



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2014/081

Audit of the Security Sector Reform Unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Overall results relating to effective implementation of the mandate of the Security Sector Reform Unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations were initially assessed as partially satisfactory. Implementation of one important recommendation remains in progress

FINAL OVERALL RATING: PARTIALLY
SATISFACTORY

25 August 2014
Assignment No. AP2013/600/01

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AUDIT REPORT

Audit of the Security Sector Reform Unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the Security Sector Reform Unit (SSRU) in the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).
2. In accordance with its mandate, OIOS provides assurance and advice on the adequacy and effectiveness of the United Nations internal control system, the primary objectives of which are to ensure (a) efficient and effective operations; (b) accurate financial and operational reporting; (c) safeguarding of assets; and (d) compliance with mandates, regulations and rules.
3. In August 2009, the General Assembly formally established a standalone SSRU to replace the capacity established in 2007 and to: (a) serve as focal point and technical resource capacity on security sector reform for the United Nations system and national and international partners; (b) co-chair the Inter-agency Security Sector Reform Task Force (IASSRTF) responsible for developing training, policy, standards and principles for the United Nations security sector reform activities and to facilitate inter-agency consultation and coordination on such issues; and (c) develop rosters to meet United Nations security sector reform requirements. The SSRU was also responsible for supporting 13 field missions and offices with dedicated security sector reform mandates, supporting missions where no dedicated security sector reform capacities existed and conducting assessment and planning processes for new and potential new missions.
4. The SSRU did not have a budget of its own and the budget of the OROLSI did not clearly identify the amounts allocated to the Unit. The SSRU had 10 posts; 7 funded from the peacekeeping support account and 3 from extrabudgetary funds.
5. Comments provided by DPKO are incorporated in italics.

II. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

6. The audit was conducted to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of DPKO governance, risk management and control processes in providing reasonable assurance regarding the **effective implementation of the mandate of SSRU in DPKO**
7. The audit was included in the 2013 OIOS risk-based work plan because of the operational risks related to the implementation of the mandate of SSRU.
8. The key control tested for the audit was programme management and performance monitoring. For the purpose of this audit, OIOS defined programme management and performance monitoring as controls that provide reasonable assurance that there is sufficient capacity to achieve mandates and a system exists for the measurement of efficiency and effectiveness of SSRU operations.
9. The key control was assessed for the control objectives shown in Table 1. Certain control objectives (shown in Table 1 as “Not assessed”) were not relevant to the scope defined for this audit.

10. OIOS conducted this audit from September 2013 to March 2014. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2011 to November 2013.

11. OIOS conducted an activity-level risk assessment to identify and assess specific risk exposures, and to confirm the relevance of the selected key controls in mitigating associated risks. Through interviews, analytical reviews and tests of controls, OIOS assessed the existence and adequacy of internal controls and conducted necessary tests to determine their effectiveness.

III. AUDIT RESULTS

12. The DPKO governance, risk management and control processes examined were assessed as **partially satisfactory**¹ in providing reasonable assurance regarding the **effective implementation of the mandate of SSRU in DPKO**. OIOS made one recommendation to address the issue identified. SSRU adequately supported the IASSRTF, notably, in developing the Integrated Technical Guidance Notes and in leading five of the seven IASSRTF system-wide projects to develop a United Nations approach to security sector reform. This included the United Nations roster of senior security sector reform experts to be used in selecting experts for deployment to field missions and Member States upon request and on short notice to meet United Nations security sector reform requirements. SSRU also supported security sector reform components in field missions through formal and informal contacts and field visits on a range of issues such as strategic and operational planning, recruitment and training. However, SSRU needed to increase its outreach efforts to promote use of the roster of security sector reform experts and implement a strategy to promote cost-sharing arrangements with beneficiary Member States and field missions for the deployment of experts. DPKO developed a plan of action to address the audit recommendation.

13. The initial overall rating was based on the assessment of key control presented in Table 1 below. The final overall rating is **partially satisfactory** as implementation of one important recommendation remains in progress.

Table 1: Assessment of key control

Business objective	Key control	Control objectives			
		Efficient and effective operations	Accurate financial and operational reporting	Safeguarding of assets	Compliance with mandates, regulations and rules
Effective implementation of the mandate of SSRU in DPKO	Programme management and performance monitoring	Partially satisfactory	Satisfactory	Not assessed	Satisfactory
FINAL OVERALL RATING: PARTIALLY SATISFACTORY					

A. Programme management and performance monitoring

The Security Sector Reform Unit required increased outreach to promote its roster of experts

¹ A rating of “**partially satisfactory**” means that important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies exist 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.

14. According to Secretary-General's Bulletin on the Organization of DPKO, SSRU was responsible for: (a) providing advice on security sector reform issues to departments and field missions and lead planning processes related to the design and implementation of security sector reform support to national authorities; (b) serving as a focal point and technical resource capacity on security sector reform for the United Nations system and national and international partners; (c) developing United Nations guidance, standards and practices and identifying lessons learned on security sector reform, including the provision of a repository of materials on security sector reform; and (d) developing rosters of experts to meet United Nations security sector reform requirements at Headquarters and in the field and to deliver training on security sector reform.

15. The SSRU had, within existing resources, implemented its mandated activities. A review of the reports of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and Presidential statements from the Security Council indicated that SSRU consistently received positive feedback from Member States. The number of field missions with dedicated security sector reform mandates increased from 4 in 2008 to 13 in 2013. The Unit supported these missions through formal and informal contacts and field visits on a range of issues such as strategic and operational planning, recruitment and training. SSRU launched a roster in 2010 with 41 security sector reform experts in 21 specialist areas. SSRU also co-chaired and provided the secretariat for the IASSRTF; notably, the Unit facilitated consultation among members of the IASSRTF and supported IASSRTF in rolling out security sector reform sensitization courses in over 14 countries and in developing the Integrated Technical Guidance Notes on security sector reform. At the annual IASSRTF workshops led by SSRU and the United Nations Development Programme, practitioners in field missions contributed to the development of a United Nations approach to security sector reform.

16. However, the number of requests for deployment of security sector reform experts to Member States and field missions decreased significantly from 25 in 2010 to an average of 8 in 2012 and 2013. SSRU attributed the decrease in requests to its decreased promotion of the roster as there was limited funding to accommodate requests. The Unit stated that it was more successful in promoting the roster to potential clients than in gaining sustainable resources for its use. However, OROLSI acknowledged the need to intensify efforts to obtain resources, which could include communicating the need for resources by way of cost-sharing arrangements with beneficiary Member States and field missions.

(1) DPKO should communicate the need for funding, including cost-sharing arrangements with beneficiary Member States and field missions for the deployment of experts.

DPKO accepted recommendation 1 and stated that efforts had been made in the past to obtain additional funding; however, further efforts would be made, and an action plan had been developed to seek funding. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of evidence of increased effort made to obtain resources for the roster use.

Extrabudgetary-funded activities were adequately managed

17. Extrabudgetary funding comprised voluntary contributions by Member States and other donors. Receipt of, use of and accountability for extrabudgetary funds were governed by the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules, administrative instructions such as ST/AI/284 on general trust funds and agreements between the United Nations and donors.

18. OIOS reviewed the following projects funded by extrabudgetary resources: (a) development of the United Nations approach to security sector reform; (b) management of the roster of experts; and (c) support to special political missions. The review indicated that SSRU maintained adequate documentation for these projects, including records of project formulation, work plans and project reports. Additionally,

SSRU complied with relevant rules in managing the projects as well as the relevant agreements between the United Nations and donors. OIOS concluded that extrabudgetary-funded projects were adequately managed and the use of funds complied with applicable rules and procedures.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

19. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the Management and staff of DPKO for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

(Signed) David Kanja
Assistant Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of the Security Sector Reform Unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Critical ² / Important ³	C/ O ⁴	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁵
1	The SSRU should communicate the need for funding, including cost-sharing arrangements with beneficiary Member States and field missions for the deployment of experts.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of increased effort made to obtain resources for the roster use.	Third quarter of 2015

² Critical recommendations address significant and/or pervasive deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

³ Important recommendations address important deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

⁴ C = closed, O = open

⁵ Date provided by DPKO in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response

CONFIDENTIAL

Routine

TO: Ms. Eleanor Burns, Director
A: Peacekeeping Audit Service, Internal Audit Division,
OIOS

DATE: 5 August 2014

THROUGH:
S/C DE:

REFERENCE: UNHQ-AR-BOI-Memo-2-
2014-1659

FROM: Anthony Banbury, Assistant Secretary-General
DE: Department of Field Support



SUBJECT: AP2013/600/01 – Audit of Security Sector Reform Unit in DPKO
OBJET:

1. I refer to your memorandum dated 10 July 2014 regarding the above-mentioned audit. Please find attached our comments on the findings and recommendations contained in the draft report.
2. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft report. We stand ready to provide any further information that may be required.

cc: Ms. Cynthia Avena-Castillo

Management Response

Audit of Security Sector Reform Unit in the Office of the Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ⁶ / Important ⁷	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	The SSRU should increase its outreach activities to promote the United Nations' capacity to deliver security sector reform services through its roster of experts and communicate the need for funding, including cost-sharing arrangements with beneficiary Member States and field missions for the deployment of experts.	Important	Yes	Chief, SSRU	Third quarter of 2015	DPKO accepts this recommendation, noting that such efforts have been made in the past, including through the Peacekeeping Support Account and Extra-budgetary Funding Proposals, as well as in presentations to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the Group of Friends of SSR and Senior SSR Experts in Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions. DPKO's Action Plan to implement this recommendation is attached as Annex III.

⁶ Critical recommendations address significant and/or pervasive deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

⁷ Important recommendations address important deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

ANNEX III

Action Plan for the recommendation arising from AP2013/600/01

Recommendation 1: The SSRU should communicate the need for funding, including cost-sharing arrangements with beneficiary Member States and field missions for the deployment of experts.

Action	SSRU Responsible Officer	Deadline
Modify the deployment guidelines of the Roster of SSR Experts (henceforth the "Roster") to stipulate the importance of cost-sharing arrangements for the deployment of Roster experts, where possible	SSR Officer	September 2014
Communicate the revised Roster guidelines to every Mission/beneficiary Member State upon receipt of requests for Roster assistance	SSR Officer	Upon receipt of requests for Roster assistance
Send a Note Verbal to Member States requesting further nomination of expert resources and the need for voluntary funding for the Roster	SSR Officer	October 2014
Send a code cable to all Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions further promoting the Roster and highlighting the aforementioned revised deployment guidelines	SSR Officer	October 2014
Hold one event with Member States to promote the need for voluntary funding for the Roster, and to enhance access to qualified SSR experts	SSR Officer	March 2015
Make further proposals for Roster resources through the 2015/16 Peacekeeping Support Account	Chief	June 2015