Office of Internal Oversight Services

INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2017/090

Audit of military patrolling operations in United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

The Mission was successfully conducting day-to-day patrols but needed to strengthen guidance in some areas and assess the longer-term impact of patrolling operations towards eventual mandate implementation

20 September 2017
Assignment No. AP2016/672/09

Audit of military patrolling operations in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes over military patrolling operations in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The audit covered the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 April 2017 and it included planning, executing and monitoring ground military patrolling operations, and evaluating the longer-term impact of the patrols.

UNIFIL had a well-established command and control structure and was successfully conducting day-to-day patrolling operations. However, the Mission needed to strengthen guidance in some areas and establish and monitor longer-term outcome indicators of patrolling operations towards mandate implementation.

OIOS made five recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, UNIFIL needed to:

- [redacted]
- Develop a strategy to prioritize joint patrols with the Lebanese Armed Forces, taking into consideration their limited capacity;
- Establish and implement procedures on the use of the Patrol Mapping Reporting Tool and routes catalogue to improve monitoring and reporting of military patrols;
- Establish requirements for reporting deviations from the guidance included in Standardized Tactical Incident Reactions and update the guidance as needed; and
- Establish and monitor longer-term outcome indicators to assess the contribution and progress of military patrolling activities towards eventual mandate implementation.

UNIFIL accepted the recommendations and has initiated action to implement them.

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Audit of military patrolling operations in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of military patrolling operations in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

2. As delegated by the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander, the Chief of Staff directs and supervises the work of the nine military operational branches (J1 – J9) at Force Headquarters to coordinate all military activities and deployments in the Mission area of operations. The nine battalions conduct patrolling operations in their designated areas under the operational control of Sectors East and West commanders. In addition, the Force Commander Reserve (FCR) conducts reconnaissance patrolling operations throughout the two sectors to support the battalions. Further, the Observer Group for Lebanon (OGL) of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, under the operational control of UNIFIL's Head of Mission and Force Commander, patrols the Blue Line between Lebanon and Israel.

3. The military personnel strength of UNIFIL was 10,518 as of July 2017. Total expenditures on military pillars of the Force for the financial years 2015/16 and 2016/17 were $311.3 million and $318.2 million respectively.

4. Comments provided by UNIFIL are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

5. The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes over military patrolling operations in UNIFIL.

6. This audit was included in the 2016 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the operational importance of military patrolling to the achievement of the Mission's mandate.

7. OIOS conducted this audit from March to May 2017. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 April 2017. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risk areas in the military patrolling operations in UNIFIL, which included planning, executing and monitoring military patrolling operations, and evaluating the longer-term impact of patrolling operations.

8. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews of key personnel, (b) review of relevant documentation, (c) analytical reviews of data, and (d) field visits to six out of nine battalion locations and physical observations of pre-briefings for patrol teams.

III. OVERALL CONCLUSION

9. UNIFIL had a well-established command and control structure and was successfully conducting day-to-day patrolling operations. However, the Mission needed to establish and monitor longer-term outcome indicators to assess the impact and contribution of patrolling operations towards mandate implementation. Further, the Mission needed to: [redacted]; prioritize activities and establish target numbers of joint patrols to be conducted with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF); implement the Patrol Mapping Reporting Tool (PMRT) to better

monitor and report on patrols; and improve control measures for handling and reporting incidents that occur during patrols.

IV. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Planning of patrolling operations

The Mission exceeded the number of planned patrolling operations

10. The regulations and rules governing the programme planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation (ST/SGB/2016/6) require missions to justify their requested resources in terms of committed output delivery. UNIFIL's budgets include the numbers of patrols it plans to conduct during the budget periods.

11. The Mission conducted higher numbers of patrols and patrol-person days than planned for the past three years, as shown in the Table 1, partly due to the increased in market walks conducted by patrol teams as directed by the Force Commander. The number of planned patrols remained the same for the last three years because the number was based on standard planning assumptions and there was no change in the number of troops deployed to the area of operations. The Mission properly collected and maintained necessary data and records to account for the patrols conducted.

Table 1: Planned and actual patrols and patrol person days in UNIFIL

Financial year	Planned		Achieved	
	Number of patrols	Total person days	Number of patrols	Total person days
2014/15	75,555	996,450	80,354	1,028,580
2015/16	75,555	999,180	106,066	1,325,800
2016/17	75,555	996,450	86,786*	1,044,507*

Source: Results based budgets (A/68/757, A/69/731, A/69/731, A/70/699) and UNIFIL's completion of the statistics of Daily Activities Incident Reports

* For the 10-month period ended at 30 April 2017.

12. OIOS concluded that the Mission fully achieved its committed outputs in terms of the planned number of patrols, which was properly supported by relevant statistics.

UNIFIL had adequate arrangements for the planning of day-to-day patrolling operations

13. As guided by relevant operational orders and procedures, UNIFIL had well-established command, control and communication structures, encompassing all three levels of Mission headquarters, Sector headquarters and battalions, to govern patrolling operations. The officers were well aware of: (i) planning procedures; (ii) planning considerations such as situational awareness, threat assessments and route reconnaissance; and (iii) patrol objectives such as showing UNIFIL's presence, monitoring cessation of hostilities and ensuring freedom of movements in the Mission area of operation, as required. Both East and West Sector headquarters established an adequate monthly planning process for patrols to be conducted by their battalions. OIOS concluded that UNIFIL had adequate arrangements to plan its day-to-day patrolling operations. However, there were areas for improvement to make patrolling operations more effective, as outlined in the paragraphs below.

[redacted]

Improvement was needed in prioritizing types of activities to be conducted during joint patrols with LAF

18. The Strategic Review of UNIFIL in April 2017 stated that UNIFIL should explore ways for its land forces to enhance the coverage and effectiveness of coordinated operations with LAF. Accordingly, it was crucial for UNIFIL to prioritize activities to be conducted jointly with LAF. This was also necessary

because the current strength of LAF in UNIFIL's area of operation was only around 2,000, against 15,000 envisaged by Security Council resolution 1701 of 2006 establishing the Mission's mandate.

19. UNIFIL standard operating procedures on Operational Activities listed the priority activities to be conducted jointly with LAF, such as counter rocket launching operations, Blue Line patrols and foot and vehicle patrols. These joint patrols accounted for approximately 8 to 10 per cent of total patrols conducted by UNIFIL per annum in the past three years, as shown in Table 2. By 30 April 2017 in the 2016/17 financial year, the Mission had doubled the number of joint foot patrols from the previous year due to increased joint market walks, while joint patrols for counter rocket launching operations and Blue Line patrols had decreased by 817 and 293, or 23 and 9 per cent, respectively. In addition, 343 joint escort activities, although not indicated in the standard operating procedures as a priority for joint activities, were conducted.

Table 2: Total number of joint UNIFIL and LAF patrols in the past three years by type

Type	Financial year 2014/15		Financial year 2015/16		Financial year 2016/17 (up to April 2017)	
	No.	**Percentage**	**No.**	**Percentage**	**No.**	**Percentage**
Vehicle patrols	604	8%	503	6%	289	3%
Foot patrols	889	12%	1,223	15%	2,343	27%
Blue Line patrols	3,077	41%	3,251	38%	2,958	35%
Counter rocket launching operations	2,992	39%	3,484	41%	2,667	31%
Escorts	-	-	-	-	343	4 %
Total	**7,562**	**100%**	**8,461**	**100%**	**8,600**	**100%**
Percentage to total UNIFIL patrols	**9.4%**		**8.0%**		**9.9%**	

Source: Compilation based on the Mission's daily activities and incident reports

20. Counter rocket launching operations and Blue Line patrols were top priorities for joint patrols as Security Council resolution 1701 had emphasized the importance of the Mission's area of operations not being utilized for hostile activities and for full respect of the Blue Line. However, in light of the lower capacity of LAF, UNIFIL needed to provide adequate strategic guidance in its standard operating procedures on Operational Activities in prioritizing the other types and locations of joint vehicle and foot patrols to be conducted. This was necessary to ensure the availability of LAF personnel to cover sensitive areas and hotspots due to challenges that could be faced otherwise. In doing so, the Mission needed to establish target numbers of joint patrols, corresponding to the capacity of LAF, and monitor their completion. Without adequate prioritization, the Mission would not be able to maximize the effectiveness of joint patrols with LAF.

(2) UNIFIL should develop a strategy to prioritize joint patrols with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), taking into consideration their limited capacity. This strategy should prioritize the types and locations of joint patrols with LAF, establish target numbers of patrols corresponding to the capacity of LAF and monitor their completion.

UNIFIL accepted recommendation 2 and stated that UNIFIL OPORDER No. 5 established the overarching framework to prioritize patrols, which was reinforced through UNIFIL's decision making process. The military operations branch J3 had been tasked to develop a more explicit strategy to provide the necessary guidance to Sectors to prioritze joint patrol activities. Such strategy would not restrict or override the discretion of subordinate commanders. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of the strategy to prioritize the types and locations of joint patrols with LAF including the target numbers of such patrols.

B. Monitoring and reporting of patrols

PMRT needed to be fully implemented for better patrol monitoring and reporting

21. In February 2016, the Force Commander issued a directive on the implementation of PMRT to provide 'close to real-time' visibility of ongoing mobile and static activities on a digital map. The directive required patrol teams to report their locations every 30 minutes. It also instructed the Joint Operations Centre (JOC), in close coordination with the military operations branch J3, to be responsible for implementing the PMRT system. The reporting facility in PMRT requires the Mission to maintain patrol route numbers that are properly referenced to a library of patrol routes catalogue, to serve as a Mission-wide integrated reporting platform to avoid duplication of data entry and improve data security.

22. UNIFIL standard operating procedures on Operational Reporting (Amendment 1) of 2013 states that when carrying out operations in another Unit's area of responsibility, the Sector or Unit shall ensure that their troops have constant communication with not just their own Tactical Operation Centre which would inform JOC, but also the battle space owner until they leave the area of responsibility.

23. A review of PMRT records and interviews with six battalions identified the following:

- The battle space owners (battalions) stated that they provide full coverage of their area of responsibility through either static or mobile patrol activities. However, their representations could not be independently verified because the battalions did not always enter full information on patrols conducted, such as route numbers, in PMRT;

- The battalions did not update the patrol location every 30 minutes as required. In addition, when patrols were completed, they were not reflected in PMRT in a timely manner. For example, on 15 May 2017, out of 251 patrols conducted, 81 patrols (or 32 per cent) were updated between 1 and 18 hours after the scheduled completion time;

- The reporting facility in PMRT was not properly utilized. The Sectors continued to require their battalions to report patrol information in word or excel documents. For example, a battalion in Sector West typically submitted five excel files on planned patrols every day to the Sector headquarters, although this information could be available in PMRT with proper data entry; and

- The battalions stated that other Mission components such OGL, FCR and sector mobile reserves, when entering their areas of responsibility, did not communicate their movements to the battalions. For example, on 29 December 2016, a battalion was not informed that the Sector West Close Protection Team was performing a reconnaissance visit in its area of responsibility until the locals blocked the Team and seized a camera from it.

24. The above occurred because:

- There were no detailed procedures on the use of PMRT and the routes catalogue. As a result, the battalions, OGL and FCR exercised their own discretion in using PMRT leading to incomplete or outdated routes catalogue; and

- The military operations branch J3 did not initiate measures to promote the use of PMRT reports. Instead, the branch opted to re-enter patrol statistics manually when it realized that reports in PMRT were incomplete and inaccurate.

25. Inadequate implementation of PMRT and routes catalogue reduced the effectiveness of monitoring ongoing patrol activities. This also led to duplicative data entry and difficulty in reporting patrol coverage.

(3) UNIFIL should establish and implement procedures on the use of the Patrol Mapping Reporting Tool and routes catalogue to improve monitoring and reporting of military patrols including patrol coverage.

UNIFIL accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the Force Commander had prepared a directive to reiterate the importance of using the PMRT, whose full implementation was a major goal of the Mission. The military operations branch J3 had established a working group to develop a single patrol routes catalogue that will be replicated in the tool. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of established procedures to monitor the usage of PMRT, and the updated routes catalogue.

Handling and reporting of incidents during patrols requires improvement

26. The Rules of Engagement for military components in UNIFIL (ROE) require military operational activities to adhere to its principles in all situations. UNIFIL translated the ROE principles into 22 common incidents/situations that military units could face and provided recommended courses of actions for each incident for patrol teams to comply with, which were called the Standardized Tactical Incident Reactions (STIR). In addition, battalions are required to translate the ROE into their own language and provide training sessions on the ROE and STIR to patrol teams at least once a month.

27. The six battalions visited translated ROE into their language and trained their military personnel on ROE and STIR at least once per month as required.

28. A review of 59 incident reports on unauthorized carrying of weapons in the area of operations showed that UNIFIL did not order the armed elements to stop on the spot in all cases, which was inconsistent with STIR. The reasons for not doing so were not indicated in 19 of the 59 cases.

29. This incomplete recording occurred because the Mission had not established firm reporting requirements for commanders on the ground to report the reasons for, on exceptional circumstances, deviating from the STIR recommended actions. As a result, the Mission did not have the opportunity to assess whether there were valid grounds for not complying with STIR or to identify the causes for the practical difficulties in implementing STIR.

30. Additionally, there were 10 cases during the audit period when the locals seized UNIFIL maps, assets and weapons from the patrol teams. These incidents occurred in spite of the Force Commander's Directive of February 2015 that UNIFIL personnel should not surrender equipment to civilians either under pressure or as a gesture of goodwill.

31. This was attributed to the fact that the Mission's annual update of STIR did not include a scenario of attempts by the local population to seize equipment and belongings of patrol teams. As a result, patrol teams may not be ready to properly respond to such incidents.

(4) UNIFIL should establish requirements for: (i) reporting deviations from the guidance given in the Standardized Tactical Incident Reactions (STIR) when handling incidents; and (ii) updating STIR based on experiences encountered during operations.

UNIFIL accepted recommendation 4 and stated that it was challenging to predict or encompass all potential situations that would be experienced during patrols. UNIFIL would revise the STIR to incorporate reporting procedures for deviations and situations encountered during operations. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of the updated STIR.

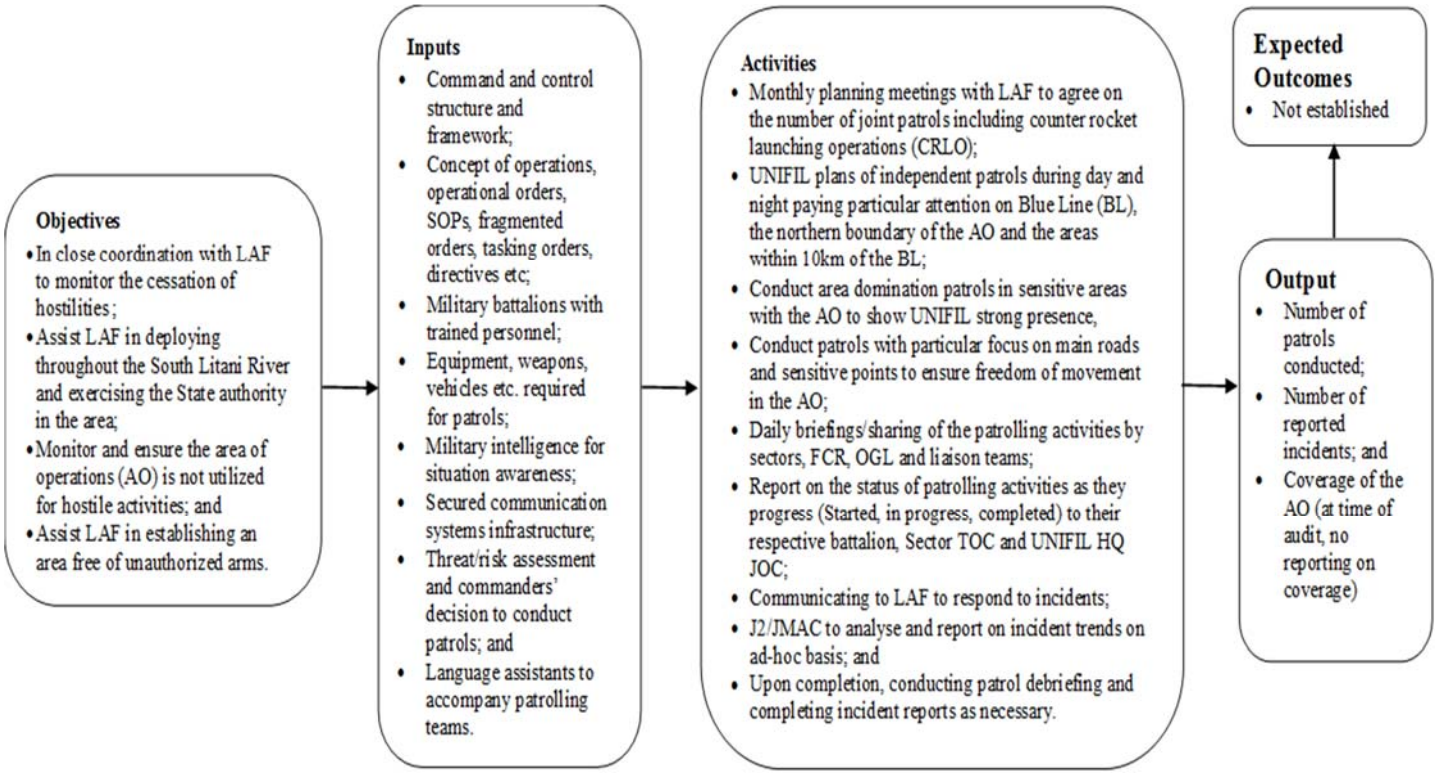
C. Evaluation of long-term impact of patrolling operations

Need to evaluate contribution and impact of patrolling operations towards eventual mandate implementation

32. The regulations and rules governing the programme planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation (ST/SGB/2016/6) require programme managers to establish indicators of achievements and conduct periodic self-evaluations of the effectiveness and impact of subprogrammes.

33. A review of results-based budgets of the Mission and established processes governing military patrolling operations showed that there were well established linkages between objectives, inputs, activities and outputs as shown in the Chart 1.

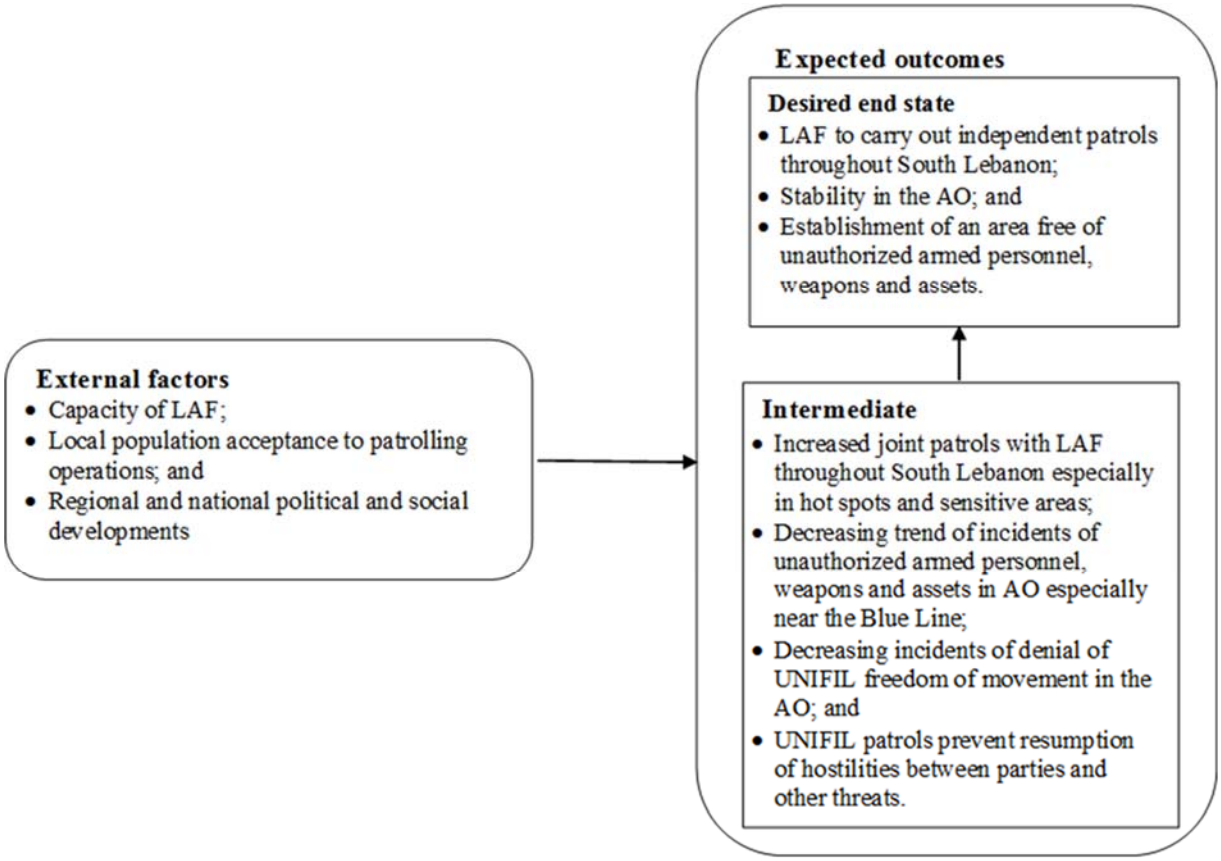
Chart 1: Objectivities, inputs, activities and outputs of military patrolling operations



34. The Mission, however, did not clearly articulate longer-term expected outcomes of military patrolling operations in contributing to the eventual implementation of the Mission mandate outlined in Security Council resolution 1701. In addition, a review of UNIFIL annual performance reports showed that the existing result-based measures were reporting only on outputs such as numbers of patrols conducted and numbers of reported incidents. Although the quarterly Secretary-General's report to the Security Council included narrative description of incidents during the period, it did not assess the trend or impact of the incidents on UNIFIL's mandate.

35. The above occurred because of a long standing practice for UNIFIL to report on outputs instead of achievement of expected outcomes. This issue was highlighted in the report of the High Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations in June 2015 stating that "the existing results-based budgeting system is an abstract mechanism that fails to link genuine indicators of achievement to resources. Instead it focuses only on outputs such as number of patrols conducted." As a result, although UNIFIL was successfully conducting day-to-day patrolling operations, the contribution and progress of military patrolling operations towards eventual mandate implementation could not be assessed.

36. A series of consultations and interviews with the Mission's senior military leadership, including the Force Commander, Chief of Staff, Sector Commanders and Deputy Chief of Staff, identified possible longer-term expected outcomes of military patrolling operations and related external factors as follows.



(5) UNIFIL should establish and monitor longer-term outcome indicators to assess the contribution and progress of military patrolling activities towards eventual mandate implementation.

UNIFIL accepted recommendation 5 and stated that the military planning branch (J5) would establish a working group to develop measurements of the effectiveness of patrols and analytical and assessment procedures capable of producing periodic military reports. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of procedures to monitor effectiveness of patrols and the first set of related reports prepared.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

37. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of UNIFIL for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

(*Signed*) Eleanor T. Burns
Director, Internal Audit Division
Office of Internal Oversight Services

ANNEX I

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of military patrolling operations in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical[1]/ Important[2]	C/ O[3]	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date[4]
1	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
2	UNIFIL should develop a strategy to prioritize joint patrols with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), taking into consideration their limited capacity. This strategy should prioritize the types and locations of joint patrols with LAF, establish target numbers of patrols corresponding to the capacity of LAF and monitor their completion.	Important	O	Submission of the strategy to prioritize the types and locations of joint patrols with LAF including the target numbers of such patrols.	31 January 2018
3	UNIFIL should establish and implement procedures on the use of the Patrol Mapping Reporting Tool and routes catalogue to improve monitoring and reporting of military patrols including patrol coverage.	Important	O	Submission of established procedures to monitor the use of PMRT, and the updated routes catalogue.	28 February 2018
4	UNIFIL should establish requirements for: (i) reporting deviations from the guidance given in the Standardized Tactical Incident Reactions (STIR) when handling incidents; and (ii) updating STIR based on experiences encountered during operations.	Important	O	Submission of the updated STIR.	31 January 2018

[1] Critical recommendations address critical and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided with regard to the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.
[2] Important recommendations address important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.
[3] C = closed, O = open
[4] Date provided by UNIFIL in response to recommendations.

ANNEX I

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of military patrolling operations in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical[1]/ Important[2]	C/ O[3]	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date[4]
5	UNIFIL should establish and monitor longer-term outcome indicators to assess the contribution and progress of military patrolling activities towards eventual mandate implementation.	Important	O	Submission of procedures to monitor the effectiveness of patrols and the first set of related reports prepared.	1 July 2018

APPENDIX I

Management Response

UNITED NATIONS
INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON

NATIONS UNIES
FORCE INTERIMAIRE AU LIBAN

Office of the Director of Mission Support

CONFIDENTIAL

22 August 2017

To: Ms. Muriette Lawrence-Hume, Chief, New York Audit Service
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

From: Major General Michael Beary
Head of Mission and Force Commander, UNIFIL

UNIFIL OFFICE OF THE FORCE COMMANDER

Subject: **Draft report on an audit of military patrolling operations in UNIFIL (Assignment No. AP2016/672/09)**

1. We refer to your memorandum on the above subject, reference No. IAD: 17-MO0803 dated 10 August 2017. Please find attached, UNIFIL's response to the recommendations contained in the subject Draft Report.

2. In following the usual procedure, copies of any supporting documents will only be provided to MERAO based at UNIFIL HQ and will not be transmitted to you with this Mission's response.

Best regards.

Cc: Mr. Effendi Syukur, Audit Focal Point, UNIFIL
Mr. Daeyoung Park, Chief Resident Auditor, MERAO, Internal Audit Division, OIOS
Ms. Cynthia Avena-Castillo, Professional Practices Section, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

APPENDIX I

Management Response

Audit of military patrolling operations in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical[1]/ Important[2]	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
[redacted]						
2	UNIFIL should develop a strategy to prioritize joint patrols with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), taking into consideration their limited capacity. This strategy should prioritize the types and locations of joint patrols with LAF, establish target numbers of patrols corresponding to the capacity of LAF and monitor their completion.	Important	YES	DCOS OPS / J3	**31 January 2018**	UNIFIL OPORDER No 5 establishes the overarching framework of prioritization of UNIFIL patrols. This framework is reinforced through UNIFIL's decision making process which is informed by a wide variety of factors these include Commanders planning guidance, assessment, experience, and familiarity with the operational environment and availability of the LAF. It is imperative that any strategy developed not restrict or override the discretion of the subordinate commanders. J3 has been tasked with the development of a more explicit Strategy to provide necessary guidance to Sectors that will prioritize the establishment of joint patrols.
3	UNIFIL should establish and implement procedures on the use of the Patrol Mapping Reporting Tool and routes	Important	YES	DCOS OPS / J3	**28 February 2018**	Full implementation of Patrol Mapping Reporting (PMRT) is a major goal of the Force HQ and a Force Commander Directive has been prepared to reiterate the importance of usage of the PMRT for those units who are not compliant.

[1] Critical recommendations address critical and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided with regard to the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

[2] Important recommendations address important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

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Management Response

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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical[1]/ Important[2]	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
	catalogue to improve monitoring and reporting of military patrols including patrol coverage.					J3 has established a working group to compile the necessary information to develop a single patrol catalog that will be replicated in the tool. Units will carry out and monitor planned patrols.
4	UNIFIL should establish requirements for: (i) reporting deviations from the guidance given in the Standardized Tactical Incident Reactions (STIR) when handling incidents; and (ii) updating STIR based on experiences encountered during operations.	Important	YES	DCOS OPS / J3	**31 January 2018**	STIR's are a tool utilized to direct the reaction of the peacekeepers on the ground, but as with any dynamic environment, it is challenging to predict or encompass all potential situations. Current STIRs have been developed to reflect the operational experiences of the Force over many years All patrols have been given clear guidance that UNIFIL should make every effort not to escalate tension in the AO and the STIR's will be reviewed accordingly. In addition, the catalog will include reporting procedures for deviations and STIRs for situations that have been encountered during operations.
5	UNIFIL should establish and monitor longer-term outcome indicators to assess the contribution and progress of military patrolling activities towards eventual mandate implementation.	Important	YES	DCOS OPS / J5	**01 July 2018**	The Military Component will work to develop measure of effectiveness of patrols and an analysis and assessment procedure capable of providing period Military Reports. J5 will establish a working group for this task.