

OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTION REF. OI.SECURITY.2018.02

AVIATION SAFETY

1. Authority

- 1.1. This Operational Instruction (OI) is promulgated by the Chief of Security, Executive Office on the basis of a delegation of authority from the Executive Director under OD.ED.2017.01 – Safety and Security of 13 June 2017.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this OI is to clarify the roles and responsibilities on Aviation Safety in line with OD.ED.2017.01 and as outlined by the UN Security Management System Policy on Air Travel. The specific processes describing in detail how to manage Aviation Safety shall be included in the Processes and Quality Management System (PQMS) in section 11.2.

3. Effective Date

- 3.1. This OI shall become effective **immediately**.

[signature redacted]

Arve Skog
Chief of Security, Executive Office,
UNOPS

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1. Introduction:

- 1.1. UNOPS personnel serve in some of the most challenging environments in the world, often working in difficult conditions while conducting their duties. Air transport is the preferred – and often the only – mode of transport available for reaching some of our duty stations.
- 1.2. For the purposes of this OI, the requirements, responsibilities, aviation risks and aviation safety must be considered within the context of the safety and well-being of our personnel in accordance with the policies, procedures, standards and other arrangements of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS).
- 1.3. The objective is to ensure that all UNOPS programme/project implementation and operations are managed in the safest possible way and within the guidance outlined in the UNSMS policy on Air Travel.
- 1.4. The primary Air Travel Focal Point (ATFP) on safety for UNOPS is:

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- 1.5. Notwithstanding the responsibility of Host Governments and the United Nations Security Management System, all personnel also play a role in ensuring their own safety and security and in implementing safe practices with regard to air travel.

2. Purpose:

- 2.1. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide clear guidance to enable the conduct of UNOPS activities, while ensuring the safety, security and well-being of personnel to and throughout UNOPS for official air travel.
- 2.2. This OI should be read in conjunction with all existing UNSMS policies. For UN security policies [click here](#)

3. Applicability:

- 3.1. These guidelines are applicable to all Official Duty Travel arranged and covered by UNOPS via air as defined in the OI on Official Duty Travel.
- 3.2. This policy does not apply to medical evacuations. For guidance on medical evacuations, please refer to PQMS section 7.5.85.

4. Scope of Risk Management:

- 4.1. Aviation risk management is a part of the Security Risk Management (SRM) process meant to identify, assess and manage the safety risks posed to the UN by all air travel.

5. Management: Organisation Rules/Requirements:

- 5.1. All ticketing for UNOPS Personnel on official travel is encouraged to be done by the corporate travel system in place that is validating the ticketing in reference to the UNSMS Air Travel Policy (*Security Policy Manual, Chapter VII, Section B*).

Offices and personnel not purchasing the ticket through CWT must ensure that the airline meets the UNOPS criteria for ticketing per the [Air Travel Policy](#). This should, if in doubt, be confirmed through the local UNDSS office or by contacting the AFTPs.

- 5.2. The process for routine and non-routine ticketing is covered by the OI on Official Duty Travel.
- 5.3. All UNOPS Personnel on official duty travel must comply with the UNSMS policies requiring Security Clearances for travel using the Travel Request Information Process (TRIP) and Security Training. [For TRIP, click here](#).
- 5.4. Security clearance for travel must be obtained by using the Travel Request Information Process (TRIP) prior to any official duty travel.
- 5.5. Offices requiring the use of charter flights to meet specific mission requirements should contact the World Food Programme (WFP) Air Transport Unit or the Department of Field Support (DFS) Air Transport Section (ATS) or alternatively WFP locally, which will provide assistance in accordance with the UN Aviation Standards (AVSTADS), as appropriate.

6. Definitions

RELATING TO THE UNSMS

- 6.1. Air Travel Focal Point (ATFP): Assigned individual(s), acting as the representative(s) of their UNSMS organisation, who is (are) primarily responsible for responding to questions relating to air travel in accordance with the policy and guidelines of his or her organisation.
 - ATFP Terms of Reference (TORs) are included in Annex A to the [Air Travel Policy](#).
- 6.2. Security Professional: Under the *Framework of Accountability* for the UNSMS, the senior-most security professional directly supporting the Designated Official (DO), who can be an agency-assigned professional.
- 6.3. Air Travel Operational Guidelines: Guidelines developed by each UNSMS organisation. These operational guidelines offer specific guidance regarding definitions,

procedures, authorizations and requirements expected in the planning of air travel as it relates specifically to their organisation.

- 6.4. Manager with Signature Authority: The manager entrusted by his or her UNSMS organisation with the authority to weigh the risks associated with air travel against those associated with the delivery of his or her organisation's programme(s), in accordance with the *Framework of Accountability for the UNSMS*.

For UNOPS, the Manager with Signature Authority is the UNOPS designated Security Focal Point as the most senior UNOPS personnel based in the country, the Hub Director or Program/Project Manager.

The ATFP should, if in doubt, be contacted for clarification on the identification of the Manager with the Signature Authorization and/or to discuss specific requirements and/or other considerations prior to taking a decision on the use of airlines covered by paragraph 9.3. and 9.4.

- 6.5. Aviation Risk Management Office (ARMO): An office within the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) that takes a broad, holistic approach to air transport and aviation, with a focus on aviation risks faced by Personnel.
- 6.6. Risk Management Tool (RMT): A structured, holistic and subjective risk assessment process model aligned with the Security Risk Management (SRM) process and used to identify threats and assess specific risks that may affect Personnel and programmes.
- The Risk Management Tool (RMT) and associated processes should only be conducted together with security professionals having demonstrated proficiency in the UNSMS Security Risk Management (SRM) process.
- 6.7. Official Travel (or Official Duty Travel):
Travel as defined by the scope in the OI for Official Duty Travel.

RELATING TO AVIATION

- 6.8. Air Charter Agreement: Air charter agreements refer to a contractual arrangement between an air operator and an organisation employing its aircraft, crew and other necessary personnel for the sole purpose of providing short-term or long-term air transport services.
- 6.9. Commercial Air (Transport) Operator: An operator, with a valid Air Operator Certificate (AOC) issued by the *State of the Operator*, which, for remuneration or hire, provides scheduled or *non-scheduled air transport* services to the public for the carriage of passengers.
- *State of the Operator*: Normally under the direction of a civil aviation authority or equivalent body.
 - *Non-scheduled air transport*: Commonly referred to as an "Air Taxi", does not include passenger charter operators for the purposes of establishing contracted chartered services procured or administrated by air charter agreements. These air operations are covered in the UN Air Travel Policy in paragraph 29 under Section H ("Personnel Travel Facilitated by UN Contracted Air Charter Agreements").
- 6.10. Donated Flight: Air transport offered and provided by an air operator, whether publicly-owned (i.e. State, government) or privately-owned (i.e. corporate, personal), to benefit Personnel in support of humanitarian service, joint mandate and/or other purposes at no cost to the relevant UNSMS organisation.

- 6.11. United Nations Aviation Standards (AVSTADS): Established common aviation standards for chartered humanitarian and peacekeeping air transport operations to facilitate interoperability and that are applicable to UNSMS organizations involved in the provision of air charter agreements.

7. Passenger Related Issues:

- 7.1. All Personnel are expected to comply with the safety requirements and briefings provided by the crew on all air operators.
- 7.2. The number of UNOPS Personnel permitted to travel in one aircraft is as follows;
- i. A maximum of twenty (20) UNOPS personnel may travel on the same aircraft.
 - ii. As a general principle, for the purposes of business continuity only 50 percent of any office management should travel on the same aircraft. For HQ no more than five senior managers at the regional directors/senior directors' level or above should travel on the same aircraft.

In the event that there might be a need to deviate from the above, a request must be forwarded to Deputy Executive Director through ATFP who may in exceptional circumstances approve the travel.

- 7.3. UNOPS personnel that experience any safety and security problems or concerns relating to a specific air operator should first contact their office focal point (often the operations officer or the security officer) who can forward these to the UNOPS ATFPs who, depending on the nature of these concerns will raise these with UNDSS ARMO.

8. Insurance:

- 8.1. Insurance during Air Travel follows the same policies as any other insurance matter related to personnel conducting UNOPS business; please see the intranet overview for medical insurance, insurance for service incurred incidents and insurance of luggage in relations to air travel Insurance

9. Categories of Air Operators and Implications for UNOPS use:

- 9.1. Please note that classifications of airlines following the UNDSS ARMO methodology is available only to the Air Travel Focal Points, offices can be provided with the current classification on a country level and only upon request. In case you use already retrieved list of airlines it is vital that you ensure that this information reflects the situation at the time of the flight.
- 9.2. Unrestricted Use: The air operator meets established safety criteria and is considered suitable for use by Personnel on official travel.
- 9.3. Conditional Use: The air operator is considered suitable for use by Personnel on official travel when an Unrestricted Use air operator is not available. A risk assessment using the RMT, as per the framework established by UNDSS for specific circumstances (e.g., date, city pair and number of travelers), should be conducted to support decision-making for the use of these air operators.

- 9.3.1 Supplemental information shall be provided to clarify the Conditional Use categorization and enable the UNOPS *Air Travel Focal Point* to provide advice regarding suitability for use.
- *Air Travel Focal Point*: As defined in the UNSMS *Security Policy Manual, Chapter VII, Section B, "Air Travel Policy"*.
- 9.3.2 Use of air operators listed as ‘Conditional Use’ requiring a special risk assessment, requires approval by the Manager with Signature Authorization. This is the most senior UNOPS personnel based in the country, the Hub Director or Program Manager. The ATFP should, if in doubt, be contacted for clarification on this and the Manager with the Signature Authorization must discuss any specific requirements and/or other considerations with the ATFP prior to taking a decision on the use of these airlines.
- 9.4. Restricted Use: The decision to use air operators categorised as ‘Restricted Use’ shall be made by the Manager with Signature Authority (see section 5.4) after conducting a thorough risk assessment together with the ATFP as per the framework established by UNDSS for specific circumstances (e.g., date, city pair, number of travellers).
- Use of air operators determined to be ‘Restricted Use’ requires approval by the Manager with Signature Authorization (see section 5.4).
- 9.5. The Decision-Making Authority of the Designated Official (DO) in Exigent Situations: Please note that the authority of the DO overrides the operational role of the Manager with Signature Authority, as aligned with the Security Policy Manual and in accordance with the *Framework of Accountability*, United Nations Security Management System Security Policy Manual, Chapter II, F13. In crisis situations involving contingencies and extraordinary situations, DOs are authorized to approve the use of any commercial air operator in the interest of ensuring staff safety and security.

10. Requirements for Donated Flights:

- 10.1. Donated Flights may include the use of publicly-owned (i.e. State, government, including military aircrafts) or privately-owned (i.e. corporate, personal) aircraft.
- 10.2. The approval for the use of donated aircraft rests with the UNOPS Manager with Signature Authority (see paragraph 6.4.) at the *country level*, in line with programme criticality. Authorization shall be granted after a Donated Flight risk assessment, using the RMT, has been conducted in conjunction with the Air Travel Focal Points, whereby the assessment does not indicate *High Risk or Very High Risk*.
- *Country level*: See *Security Policy Manual, Chapter II, Framework of Accountability, Annex, Section G, para. 5*, which mandates Representatives UNSMS organisations to advise “the Designated Official, Chief Security Adviser and their respective Security Focal Point at Headquarters on the particular concerns of their organization regarding security.”
 - *High Risk or Very High Risk*: The delegation of signature authorization must be stated in the relevant UNSMS organisation’s Air Travel Operational Guidelines.
- 10.3. Should the Donated Flight risk assessment indicate Very High Risk, approval for use by the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security (USG, UNDSS) *shall be required*.

- *Shall be required:* The Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security (USG, UNDSS) may delegate this responsibility at his or her discretion.

10.4. In a *crisis setting*, whereby immediate deployment is required, approval may be granted by USG, UNDSS in lieu of a Donated Flight risk assessment.

- *Crisis setting:* As defined by the Organisation and in line with UNSMS *Security Policy Manual, Chapter IV, Section C, "Guidelines for Determining Acceptable Risk"*.

10.5. The Donated Flight RMT form and instructions is available upon request to the ATFPs.

11. Requirements and Recommendations for Travellers/ Passengers:

11.1. Fly/Don't Fly Decision

Having arrived for a flight, personnel may see something that causes them concern. Personnel are fully authorized and expected to refuse to fly, in any circumstance where:

- It is apparent that usual and typical air travel security standards have been breached;
- Personnel have serious concerns about the general safety of the proposed flight.

These concerns may include, but is not limited to the following:

- The aircraft is clearly overloaded, such as too many passengers for the number of seats or excess baggage and/or freight visible in the cabin;
- There is no seat belt available for the seat;
- The crewmembers seem to be impaired.

If time permits, personnel should confer with their line manager, security officer or ATFP prior to the departure of the proposed flight. A written report should be made, as soon as possible afterwards, to their line manager, with a copy to the ATFP and the UNOPS country Security Focal Point, indicating the deficiencies observed and the action taken by the personnel concerned.

12. Acronyms:

AOC	Air Operator Certificate
ATS	Air Transport Section
ATFP	Air Travel Focal Point
ARMO	Aviation Risk Management Office
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
DFS	Department of Field Support
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DSS	Department of Safety and Security
GA	General Assembly
IASMN	Inter-Agency Security Management Network
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
MAIP	Malicious Acts Insurance Policy
OLA	Office of Legal Affairs
SARPS	Standards and Recommended Practices
TRIP	Travel Request Information Processing
AVSTADS	United Nations Aviation Standards
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNSMS	United Nations Security Management System
WFP	World Food Programme