



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2021/053

Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

**The Mission needed to enhance the capacity
of the Joint Operations Centre and implement
measures to strengthen its integrated
operational coordination and planning**

8 November 2021

Assignment No. AP2021-637-01

Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). The objective of the audit was to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of JOC in performing its functions in MINUSCA. The audit covered the period from May 2019 to July 2021 and included a review of implementation of Mission-specific standard operating procedures, staffing and other operational resources, integrated situational awareness, and integrated operations coordination and crisis management support.

The Mission needed to enhance the capacity of JOC and implement measures to strengthen its integrated operational coordination and planning.

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

- Prioritize the approval and promulgation of the revised JOC standard operating procedures and ensure compliance thereof;
- Enhance the capacity of JOC to perform its mandated tasks by: filling the post of Chief on a regular basis and other vacant positions; ensuring staff have the requisite language proficiency, skills and experience; returning to JOC all posts loaned to other units; and ensuring adequate transportation is available to carry out its functions;
- Assign and train focal points in each relevant Mission component on the use of the Unite Aware-Incidents reporting system to support JOC in providing integrated situational awareness information in a consistent and timely manner;
- Facilitate JOC in accomplishing its integrated operational coordination and planning responsibilities by: (a) co-locating duty officers from relevant Mission components; (b) keeping the Chief of JOC adequately informed of decisions by senior leadership in strategic level coordination meetings; and (c) putting in place a matrix to track and monitor the implementation of action points agreed at operational coordination team meetings; and
- Ensure recommendations resulting from table-top exercises and After-Action Reviews are monitored and implemented.

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

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Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).
2. MINUSCA established JOC at the inception of the Mission in September 2014 to support the full spectrum of situational awareness, incorporating knowledge, understanding and anticipation, which underpin the effective coordination and monitoring of operations. The core functions of JOC include: (a) providing integrated situational awareness to Mission's leadership and United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ); (b) facilitating integrated operational coordination and contingency planning within the Mission and with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), as needed, and where necessary, with non-United Nations actors; and (c) supporting the Mission's crisis management.
3. The Mission further established Field Joint Operations Centres (F/JOCs) in each of its 11 field offices. F/JOCs are responsible for managing incidents in their respective areas of responsibility and providing daily and other periodic situational awareness reports to JOC at Mission Headquarters in Bangui.
4. JOC is currently headed by a Chief at the P-4 level who reports to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) through the Chief of Staff (COS). In 2020/21, JOC had 52 approved posts consisting of 24 civilians, 22 military staff officers and 6 police liaison officers. JOC is co-located with the Military Operations Centre (MOC) within the MINUSCA UCATEX compound in Bangui.
5. The approved operating budgets and expenditures (excluding salaries) of JOC for fiscal years 2018/19, 2019/20, and 2020/21 are shown in Table 1. Budgeted funds are for within-mission and international travel to attend training/workshops, and for consultation meetings and briefings at MINUSCA headquarters in Bangui and field locations.

Table 1
MINUSCA JOC budget and expenditure for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21 ¹
Budget	\$31 700	\$18 160	\$93 568
Expenditure	(24 148)	(32 658)	(3 051)
Surplus/(deficit)	\$7 552	(\$14 498)	\$90 517

Source: MINUSCA Budget & Finance Section

6. Comments provided by MINUSCA are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

7. The objective of the audit was to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of JOC in performing its functions in MINUSCA.

¹ The increase in the operating budget was due to the significant number of planned mission travels in support of JOC mandate prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. The low operating expenditure resulted due to Covid-19 travel restrictions.

8. This audit was included in the 2021 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the key role that JOC plays in supporting decision-making by the Mission's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) through its provision of situational awareness and identification of potential higher-risk events that may adversely impact the implementation of the MINUSCA mandate.

9. OIOS conducted this audit from June to August 2021. The audit covered the period from May 2019 to July 2021. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risks areas in JOC operations, which included: (a) implementation of Mission-specific standard operating procedures (SOPs); (b) staffing and other operational resources; (c) integrated situational awareness; and (d) integrated operations coordination and crisis management support.

10. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews with key personnel, (b) review of relevant documentation, (c) analytical review of incidents reported, and (d) sample testing of controls related to incidents and periodic situational awareness reporting.

11. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Implementation of Mission-specific standard operating procedures

Need to promulgate and ensure implementation of Mission-specific SOPs

12. Mission-specific SOPs, in alignment with the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) Policy on Joint Operations Centres, provide guidance to JOC and other relevant Mission personnel on their combined roles and responsibilities related to integrated situational awareness, integrated operational coordination and planning facilitation, and crisis management support. Such SOPs assist in ensuring consistent and timely reporting and enable JOC operations to be more efficient and effective.

13. MINUSCA had developed and periodically reviewed and revised its SOPs (latest update was February 2020) on: (a) JOC operations at Mission Headquarters, at sectors and field offices; (b) crisis management support; and (c) use of the Unite Aware-Incidents system. At the time of the audit, the February 2020 SOPs were still in draft and pending approval by the COS, except for the SOP on crisis management that had been approved and promulgated. OIOS was informed that finalization and promulgation of SOPs were delayed due to management's focus on dealing with COVID-19.

14. JOC informed OIOS that the absence of final SOPs outlining JOC and Mission components' functions, roles and responsibilities, and communication by senior management on the need for components to comply with them, was impacting its performance. Moreover, the SRSG Inter-Office Memorandum on decision-making, planning, operational coordination and briefing structures, dated June 2019, had not clearly explained the role of JOC in these processes and the importance of components cooperating with each other for the Mission to have robust integrated operational coordination and planning functions. As a result, Mission components were: (a) reluctant to share information and provide, for example, early warning crisis alerts to JOC for triangulation and deconflicting; (b) not using the Unite Aware-Incidents system to upload information on significant events and security incidents for the Mission to have a central and complete repository of occurrences; and (c) not always providing timely feedback to JOC on the implementation of recommendations from the Operational Coordination Team (OCT) and Crisis Management Team (CMT) meetings. These issues are dealt with later in the report.

15. Therefore, there was a need for the Mission to prioritize the up-date and issuance of its SOPs and for senior management to regularly remind Mission components to comply with them

(1) MINUSCA should: (a) prioritize the approval and promulgation of the revised Joint Operations Centre standard operating procedures; and (b) communicate to Mission components the need for compliance.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 1 and stated that JOC in collaboration with the Policy and Best Practices Officer would review the SOPs by 1 December 2021 and that the COS would ensure compliance by all Mission components. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of copies of the finalized SOPs and evidence that they are being complied with.

B. Staffing and other resources

Need for adequate staffing and other resources to ensure effective mandate delivery

16. An efficient and effective JOC needs to be equipped with the capability to provide integrated situational awareness and to properly coordinate events and support crisis management.

17. JOC (in Mission Headquarters and at the field level) was not fully staffed. For example: (a) since August 2017, the post of Chief has either been vacant or filled on a temporary basis; (b) one P-3 and one P-4 civilian international JOC officers' posts in Bangui were on loan to other components since July 2019 and February 2020, respectively; (c) United Nations Police (UNPOL) officers had not been assigned to 8 of the 11 F/JOCs, although discussions were ongoing at the time of the audit for their deployment; and (d) four military staff officer (MSO) posts were vacant since 2017. There were also one P-2, one United Nations volunteer (UNV) and two national officers' civilian posts in Bangui that were vacant, but under recruitment. To address the capacity of field offices, the SRSG in December 2019 had decided to, among others: (i) allocate professional staff to substantive sections in all field offices; and (ii) return all staff posts removed from the field to their original duty station. However, the implementation of the SRSG's decision had been delayed, partly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

18. Not all military and police personnel assigned to JOC had the requisite operational experience and necessary language skills (English and French). JOC's assessment of personnel assigned as of August 2021 determined that: (a) 15 of the MSOs had proficiency in only one language (English or French) and limited or no working proficiency in the other language; and (b) 16 (12 MSOs, 2 police, 2 UNVs) out of 43 JOC staff had no previous experience in JOC-related work prior to their assignment

19. JOC also informed that they did not have enough vehicles considering the nature of its activities to support the 24/7 functioning of the watch room in Bangui and coordinate joint visits to incident sites with other Mission components. Only four vehicles were allocated for the 20 JOC staff in Bangui and none were allocated to F/JOCs. Due to insufficient transportation, JOC staff were not always able to participate in: (a) joint visits to incident sites; (b) military and police patrols to verify information after incidents; (c) Joint Protection Team visits; and (d) meetings with UNCT, the humanitarian community, local authorities, and other local stakeholders.

(2) MINUSCA, to enhance the capacity of the Joint Operations Centre (JOC), should: (a) fill the post of Chief of JOC on a regular basis and its other vacant positions; (b) take action to improve the requisite language proficiency, skills and experience of JOC staff; (c) return to JOC all posts on loan to other units; and (d) provide adequate transportation for JOC to carry out its functions.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 2 and stated that the recruitment of the Chief JOC was in the finalization phase, the language challenge for the deployed JOC uniformed personnel would be addressed with the Force and Police components, and an additional vehicle would be provided to JOC. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence that the capacity of JOC to perform its mandated tasks has been enhanced as required.

C. Integrated situational awareness

The Mission-wide use of the Unite Aware-Incidents reporting system needed to improve

20. To support decision-making by MINUSCA SLT and UNHQ, JOC provides an overview of the situation in the Mission area through routine and special incident reporting. To help ensure that timely, accurate and relevant information is collected, MINUSCA launched the Unite Aware-Incidents system in November 2015. The system is an integrated field operational and situational awareness tool that allows Mission components to efficiently collect, validate, store, search, retrieve, analyze and share critical situational information across Mission components, across multiple missions and with UNHQ.

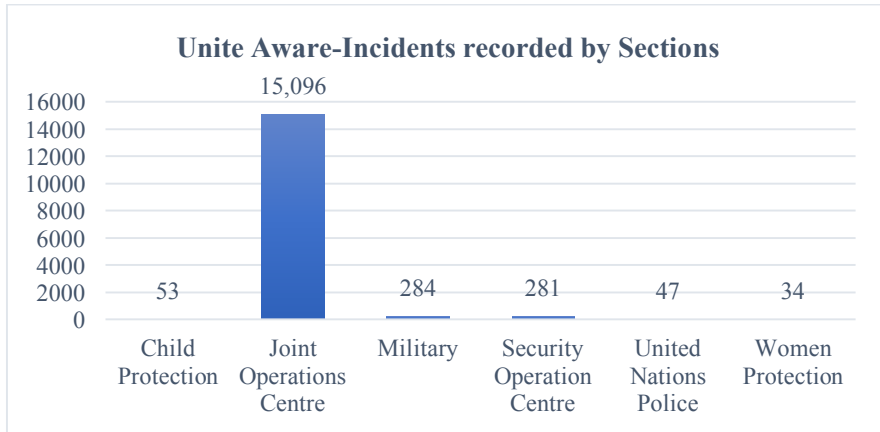
21. JOC provided daily and weekly situational reports, and regular flash reports on incidents to the SLT, other Mission management and UNHQ. The Section also regularly presented during Senior Management Meetings an analysis of incidents that had occurred. It also contributed to the drafting of the Mission's Code Cables informing UNHQ of specific incidents of importance that required UNHQ attention.

22. Furthermore, to facilitate use of the Unite Aware-Incidents reporting tool, since July 2020, JOC provided eight training sessions on the use of the system in both English and French for 247 staff from various Mission components, and at the time of the audit, the system had 352 users from Mission components.

23. However, OIOS review of incidents recorded in the system showed:

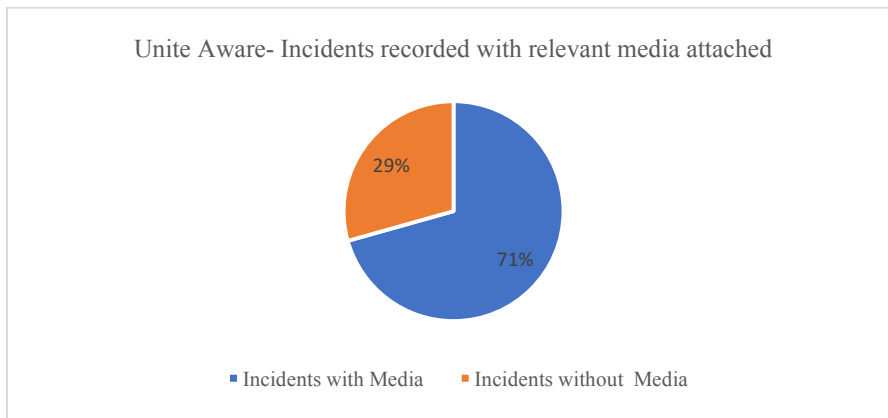
- Mission components did not regularly record incidents directly into the system, with JOC being responsible for 95 per cent of the 15,795 incidents recorded during the audit period, as shown in Figure 1. The other 5 per cent came from only 5 of the 34 substantive sections. Such an approach increased the risk that all incidents were not being captured in the system, meaning the data held in the system was incomplete and not a reliable resource for conducting evidence-based critical assessment and analysis to better understand causes and trends in incidents. This could impact MINUSCA's risk management and decision-making processes.
- Incidents were not always verified and recorded in the system within one day (24 hours) of their occurrence, or properly checked prior to entering the information. A review of a sample of 100 recorded incidents showed an average delay of 2.8 days between an incident's occurrence and it being recorded. One case that was reported after a delay of 26 days involved harassment and threat of violence by an armed group in a remote area. OIOS also found that information was included twice, as JOC during the verification process identified 342 duplicate incidents in the period December 2019 to May 2021. Moreover, only 11,158 (71 per cent) of recorded incidents had relevant supporting media evidence to validate their accuracy, as indicated in Figure 2.

Figure 1
Analysis of incidents recorded in Unite Aware by section



Source: Unite Aware-Incidents system

Figure 2
Analysis of Unite Aware-Incidents recorded with media attached



Source- Unite Aware-Incidents system

24. The above occurred because: (a) not all 34 Mission substantive components had appointed and had fully trained Unite Aware-Incidents system focal point responsible for directly inputting information into the system; and (b) field substantive sections were often reporting directly to their headquarters in Bangui on issues impacting their operations, rather than going through the F/JOC after approval of the Head of Office as required.

25. The shortfall in trained focal points for verifying and supporting significant events and incidents and inputting them into the Unite Aware-Incidents system impacted the availability of timely and comprehensive situational awareness information to support the SLT in responding promptly and effectively to threats and opportunities impacting MINUSCA's mandate. Interviews with JOC staff indicated that the lack of sufficiently trained focal points made deconflicting and triangulation of information on incidents challenging at times.

(3) MINUSCA should assign and train focal points in each relevant Mission component on the use of the Unite Aware-Incidents reporting system to support the Joint Operations Centre in providing integrated situational awareness information in a consistent and timely manner.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 3 and stated that that the SLT and COS would communicate with all section chiefs to nominate focal points to be trained by JOC, and the Chief JOC would ensure that the training is conducted monthly and the use of the Unite Aware-Incidents reporting system is reported to the COS and the SLT. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of evidence that focal points have been appointed and trained on the use of the Unite Aware-Incidents reporting system, and the system is being populated in a timely manner.

D. Integrated operations coordination and crisis management support

Need to strengthen JOC integrated operational coordination and planning role

26. JOC is mandated to play a critical coordination role in integrated operational planning between Mission components and UNCT to ensure operational activities are complementary and coherent, and that shared situational awareness assets are efficiently and effectively utilized.

27. MINUSCA established an OCT, headed by the COS, which was responsible for managing and coordinating specific operational coordination requirements. During the period, the OCT met 31 times and those meetings were facilitated by JOC. The OCT was a forum where representatives from relevant Mission components provided briefings on their operations and activities. JOC prepared minutes of meetings in which issues of potential concern were identified and action points were agreed and assigned to responsible units with target dates for completion. While this was a good forum for coordinating activities, there was no system for tracking and monitoring the implementation of action points agreed at each meeting. For instance, an action-item-matrix could be developed, with status of actions reported and discussed at future meetings until implemented. Such a process was necessary, as MINUSCA components were not systematically providing JOC input on the status of assigned actions in a timely manner, even though JOC issued repeated reminders. JOC's coordination role was also hampered by the following:

- JOC Headquarters was relocated from MINUSCA HQ compound to the UCATEX compound in November 2020 and it was co-located with MOC, although there had been plans for JOC to also co-locate with the Police Operations Centre, the Joint Mission Analysis Centre and the Security Operations Centre. Although discussions were ongoing, other component chiefs had not yet deployed their representatives to the co-located facilities. This may be one of the reasons that JOC was experiencing delays in collecting and deconflicting information on security incidents and thus in issuing situational awareness reports. The co-location of these centres may better facilitate the sharing of information and expedite the verification and issuance of situational awareness/flash reports to aid SLT decision-making.
- The Chief JOC was not attending strategic level coordination meetings held by the SLT or senior leadership coordination meetings with field offices where cross-cutting operational issues were discussed and did not also proactively seek briefings on outcomes of such meetings. Additionally, JOC was neither invited to nor kept informed of the outcomes of the Bangui Task Force, military and UNPOL operational planning activities, although outcomes of such meetings may impact on the effectiveness of JOC's coordination role.

28. The weakness was partly due to the absence of up-dated SOPs as referred to above. However, once these were finalized, there was also a need for Mission management to better facilitate JOC's integrated operational coordination and planning role and by doing this, ensure effective management of information and crises.

- (4) MINUSCA should facilitate the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) in accomplishing its integrated operational coordination and planning responsibilities by: (a) co-locating duty officers from various Mission components; (b) keeping the Chief of JOC adequately informed of decisions by senior leadership in strategic level coordination meetings and outcomes of operational planning activities; and (c) putting in place a matrix to track and monitor the implementation of action points agreed at operational coordination team meetings.**

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 4 and stated that it would ensure: (a) the Police Operations Centre, Security Information and Operation Centre, as well as Joint Mission Analysis Centre are co-located altogether with MOC and JOC for an effective coordination by March 2022; (b) the COS communicates to the Chief JOC on the required actions decided during the SLT meetings; and (c) the action point matrix is prepared and monitored by JOC. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence that action has been taken to better facilitate JOC in accomplishing its integrated operational coordination and planning responsibilities.

Monitoring of recommendations from scenario-based exercises and After-Action Reviews needed improvement

29. To enable timely, coordinated and effective response to crisis situations, JOC is required to regularly report on crises, act as the integrated information centre for all crisis-related information and maintain the Mission's CMT venues in a state of readiness. JOC was providing secretariat support to the CMT.

30. From a review of the five minutes of CMT meetings held during the audit period, JOC was: alerting senior management on crisis situations through issuance of flash reports; providing situational awareness briefings; and documenting action points based on CMT decisions including those units responsible and target completion dates. JOC also, under the auspices of the COS, facilitated 10 scenario-based table-top exercises in 2019 with the United Nations Operations and Crisis Centre involving Mission leadership and staff in 9 of the 11 field offices. No exercises were conducted in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but JOC had conducted table-top exercises for all field offices by 15 September 2021.

31. Recommendations made during the scenario-based table-top exercises included the need for: (a) reviewing arrangements for influx of internally displaced persons into MINUSCA camps, e.g., hygiene, security, water, and designating a refuge area; (b) establishing appropriate coordination mechanisms between field offices and humanitarian actors, including non-governmental organizations, to harmonize operations; (c) training and capacity building for field office sections on their role in crisis management; and (d) compiling and updating information/state of readiness of safe havens, names and contact details of wardens. However, the implementation of recommendations was not monitored to ensure appropriate mitigating measures were in place to minimize recurrence of identified weaknesses and thus improve preparedness to respond to future crisis situations.

32. JOC in conjunction with the Mission's Best Practices Office facilitated 14 After-Action Reviews (AARs). These were adequately drafted and included all elements in the prescribed Mission AAR template such as: background information, review of objectives and deliverables, achievements/results, process mapping and methodology, identification of best practices, lessons learned or areas of improvement and recommendations. However, recommendations were not monitored to ensure any identified weaknesses were addressed with lessons learned factored into future decision-making processes.

33. Moreover, as heads of substantive components were not complying with JOC procedures, early warning crisis alerts received by field substantive components were not always provided to F/JOCs for

verification prior to reporting them to their respective chain of command and the SLT. Five examples of such instances were noted from the Bambari, Birao and Bouar Field Offices between May and June 2021 where information on alleged security incidents were sent directly to the COS in Bangui who in turn forwarded them to the Chief JOC and/or F/JOC for verification and confirmation. This process was not efficient and resulted in delays in communicating important information.

34. Additionally, following the relocation of JOC to the UCATEX compound in November 2020, a new CMT meeting venue had not been designated within the Mission. Also, since the establishment of the Mission in September 2014, JOC had not identified and maintained an alternate venue to be used in the event the primary venue was affected. JOC advised that following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, all CMT meetings were conducted virtually and therefore, it had not yet discussed reestablishing a CMT meeting venue and an alternate venue. However, there was a need to identify physical venues for meetings considering the change of the Mission's posture to increasingly accommodate physical meetings where appropriate.

(5) MINUSCA should implement a mechanism to ensure recommendations resulting from table-top exercises and After-Action Reviews are monitored and implemented.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 5 and stated that the COS, the Field Offices Coordinator and the Chief JOC would conduct coordination meetings with all substantive sections, Head of Offices, Force and Police to prepare table-top exercises once a year; and would ensure that the After-Action Review recommendations are tracked by Chief JOC and reported to the COS and the SLT. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of evidence that a mechanism for monitoring implementation of table-top exercises and After-Action Review recommendations is established.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

35. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of MINUSCA 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

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ² / Important ³	C/ O ⁴	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁵
1	MINUSCA should: (a) prioritize the approval and promulgation of the revised Joint Operations Centre standard operating procedures; and (b) communicate to Mission components the need for compliance.	Important	O	Receipt of copies of the finalized SOPs and evidence that they are being complied with.	31 December 2021
2	MINUSCA, to enhance the capacity of the Joint Operations Centre (JOC), should: (a) fill the post of Chief of JOC on a regular basis and its other vacant positions; (b) take action to improve the requisite language proficiency, skills and experience of JOC staff; (c) return to JOC all posts on loan to other units; and (d) provide adequate transportation for JOC to carry out its functions.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that the capacity of JOC to perform its mandated tasks has been enhanced as required	1 July 2022
3	MINUSCA should assign and train focal points in each relevant Mission component on the use of the Unite Aware-Incidents reporting system to support the Joint Operations Centre in providing integrated situational awareness information in a consistent and timely manner.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that focal points have been appointed and trained on the use of the Unite Aware-Incidents reporting system, and the system is being populated in a timely manner.	30 June 2022
4	MINUSCA should facilitate the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) in accomplishing its integrated operational coordination and planning responsibilities by: (a) co-locating duty officers from various Mission components; (b) keeping the Chief of JOC adequately informed of decisions by senior leadership in strategic level coordination meetings and outcomes of operational planning activities; and (c) putting in place a matrix to track and monitor the implementation of action points agreed at operational coordination team meetings	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that action has been taken to better facilitate JOC in accomplishing its integrated operational coordination and planning responsibilities	30 June 2022
5	MINUSCA should implement a mechanism to ensure recommendations resulting from table-top	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that a mechanism for monitoring implementation of table-top	31 December 2021

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

	exercises and After-Action Reviews are monitored and implemented			exercises and After-Action Review recommendations is established	
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² Critical recommendations address those risk issues that require immediate management attention. Failure to take action could have a critical or significant adverse impact on the Organization.

³ Important recommendations address those risk issues that require timely management attention. Failure to take action could have a high or moderate adverse impact on the Organization.

⁴ Please note the value C denotes closed recommendations whereas O refers to open recommendations.

⁵ Date provided by MINUSCA in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response

United Nations

United Nations Multidimensional Integrated
Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic



MINUSCA

Nations Unies

Mission Multidimensionnelle Intégrée des Nations Unies
pour la Stabilisation en République centrafricaine

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

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

DATE: 05 November 2021

REFERENCE: MINUSCA/SRSG/1882021

FROM: Mankeur Ndiaye
DE: Special Representative of the Secretary-General
MINUSCA

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mankeur', is written over the 'FROM' and 'DE' fields.

SUBJECT: Comments on the Draft report on an audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (Assignment No. AP2021-637-01)
OBJECT: Comments on the Draft report on an audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (Assignment No. AP2021-637-01)

1. With reference to your memorandum of 22 October 2021 (OIOS/2021/01532), on the above captioned-subject matter for your consideration, please find attached Appendix 1 with MINUSCA's comments.

Mr. Souleymane Thioune, Field Offices Coordinator and Acting Chief of Staff, MINUSCA
Ms. Weijie Yu, Chief, Joint Operations Centre, MINUSCA
Ms. Roseline Ginette Kombo-Yaya, Audit Focal Point, MINUSCA

Management Response

**Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
1	MINUSCA should: (a) prioritize the approval and promulgation of the revised Joint Operations Centre standard operating procedures; and (b) communicate to Mission components the need for compliance.	Important	Yes	Chief of Staff (COS) and CJOC	31 December 2021	MINUSCA accepts the recommendation: (a) the Joint Operation Center in collaboration with the Policy and Best Practices Officer will review the SOP by 1 December 2021 and; (b) the Chief of Staff (COS) will ensure compliance by all Mission components.
2	MINUSCA, to enhance the capacity of the Joint Operations Centre (JOC), should: (a) fill the post of Chief of JOC on a regular basis and its other vacant positions; (b) take action to improve the requisite language proficiency, skills and experience of JOC staff; (c) return to JOC all posts on loan to other units; and (d) provide adequate transportation for JOC to carry out its functions.	Important	Yes	COS for (a) FCOS and Police COS for uniform JOC personnel (b) COS and HR for (c) DMS for (d)	(a) 30 November 2021 (b) 30 June 2022 (c) 1 July 2022 (d) 31 December 2021	MINUSCA has started the (a) the recruitment of the Chief Joint Operations Center and it is currently in the finalization phase; (b) agrees that JOC staff should meet the

¹ Critical recommendations address those risk issues that require immediate management attention. Failure to take action could have a critical or significant adverse impact on the Organization.

² Important recommendations address those risk issues that require timely management attention. Failure to take action could have a high or moderate adverse impact on the Organization.

Management Response

**Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
						requisite language proficiency but nonetheless wishes to clarify that the language challenge for the deployed JOC uniformed personnel will be addressed with the Force and Police components ; (c) an additional vehicle will be provided to JOC.
3	MINUSCA should assign and train focal points in each relevant Mission component on the use of the Unite Aware-Incidents reporting system to support the Joint Operations Centre in providing integrated situational awareness information in a consistent and timely manner.	Important	Yes	COS and CJOC	30 June 2022	The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and COS will communicate with all Section chiefs to nominate section focal points to be trained by JOC. Chief JOC will ensure that the training is conducted on a monthly basis. The use of UAI will be reported to the COS and the SLT.

Management Response

**Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
4	MINUSCA should facilitate the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) in accomplishing its integrated operational coordination and planning responsibilities by: (a) co-locating duty officers from various Mission components; (b) keeping the Chief of JOC adequately informed of decisions by senior leadership in strategic level coordination meetings and outcomes of operational planning activities; and (c) putting in place a matrix to track and monitor the implementation of action points agreed at operational coordination team meetings.	Important	Yes	COS and SLT for a) and b) CJOC for c)	(a) 30 June 2022 (b) 30 November 2021 (c) 30 November 2021	MINUSCA accepts the recommendation. (a) Duty officers of the Military Operations Centre (MOC) and JOC have been co-located in MINUSCA, the Mission will ensure the Police Operations Centre (POC), Security Information and Operation Centre (SIOC) as well as Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC) will be co-located altogether with the MOC and the JOC for an effective coordination by March 2022. (b) The COS will communicate to the Chief JOC on the required actions decided during the SLT meetings. (c)

Management Response

**Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
						The action point matrix is prepared and monitored by JOC.
5	MINUSCA should implement a mechanism to ensure recommendations resulting from table-top exercises and After-Action Reviews are monitored and implemented.	Important	Yes	Best Practices Officer/CJOC	31 December 2021	The COS, the Field Offices Coordinator and the Chief JOC will conduct coordination meetings with all substantive sections, Heads of Offices, Force and Police to prepare the Table-Top Exercise once a year; the After-Action Review recommendations are tracked by CJOC and reported to the COS and the SLT.