SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

Standard Administrative and Operating Procedures (SAOP) Part 1 (Users)

UNHAS Ethiopia

WFP
UNHAS
Humanitarian Air Service

OCT 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Aviation plays an important role in humanitarian operations around the world, especially in countries where overland transport is difficult or impossible due to insecurity, damaged or inadequate infrastructure, and challenging climatic conditions. Aviation allows the transport of humanitarian aid workers and humanitarian cargo to communities in some of the world's most inaccessible places.

During the Fifth Session of the United Nations High Level Committee on Management (HLCM) held in New York from 12-13 June 2003, the World Food Programme (WFP) accepted the request of the Committee to take the responsibility for administering air transport services for UN agencies and NGOs involved in humanitarian and "other" activities not directly or specifically for peacekeeping. Thus, effective January 2004, WFP became the managing body of newly established United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS).

The operation of aircraft of any kind is a costly and potentially dangerous undertaking, and it is essential that it is conducted in a safe and cost-effective manner. UNHAS bases its rules and procedures, staff qualification criteria and aircraft chartering procedures on the United Nations Aviation Standards for Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Air Operations (UNAVSTADS). The UNAVSTADS have been developed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) / Department of Field Support (DFS) and the World Food Programme (WFP) with the assistance of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Operating in accordance with these standards does not diminish UNHAS ability to flexibly respond: in challenging and changing contexts, like conflict or disaster, the operational requirements and priorities invariably change over time and the operational response must adapt accordingly. Resultantly, air operations are inherently flexible and can be quickly adapted to meet these new situations and requirements. The operational structure and these procedures must also remain flexible and responsive to new and/or changed needs. To this end, these procedures will remain under constant review and subject to amendment as required.

UNHAS receives permanent support from the WFP Aviation Service in the areas of staff recruitment, funds management, aircraft contracting and fleet management, internal quality assurance evaluations, safety related guidance and aviation training.

1.2 UNHAS ETHIOPIA CONCEPT OF OPERATION

Humanitarian organizations have increasingly come to rely on air assets to provide urgent relief to disaster victims. Particularly so, is when surface transport is difficult or impossible due to insecurity and poor infrastructure. Long lasting protracted emergencies like Ethiopia's refugee camps, also require an ever-higher level of dedicated air support, not only for transportation of humanitarian community to remote and inaccessible locations, but also for delivering of critical supplies. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) managed by the World Food Programme (WFP) provides such vital services to the humanitarian community.

UNHAS Ethiopia has its main operating base in Addis Ababa. Two fixed-wing passenger aircraft (10-seaters C208Bs "Caravans") are utilized to cover the humanitarian air operations within Ethiopia. UNHAS Ethiopia also administratively supports neighbouring UNHAS Somalia, Sudan, Yemen and South-Sudan operations. Services provided include passenger and cargo services, medical and security evacuations, dedicated flights and interagency missions. Additionally, cargo services to individual organizations may be provided.
Emergency evacuations and relocation of staff will be requested through the office of the United Nations Designated Official. Medical evacuations will be covered by the requesting agency on a full cost recovery basis. The operation has an in-built flexibility to cover new and emerging requirements in the area. In this regard, the aircraft location may change to address the needs of the Humanitarian Community. These are under constant review as they are often affected by political, natural and security considerations. UNHAS Ethiopia follows administrative and operating procedures which have been standardized throughout, relying on approved and integrated administration, communication, flight information, ramp, cargo services, medical and security evacuation procedures. This integration has allowed for increased productivity with substantial economies of scale. Professional operating criteria contribute to safe and reliable operations thus allowing all accredited humanitarian organizations to transport their staff and supplies with a minimum of delay and maximum safety.

1.3 ADMINISTRATION OF SAOP

This SAOP has been produced by the UNHAS Chief Air Transport Officer (CATO) using the WFP Aviation Service approved template. The UNHAS CATO is responsible for the contents and update of this SAOP.

Electronic copies of this document will be shared with the relevant UNHAS staff, with the operators' Project Managers, with the WFP Country Director (CD) and with the WFP Aviation Service.

Electronic copies of the sections of this SAOP that are relevant for the customers, will be shared with the User Organizations registered with UNHAS.

The contents of the SAOP is mandatory and applicable to all UNHAS staff, contracted operators and UNHAS passengers.

2. GOVERNANCE

2.1 GENERAL

UNHAS is managed by WFP on behalf of the humanitarian community as a whole. The interests of the humanitarian community are represented by a Steering Committee (SC) and a User Group Committee (UGC). UNHAS is responsible for all aspects of the operation of the aircraft, and keeps the SC and UGC advised of technical, legal, and contractual limitations. It is vital that the UGC, the SC and UNHAS work seamlessly together, whilst remaining strictly within the boundaries of their own competence. In short, the SC and UGC decide on the requirements, and UNHAS decides the "how, who and the when".

2.2 STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee (SC) serves as the UNHAS governing body, providing overall strategic and policy guidance on the following areas:

- *UNHAS operational strategies, administrative policies, and administrative directives detailing eligibility to access the common service;*
- *Use of air transport resources and priority of locations, frequency vis-à-vis utilization;*
- *Review of host government air transport policies vis-à-vis humanitarian air transport requirements and activities;*
- *Funding modalities and advocacy for fundraising for the common service.*

The Steering Committee is chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and co-chaired by the WFP Country Director (CD).

Members of the SC include three representatives each from UN agencies, NGOs, and donors. Each Member is represented by the Head or Deputy of the respective Organization. The Chairperson may invite other stakeholders as deemed necessary.

As per the established SC Terms of Reference (ToR), the minimum number of members required to constitute a quorum comprises two UN members, two NGO members, two donor representatives, the Chair, and one member of the Secretariat (UNHAS).

The SC meets twice a year and whenever the need arises.

2.3 USER GROUP COMMITTEE

The User Group Committee (UGC) is the body representing the registered User Organizations of UNHAS. The UGC serves as the main forum for the User Organizations to promote their interests, indicate their needs and priorities for air movement, seek clarification on operational activities, etc..

Concretely, the duties of the UGC are specified in the below Terms of Reference (ToR) and are limited to administrative and scheduling decisions:

- *Deciding on the destinations to be served;*
- *Ensuring compliance with established procedures for the safe and efficient handling of passengers and cargo;*
- *Ensuring the timely settlement of dues to WFP;*
- *Matters relating to the quality of service;*
- *Projected caseload in order to assist WFP to ensure the timely contracting/release of the appropriate aircraft;*
- *Assist UNHAS with fundraising efforts.*

The User Group Committee is chaired by the UNHAS CATO or his/her delegated person. Members of the UGC include representatives from UN agencies, NGOs, and donors.

The User Group Committee meets quarterly and whenever the need arises.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

3.1 ELIGIBILITY

The UNHAS service is available only to humanitarian agencies or organizations engaged in humanitarian and/or development activities. Notwithstanding the below minimum documentation requirement, UNHAS Ethiopia reserves itself the right to further undertake eligibility vetting control with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) to further confirm the eligibility of the requesting agency to use UNHAS.

Should any new organization wish to be have access to UNHAS, the following documents should be submitted to the service:

- *Standard Terms and Conditions of Service for the provision of United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (Annex 1);*
- *UNHAS Financial Conditions for the Provision of Air Transport Service (Annex 2);*
- *UNHAS Organization Signatory Introduction Form also named Focal Point Assignment Form (Annex 3);*
- *Certificate of registration as humanitarian organization from Ethiopia's Agency for Civil Society Organizations;*
- *Letter from an official bank in Ethiopia confirming that the organization has an active bank account;*
- *Introductory letter from UNOCHA (if applicable, otherwise a UN agency) to confirm the type of Organization's activities is also highly recommended in order to enable UNHAS to rapidly conclude the registration process;*
- *Any other documentation which may support the registration process.*

The eligibility of passengers to travel on UNHAS flights will be the exclusive responsibility of each User Organization submitting a request for travel. UNHAS will consider any request for travel submitted by the designated User Organization's focal point(s) as a valid request from this User Organization. Nevertheless, UNHAS will verify each individual passenger's eligibility to access UNHAS and the relevance to the User Organization which authorized the request.

User Organizations are responsible to ensure that their staff members (passengers) meet UNHAS eligibility criteria: only staff members (passengers) in possession of the User's Organization identification card or an introduction letter (Annex 4) are allowed to travel on UNHAS aircraft.

As stated in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Service for the Provision of United Nations Humanitarian Air Services, UNHAS may be requested by eligible User Organizations to extend the right to use UNHAS services to non-staff members (including government officials and implementing partners) engaged in project(s) implementation. The User Organization shall be responsible for the eligibility of such passengers and for the cost of their transportation.

3.2 OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

UNHAS seeks to accommodate all passengers and light humanitarian cargo requests, however, an established priority system is in place in order to support emergency services and priority needs. As such, the priority system is as follows:

First priority *for the use of the air service is always given to cases of* ***medical evacuation and security relocation*** *along with cargo and personnel required for aircraft safety and operation.*

Second priority *is for* ***staff directly involved in humanitarian activities which are part of an inter-agency mission with schedule/agenda constraints*** *but travelling on UNHAS regular scheduled flights.*

Third priority *is for* ***all regular passenger and light humanitarian cargo transport*** *on a "first come (booked), first served basis". Passengers have priority over cargo, unless cargo is deemed to be of life-saving nature, such as urgently needed medical supplies. Cargo priorities vary depending on the changing humanitarian needs in affected area and are determined by UNHAS, through its User Group Committee (UGC) or any other humanitarian operational coordination body that is validated to prioritize air cargo (such as the Logistics Cluster, the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group – ICCG, etc.).*

Fourth priority *is for* ***special flights****. Special flights refer to flights requested by User Organizations that occur outside of the regular schedule. Examples include charters, high-level missions, donor visits, etc.. Special flights are performed on a full cost recovery model and are subject to the availability of an aircraft.*

3.3 PROVISIONAL FLIGHT SCHEDULE

UNHAS establishes a provisional flight schedule based on the requirements communicated and expressed during the UGC and SC meetings. This flight schedule has an established validity period, adaptable and dependent on humanitarian activities on the ground and the prevailing security situation. The schedule is shared with the User Organizations on a regular basis.

3.4 FIELD FOCAL POINTS

In some locations, often deep-field, UNHAS staff are not always present. In such cases, UNHAS in close coordination with the UGC appoints a Field Focal Point (FFP) and an alternate Field Focal Point, both typically representatives of the main User of the flights to/from the location.

The Field Focal Point (FFP) is responsible for facilitating UNHAS flight operations, according to established Terms of Reference (ToR) shared by UNHAS. The FFP plays a critical role in facilitating UNHAS operations while maintaining an acceptable level of safety and security. Proper measures must be taken in order to perform safe and secure flights.

According to UNHAS regulations, the presence of a Field Focal Point (FFP) is compulsory. ***If no contact on the ground is obtained to confirm safety and security, there can be no flight to the destination.***

3.5 CUSTOMER SERVICE

UNHAS is dedicated to delivering a quality service by professional and friendly staff for all its Users and implementing partners. By continuously striving to meet customer expectations and requirements, UNHAS has designated staff in charge of customer service to ensure a high-level of customer care is maintained and procedures related to Users' rights and responsibilities are aligned to the UNHAS SAOP.

Users are encouraged to contact UNHAS Ethiopia by email should they have concerns, complaints, suggestions, or compliments:

UNHAS Ethiopia Customer Service Centre:

Email: unhas.ethiopia@wfp.org

Moreover, participation in UNHAS surveys and passenger feedback supports UNHAS in improving and raising the standards for increased customer satisfaction.

3.6 COST RECOVERY

As approved by the Steering Committee, UNHAS Ethiopia operates on partial cost recovery basis, generating approximately 25% of its funding requirements from cost recovery (tickets), with the remaining 75% are coming from Donor's contributions.

Passenger, cargo and extra baggage weight costs are charged to UNHAS User Organizations on the basis of actual utilization by each Organization at established rates ($200 per passenger and $2 per kg, per flight). Additionally, full fare is chargeable when there is a No Show or late cancelation made in writing less than 24 business hours prior to the date of flight.

Cancellations of confirmed bookings must be communicated by email, by the Focal Point of the User Organization to UNHAS Ethiopia (unhas.ethiopia@wfp.org), by 10:00 AM on the last working day (three working days for Mekelle) preceding the date of the booked flight. All cancellations after 10:00 am will not be accepted, passenger considered as No Show and the User Organization charged the full fare accordingly.

Special flights provided for the need of one specific User Organization are performed at full cost and are subject to aircraft operational availability.

The cost recovery rate is subject to change if endorsed by the Steering Committee.

3.7 FINANCE PROCEDURES

Once a User Organization's registration process has been completed, the UNHAS Finance Unit in Addis Ababa will create the Organization's customer account. This process may take up to ten working days.

In principle, an initial deposit of minimum $1,000 must be made at the time of the account creation, before UNHAS would allow the newly registered organization to use its flight services.

The UNHAS Finance Unit is responsible for issuing monthly financial statements to the UNHAS Users. These monthly statements are distributed by the 10th day of the following month.

Monthly payments shall be conducted in accordance with 'UNHAS Financial Conditions for the provision of Air Transport Service' (Annex 2). Payment shall be made by bank deposit or bank transfer only to the following account and proof of payment shall by sent to UNHAS (please note that cash deposits are not allowed):

Account Name: WFP Ethiopia
A\C #: 1000003013611
A\C currency: ETB
Name of Bank: Commercial bank of Ethiopia
Name of Branch: ECA Branch

Account Name: WFP Ethiopia
A\C #: 1000009501038
A\C currency: USD
Name of Bank: Commercial bank of Ethiopia
Name of Branch: ECA Branch

All Users must maintain favourable fund balance in the account before submitting booking requests. Users with unfavourable account balance will be restricted from submitting new booking requests until payment is received.

3.7.1 ACCOUNT CLOSURE AND REFUND

Should a User Organization no longer require air services and wish to close their account, the following procedure applies:

- *An initial notification is sent to UNHAS informing of the intent to close the account. The notification must also include a request for an updated balance on the account.*
- *Upon receipt of the account balance, the User Organization decides whether to use the full remaining balance or request a reimbursement.*
- *The User Organization issues a written notification to UNHAS with the decision either to be reimbursed or to use the balance, clearly stating the current balance.*
- *Should the User Organization choose to be reimbursed, the notification must be written on the User Organization official letterhead and include details of the remaining balance, full banking details of the account(s) to which refunds will be credited, contact details, and any additional information required. The account closure and final reimbursement process usually takes a minimum period of one month.*

4. PASSENGER SERVICE

4.1 GENERAL

UNHAS Ethiopia supports passenger and light humanitarian cargo air transport services between its hub Addis Ababa and to locations in Ethiopia, either on regular or on ad-hoc basis.

A weekly provisional flight schedule is in place and shared on a regular basis to UNHAS users as described in Section 3.3. UNHAS operates flights strictly on a "point to point" basis. UNHAS therefore does not offer and cannot facilitate transfer of passengers or their baggage to other flights outside of the UNHAS system. Also, UNHAS assumes no responsibility for making connections and therefore will not be liable for any losses or expenses arising out of any failure to achieve a planned connection.

As per the eligibility requirements (Section 3.1), UNHAS only transports passengers directly involved in humanitarian activities. Notwithstanding the above, UNHAS may be requested by eligible User Organizations to extend the right to use the air service to non-staff members (including government officials and implementing partners) engaged in project(s) implementation.

UNHAS is not permitted to carry passengers who do not fulfil the eligibility requirements, e.g. family members and/or dependents of humanitarian staff, uniformed personnel or individuals wearing military uniforms or camouflage. Lastly, no live animals or pets are accepted on board.

A passenger is only authorized to travel when her/his name is on the passenger manifest. In accordance with ICAO and aviation industry regulations, no passenger will be authorized nor allowed to board an UNHAS aircraft without being properly manifested.

4.2 USER ORGANIZATIONS RESPONSIBILITIES

User Organizations are requested to ensure that passengers booked and authorized to travel on UNHAS have appropriate travel clearances. All required travel documents such as permits/visas and/or security clearances, MoFA clearances, etc., are the sole responsibility of the traveler. Any fines, penalties, payments or expenditures incurred as a result of breach of this requirement shall be paid by the passenger or charged to the respective passenger's User Organization.

User Organizations are responsible to ensure that their staff members (passengers) meet UNHAS eligibility criteria: only staff members (passengers) in possession of the user's identification card or a letter of introduction (Annex 4) are allowed to travel on UNHAS aircraft.

Each passenger is required to provide a proof of identity at the check-in counter and before boarding the aircraft. A proof of identity includes a UNLP or an organization/agency photo identification card. The service may be extended, upon request of a User Organization, to non-staff passengers whose travel is relevant to humanitarian operations. Acceptance of such passengers is subject to the provision of letter of introduction (Annex 4) signed by the Head of the User Organization sponsoring the passenger, and also subject to seat availability. The requesting User Organization is responsible for such passengers and their staff members.

The User Organization and the traveling staff member or sponsored individual are responsible for compliance with UNHAS procedures. Examples of non-compliance include attempting to book an ineligible passenger, impersonating a booked passenger, attempting to bring firearms onto an UNHAS flight, refusing to follow the standard check-in and passenger screening procedures, failing to show a valid agency identification card and/or appropriately signed letter of introduction. In cases where these procedures have been disregarded or not complied with, the UNHAS compliance control system will be applied.

4.3 USER ORGANIZATIONS FOCAL POINTS

Each User Organization is required to have a designated Focal Point, an authorized person who makes booking requests or cancellations on behalf of the organization. Each User Organization is required to complete and submit the Organization Signatory Introduction Form (also called Focal Point Assignment Form - Annex 3) with no more than three (3) Focal Points. The Focal Point(s) must provide UNHAS with full names, titles, specimen signatures, e-mail addresses, and other contact details for record keeping.

4.4 PASSENGER BOOKING, CONFIRMATION AND CANCELLATION PROCEDURE

Each passenger booking request must be submitted online or using the UNHAS Passenger Booking Request Form (Annex 5).

The online booking may be submitted using either of the two links below, 48 hours before the flight:

For Online Bookings – Agent/Customer Login:

UNHASEthiopiaDigitalOffice

Booking Forms must be completed in full, signed and stamped by one of the three pre-notified authorised signatories (User Organization Focal Points). Booking Forms shall be submitted to UNHAS by email to unhas.ethiopia@wfp.org at least 48 hours before the flight but not earlier than one month in advance. Booking requests must include: the full name of the passenger as per her/his organization/agency identification document. This should include middle names where applicable.

A duly signed and approved letter of introduction (Annex 4) shall accompany passenger booking requests for non-staff members. If such booking is done online, the letter of introduction must be uploaded in the booking hub at the time of the booking.

Please note that telephone bookings are not accepted.

A maximum of two (2) bookings per flight may be submitted by the same User Organization. Any additional seats are booked on stand-by basis and allocated subject to space availability. The User Organizations will be advised accordingly for passengers/cargo put on the waiting list. Should there be a special need for additional seats above two per agency, a request in writing with justification shall be submitted to UNHAS at the time of booking. Final decision on additional seats provision is subject to the UNHAS CATO's decision depending on seats availability and operational limitations.

The User Organization focal point will automatically receive the confirmation of his booking submission. However, UNHAS will only confirm the flight two day prior to departure by issuing and sending the E-Tickets to the emails provided on the Organization Signatory Introduction form (Focal Point Assignment form), Passenger Booking Request form and during online booking. E-Tickets are valid only for named person and must not be exchanged or traded. It is the responsibility of the passengers or organization/agency to confirm that the passengers are manifested.

Passenger cancellations are possible no later than 48 hours prior to the departure (10:00 on the second working day preceding the date of the booked flight). This may be done online or communicated in writing to the UNHAS Customer Service Center by the User Organization Focal Point, using the unhas.ethiopia@wfp.org generic address. Late passenger cancellations as well as no-shows are charged according to the full cost recovery rate.

It is the responsibility of the User Organization to provide UNHAS with details of all passengers requiring special assistance, for example, passengers using a wheelchair, visually impaired, etc..

4.5 CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

It is essential that passengers strictly comply with the below check-in procedures in order to maintain punctuality, maximize aircraft utilization, and ultimately ensure safe and secure operations. UNHAS requests all User Organizations and their passengers to follow the instructions from UNHAS staff, agents, and aircraft crew. The following applies:

- *Passengers must carry a valid photo identification card issued by their organization, their ticket, and a letter of introduction (if applicable). Additional documentation requirements from the authorities for flights to/from specific destinations may apply (please contact UNHAS Ethiopia for the latest updated requirements);*
- *Under the responsibility of the User Organization, passengers are required to check-in at airports served by UNHAS latest by the time indicated on their ticket, and in any case no later than one (1) hour prior to the manifested departure time. UNHAS staff have strict instructions not to check-in any passengers arriving after that time;*
- *"Standby" passengers will be allocated seats pending availability and according to their order of priority on the standby list;*
- *At the check-in counter, UNHAS staff will undertake a 100% identity check. Thus, last minute substitutions or passenger swaps are not permissible;*
- *In case of discrepancies with passenger manifests held at the airfield where no WFP/UNHAS staff or their representatives are present, the manifest presented by the Pilot-in-Command (PIC) will be considered as the valid manifest;*
- *Passengers, baggage and cargo are subject to mandatory security screening at the airport of departure. At airports without proper security screening facilities, passenger screening may be conducted using metal detectors and/or a physical search. Baggage/cargo may be inspected manually by UNHAS staff or representatives. UNHAS staff or representatives reserve the right to open and inspect any item or piece of luggage and to accept or reject it for carriage. Passengers who do not comply with these procedures will be denied access to the flight.*
- *In locations where convoys are used to reach the aircraft, passengers are required to liaise with UNHAS or with the designated Field Focal Point for information and guidance regarding established convoy procedures;*

Entry visa fees, security charges, etc. where applicable are to be paid by the individual passenger / User Organization unless agreed otherwise.

4.6 PASSENGER LUGGAGE AND CARRY-ON BAGGAGE

Due to aircraft configuration and performance, the maximum baggage allowance per passenger is twelve (12) kg for flights operated with a C-208B aircraft. This includes checked baggage and hand/carry-on (cabin) luggage. .

Excess luggage must be booked within the same deadlines as passenger bookings using the Excess Weight and Cargo Form (Annex 10) and must be composed of items for personal use only. In the event that the volume or weight of cargo limits carriage of pre-booked cargo, users are required to make their own arrangements for transportation on the next available flight to be determined by UNHAS. UNHAS does not provide storage, handling or transportation services.

UNHAS does not accept any liability for luggage loss or damage, nor responsibility for unsuitably packed, perishable, damaged or fragile luggage, nor for minor damage to the exterior of luggage (scratches, stains, dents etc.). In case of luggage misrouting, UNHAS will take all possible efforts to identify luggage location and return it to the passenger as soon as possible free of charge.

4.7 SPECIAL PASSENGER PROCEDURES

UNHAS staff will provide assistance to passengers with special needs. It is essential that the User Organization's focal point notifies UNHAS of any prospective passenger with special needs at the time of reservation. Discussing, noting, and communicating these requirements to departure and arrival teams will enhance UNHAS's ability to offer services that best meet the passenger's needs. It is important that the Passenger Booking Requests for these categories of passengers indicate in the "remark" section the type of special passengers.

4.7.1 PREGNANT PASSENGERS

Usually, pregnant passengers can travel by air until 36 weeks of pregnancy. However, specific conditions to transport pregnant passengers will be in accordance with the specific air carrier's Operations Manual (OM). Pregnant passengers must show proof of being medically cleared to travel by air.

4.7.2 INFANTS (BABIES UNDER TWO YEARS OLD)

Infant's identity shall be verified at the check-in counter by means of their Birth Certificate (or their ID card if available).

Adults accompanying infants shall show proof that they are authorized guardians for the travel. The infant will not be allocated a seat; however, all infant travellers should be captured on the passenger manifest. Cost recovery will be waived for infants, and specific details for handling infants shall be as stipulated by the specific air carrier OM.

4.7.3 VIP

Where a User Organization considers a passenger as a Very Important Person (VIP), it is important that the User Organization coordinates with UNHAS regarding specific requirements for travel (e.g. VIP lounge).

4.7.4 STAFF FAMILY MEMBER MEDEVAC

- ***Submission of Requests:*** *User organizations may request a medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) for the officially recognized family member of their staff by submitting a Medical Evacuation Request / Authorization Form (Annex 8). This must include a properly completed and signed 'fit to fly' and 'free of contagious disease' statement, which is mandatory for UNHAS to accept the MEDEVAC request.*

- ***Responsibility of the Requesting Organization:*** *The requesting User Organization bears full responsibility for the accuracy of the statements regarding the patient's condition. Additionally, they* are responsible *for arranging transportation of the patient to and from the aircraft at both the departure and arrival airports/airfields.*

- ***Seat Availability and Priority:*** *Requests will be accepted on a seat-availability basis, with priority given to humanitarian staff.*

- ***Sitting Case Only:*** *Medical evacuations on regular flights are limited to sitting cases. If a stretcher is required, the User Organization must request a special flight.*

- ***One-Way Access Only:*** *Eligibility for regular flights does not include a return ticket for the patient.*

- ***Cost Recovery:*** *All medical evacuation flights for staff family members will be charged at a full cost recovery rate of 400 USD.*

- ***Endorsement by UN Doctor:*** *The UNHAS MEDEVAC form must be filled out and endorsed by a UN doctor.*

- ***Agency Head Approval:*** *The head of the requesting agency must approve the MEDEVAC request. An introduction letter, signed and stamped by the head of the organization, must be submitted along with the MEDEVAC form.*

- ***Cost Management:*** *To ensure proper cost management, UNHAS staff must inform UNHAS finance team of the booking details.*

- *Deadline for booking and cancelation remains same as the regular booking procedure.*

- *If the patient requires an accompanying passenger, it must be either the staff member or a recognized medical professional.*

5. CARGO SERVICE

UNHAS Ethiopia offers cargo movement services between all locations included in the provisional flight schedule. It is a service intended for limited quantities of high priority or high value light cargo, bearing in mind that due to capacity limitations, priority is given to passenger movement.

5.1 CRITERIA FOR MOVEMENT OF CARGO

All cargo is to be manifested and entered on a Cargo Manifest. Only cargo meeting the following conditions will be accepted:

- *Cargo is for the sole use of the registered User Organization;*
- *Only cargo booked via a Cargo Movement Request (CMR - Annex 6) and accompanied with the Packing List will be accepted. Cargo not conforming to the description, weight, and volumetric dimensions detailed on the CMR / Packing List will not be accepted;*
- *Poorly packed or poorly labelled cargo will not be transported. The proper packing and labelling of cargo is the responsibility of the User Organization;*
- *Unless cargo cannot be broken down, single packages shall not exceed 30 kg;*
- *All cargo is subject to inspection by UNHAS to ensure compliance with ICAO standards governing safe transport of dangerous goods by air;*
- *The transportation of hazardous materials is standardized by the ICAO "Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air" (Section 5.5). Further information is available on demand from the UNHAS Office. Users are liable for any death, injury, or damage caused by such cargo;*
- *UNHAS requires detailed information on any medical supplies presented for transportation;*
- *Rotten or smelly goods are not allowed on UNHAS flight. Examples include rotten fish or food items that may upset passengers on board.*

Notwithstanding from the fact that UNHAS will arrange maximum possible security for cargo storage and apply safety measures for cargo handling and transportation, neither WFP nor its agents are liable for any loss or damage to cargo or baggage during storage, loading or transportation.

5.2 CARGO BOOKING, CONFIRMATION AND COLLECTION PROCEDURE

According to UNHAS prioritization (Section 3.2), priority is given to passenger and priority cargo movement. As such, UNHAS may transport duly requested cargo within two to five working days from the date of submission unless cargo is deemed to be of life-saving nature, such as urgently needed medical supplies.

The following applies:

- *All requests to airlift cargo must be made to UNHAS three (3) working days in advance via a CMR and accompanied by the Packing List;*
- *The CMR must be completed, signed, and stamped by the Focal Point of the requesting User Organization. The CMR must be sent through email to the UNHAS Booking Office (unhas.ethiopia@wfp.org);*
- *Booking confirmation for cargo can be obtained from the UNHAS Booking Office one (1) working day prior to the flight day;*
- *Cargo booking E-Ticket will be distributed by UNHAS to the User Organization focal points one day before the flight takes place to ensure that User representatives are able to meet the UNHAS aircraft and collect their cargo.*
- *For all confirmed cargo, the querying agency shall appear as shipper on the document and shall identify the consignee, provide particulars of the consignment, and indicate the destination. UNHAS staff can assist in this process, but the responsibility lies with the agency.*
- *All incoming cargo shall be collected from the airport immediately upon arrival.*

UNHAS has a very limited storage capacity and therefore retains the right to reject the cargo if no storage capacity is available.

UNHAS requires the User Organization to deliver the cargo to the airport of departure check-in counter in due time (please check with UNHAS as this time varies with the destinations). The User Organization representative may be required to open the cargo for security screening. The cargo shall be properly re-packed afterwards.

In case of cargo misrouting or loss, UNHAS will make all possible efforts to identify the cargo location and return it to the User Organization as soon as possible, free of charge. Nevertheless, UNHAS does not accept any liability for cargo loss or damage.

All incoming cargo shall be collected from UNHAS immediately upon arrival.

5.3 POUCH SERVICE

In addition to the cargo movement service, UNHAS offers a pouch service to its users on some of its flights. Similar to a diplomatic pouch, the pouch is a light canvas bag that contains items addressed to specific individuals/users. These items are typically official documents and/or small light-weight items, not exceeding three (3) kilograms. The pouch service is not intended for valuables, such as money. Anything in excess of three (3) kg should be sent as cargo, using the CMR procedure, but will be subject to space availability and weight limitations for the particular flight.

The User Organization must ensure that the pouch is properly packed, sealed, and well-marked, indicating both the sender and receiver (including phone number). The pouch must be accompanied by a CMR form issued by the requesting User Organization.

The User Organization representative must drop/collect their pouch from/to airport sign for it. No currency, restricted items and dangerous cargo/solid items/ornaments/etc. are to be placed in the pouches. The User Organizations are not authorised to submit any pouch or correspondence directly to crew members.

5.4 TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS

Dangerous goods are articles or substances capable of posing significant risk to health, safety, or property when transported by air. UNHAS rules, regulations, and procedures are based firmly on the regulations and guidelines issued by ICAO.

In the interest of passenger and crew safety and to prevent damage to the aircraft and/or other cargo, awareness of the risks associated with the transportation of hazardous goods is vital. The information contained in this section is extracted from the ICAO "Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air." The final decision regarding transport of goods remains with the aircraft crew and ultimately, the PIC.

User Organizations wishing to move Dangerous Goods by air using UNHAS must take the following steps before submitting the CMR:

- *Submit the Shipper's Declaration for Dangerous Goods (Annex 7) specifying the type of dangerous goods, plus any available additional information as attachments to the CMR.*
- *Identify any dangerous articles or substances in accordance with ICAO regulations.*
- *Limit the quantity contained in each package to the maximum allowable.*
- *Use the correct type of packaging.*
- *Mark and label each package in accordance with the regulations.*
- *Provide full details of the Dangerous Cargo to the UNHAS booking office.*
- *Inspect each package for damage and/or leakage.*

The following is an abbreviated list of some of the more commonly encountered Dangerous Goods. UNHAS may assist and consult the User Organizations upon request.

- *Fuel is not authorised to be transported as cargo together with passengers.*
- *Cylinders of compressed gas may not be transported by air unless as part of a life-saving oxygen breathing apparatus in certain limited medical circumstances, and then only under the supervision of aero-medical staff.*
- *Camping type stoves, heaters and lamps containing flammable gas and/or liquids, and non-safety matches are prohibited.*
- *Any pressurised cylinder, full or empty. This includes cooking gas cylinders (propane, butane etc.).*
- *Various medical supplies, which may contain dangerous chemicals. Conditions apply.*
- *Pharmaceuticals which may contain dangerous chemicals, such as acids. Conditions apply.*
- *Photographic chemicals (i.e. darkroom chemicals).*
- *Refrigerators of the type containing toxic gases or dangerous liquids. Conditions apply.*
- *Repair kits containing dangerous materials (e.g. cellulose paints, organic peroxides etc.). Conditions apply.*
- *Some medical items for scientific research (e.g. unknown samples for testing may contain dangerous substances (Prohibited unless identified).*
- *Toolboxes as they may contain explosives, compressed flammable gases (e.g. butane cylinders). Conditions apply.*
- *Motor vehicle or generator batteries. Only dry batteries can be accepted. Conditions apply.*
- *Any heat producing devices (e.g. certain battery-operated equipment such as underwater torches and soldering equipment can produce intense heat if accidentally activated).*

The procedures and regulations for the movement of dangerous goods must be strictly adhered to by all personnel involved in shipping dangerous goods and booking it on a UNHAS aircraft. Failure to abide by these restrictions will result in the User Organization being banned from UNHAS.

5.5 TRANSPORTATION OF HUMAN SPECIMEN

Human specimen of less than 5 kg weight may be transported on UNHAS flights, free of charge. No advance booking is required. Specimen boxes over 5kg are considered as cargo, hence regular cargo transportation procedures and fares apply.

Human specimen may fall under Dangerous Goods transportation regulations depending on nature of the specimen, meaning limitations and special packaging provisions shall apply:

- *UN 2814: Category A Infectious Substance. Infectious substances in a form that, when exposure to it occurs, is capable of causing permanent disability, life-threatening or fatal disease in otherwise healthy humans or animals. For example, a blood sample known or reasonably suspected to contain Ebola Virus.*
- *UN 3373: Biological Substance, Category B. The Infectious Substances that do not meet the criteria for inclusion in Category A. For example, a blood sample taken from a patient known or suspected to have category B pathogen, such as Hepatitis B or HIV.*

Exempt Patient Specimens are patient specimens for which there is minimal likelihood that pathogens are present. In determining whether a patient specimen has a minimal likelihood that pathogens are present, an element of professional judgment is required. For example, a specimens other than those known or

reasonably suspected to contain a category A infectious substance e.g. those sent for testing for Cholesterol (blood), diabetes (urine), bowel cancer (faecal), subject to professional judgment is made.

Instances not subject to Dangerous Goods regulations:

- *Substances, which do not contain infectious substances, or substances, which are unlikely to cause disease in humans;*
- *Substances containing micro-organisms, which are non-pathogenic to humans;*
- *Substances in a form that any present pathogens have been neutralized or inactivated such that they no longer pose a health risk;*
- *Dried blood spots, collected by applying a drop of blood onto absorbent material, or faecal occult blood screening tests.*

For UNHAS, such professional judgment is acceptable and sufficient confirmation when done in the form of signed statement by WHO/MSF Doctor. If such statement is done, a specimen is considered falling under the "exempt patient specimens" category, which require minimum special packaging and no additional DG paperwork for crew.

Further guidance on the classification of infectious substances and packaging instructions can be obtained from the national health authority and UNHAS Office.

5.6 TRANSPORTATION OF HUMAN REMAINS

Human Remains may be transported by UNHAS upon request from the User Organization. In the context of this SAOP, transportation of human remains means transportation by air of human remains from the location included into UNHAS provisional flight schedule to the destination determined by the User Organization for further repatriation or hand-over of the body.

The consignee of the coffin and personal belongings of the diseased person is the User Organization, which has to arrange on its own onward body repatriation or hand over to the relatives.

Considering sensitivity of the situation for next-of-kin, human remains transportation shall be done as promptly as possible. In accordance with ICAO SARPs, local authorities of the State of departure shall extend all necessary assistance in the repatriation of human remains to their countries of origin.

UNDSS may provide guidance and all required support / coordination to the concerned User Organization.

Human remains may be transported on dedicated flight only. Considering the type of aircraft used by UNHAS, it is not allowed to transport human remains on a flight together with regular passengers, except for those passengers declared by the concerned User Organization as accompanying the body.

The human remains should be placed in a coffin which complies with the following IATA standards for transportation of human remains by air:

- *The remains must be packed in a hermetically sealed inner containment which may be constructed of a flexible material (body bag) or may be a rigid coffin of lead or zinc to prevent the escape of offensive odours or fluids;*
- *The inner containment must then be packed inside a metal or wooden coffin;*
- *The wooden or metal coffin may be protected from damage by an outer packing and covered by canvas or tarpaulin so that the nature of its content is not apparent;*
- *Un-embalmed remains must be placed inside two sealed body bags;*
- *All shipping containers must be new and cannot be reused;*
- *All human remains shipments must appropriately display the label "head" on the outer container to assist handlers in aircraft loading and offloading operations.*

The following documents shall be provided to UNHAS:

- *Original copy of the Death Certificate;*
- *Original of diseased person's passport (and UNLP if applicable);*
- *Original copy of "Freedom from infection" Certificate;*
- *If death was caused by contagious infection then additional DG transportation requirements may be applicable (as per respective DG Class 6 packaging requirements)*
- *Original Embalming Certificate (if applicable);*
- *Original copy of "Laissez-Passer for human remains";*
- *List of personal effects (and official possessions if any).*

The certificates listed above must be issued/certified by appropriate local public authorities. The copies of all above listed documents should be e-mailed to UNHAS as early as possible.

The User Organization shall deliver the coffin to the aircraft. Airport ramp access for the special vehicles/people has to be coordinated by UNDSS with support of UNHAS coordinator.

The User Organization submitting above mentioned documents must confirm that the coffin only contains the remains of the person named in the relevant documents (and such personal effects as are to be buried or cremated with the human remains).

The User Organization with the assistance of UNHAS will have to liaise with airport immigration/custom authorities for required clearing procedures at the origin point to make sure respective papers and passport have been stamped before flight departure.

Human remains transportation is undertaken in accordance with the applicable conditions set forth in Carriers' regulations for human remains transportation and the final decision will remain on Pilot-in-Command.

Upon aircraft arrival, full set of the original documents accompanying the cargo has to be handed over to the consignee / concerned User Organization.

5.7 TRANSPORTATION OF FIREARMS AND WEAPON

Transportation of firearms and weapons is not permitted on UNHAS flights. Some exceptions may be made for the transportation of VIP who require to be accompanied by a close protection team, subject to prior approvals.

5.8 CARRIAGE OF PLANTS, PLANTS SAMPLES AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS

Carriage of Plants, Plant Samples & Animal Products require authorization from relevant Government Authorities. Please consult UNHAS when booking such cargo.

6. EVACUATIONS BY AIR

6.1 GENERAL PROCEDURES

Two types of evacuations exist in the context of UNHAS operations:

- *Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC);*
- *Security Relocation.*

Some general rules apply to both types of evacuations:

- *Duly requested medical evacuation and security relocation have priority over UNHAS regular schedule;*
- *Requests for medical evacuation and security relocation must be addressed to unhas.ethiopia@wfp.org. In addition, the UNHAS CATO or his/her Deputy can be reached 24 hrs. /day, 7 days/week through phone, e-mail, etc..*
- *Evacuations and relocations can only be undertaken according to prior authorizations, flight rules and restrictions as applicable (i.e. VFR conditions, between sunrise and sunset, etc.). However, this should not prevent any individual or agency from requesting an evacuation or relocation should the need arise.*
- *This procedure is strictly for evacuation or relocation by air. All other means of evacuation or relocation by land and water are outside the scope of this procedure.*

6.2 MEDICAL EVACUATION

A medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) refers to the evacuation of an individual on medical grounds from the field to the closest health center or main operating base. Such an individual is considered to be under medical care; however, she/he is not in danger of losing life, limb, or eyesight but does require further medical treatment that is not available at the field location.

UNHAS aircraft do not carry special equipment to suit medical evacuations, nor are the aircraft crews trained or available to assist with the medical care of a patient during flight. The aircraft is not equipped as an air ambulance. Nevertheless, the aircraft can be configured to accommodate a stretcher.

Should the patient need to be transported together with any form of emergency medical life-saving equipment, all the rules of flight safety and the carriage of dangerous goods shall be observed. Irrespective of the emergency, normal safety standards must be followed and cannot be compromised.

User Organizations may request for a medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) of their staff by submitting a Medical Evacuation Request / Authorization Form (Annex 8) which includes a properly filled and signed 'fit to fly' and 'free of contagious disease' statement that is mandatory for UNHAS to accept the MEDEVAC request. The requesting User Organization is fully responsible for the accuracy of the statements made about the patient's condition. The User Organization is also fully responsible for the patient's transportation to the aircraft at the airport/airfield of departure and from the aircraft upon arrival.

All medical evacuations on UNHAS regular flights are charged the nominal booking fee, whereas medical evacuations requested by a User Organization requiring the deployment of an air asset outside of the regular flight schedule (charter flight) are charged at full cost recovery.

6.3 SECURITY RELOCATION

Security relocations by air will only be approved following consultation with the WFP Country Director and WFP Security. Any such flights will be coordinated by UNHAS in direct collaboration with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) or the NGO Security Forum. The security relocation flight(s) must have a Security Officer on board except for locations where a Security Officer is on the ground or where the security situation has been assessed as acceptable. Such flights have priority over all flights with the exception of medical evacuations.

In all cases, a specific security assessment is performed to assess the level of risk associated with the requested flights. Where there is no Security Risk Assessment (SRA), UNDSS will make a decision based on information obtained from WFP or NGO Security Officers.

All area security relocations sanctioned and requested through UNDSS (or through the NGO Forum Security Officer in coordination with UNDSS) will be charged at the nominal fee per passenger. When there is an aircraft on the ground or there is a scheduled flight in the location, passengers will be charged at the nominal fee. However, security relocation requests by an individual User Organization (charter flight) will be charged at full cost recovery.

7. SPECIAL FLIGHTS

7.1 SPECIAL FLIGHTS

Should a User Organization require a special flight based on a specific need, an official request in writing shall be submitted to UNHAS booking office. UNHAS will provide the User Organization with the feedback containing the operational information about the flight (possible dates, max passenger number and baggage allowance, etc.) and a financial quotation. Once all details have been agreed upon, the User Organization shall submit a duly signed and stamped Charter Request Form (Annex 9).

8. ACRONYMS

CASEVAC	*Security Evacuation/ Relocation*
CATO	*Chief Air Transport Officer*
CMR	*Cargo Movement Request*
DO	*Designated Official*
HCLM	*High Level Committee on Management*
ICAO	*International Civil Aviation Organization*
KG	*Kilogram*
MEDEVAC	*Medical Evacuation*
NGO	*non-governmental organization*
OCHA	*Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs*
PMT	*Performance Management Tool*
PIC	*Pilot-in-Command*
SAOP	*Standard Administrative and Operating Procedures*
SARP	*(ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices*
SC	*Steering Committee (also named "Board of Directors" in some operations)*
UGC	*User Group Committee*
UN	*United Nations*
UNAVSTADS	*United Nations Aviation Standards for peacekeeping and humanitarian air transport operations*
UNDSS	*United Nations Department of Safety and Security*
UNHAS	*United Nations Humanitarian Air Service*
UNLP	*United Nations Laissez-Passer*
USD	*United States Dollar*
VFR	*Visual Flight Rules*
WFP	*World Food Programme*

Thanks to our partners for their recent contributions

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