


BUDGET REVISION OF SO FOR APPROVAL BY THE CHIEF OF STAFF

5) To:	Division	Room	Approval and Date
Mr. Jim Harvey Chief of Staff	OED	6G36	
4) Through:	Division	Room	Signature and Date
Ms. Elisabeth Rasmusson Assistant Executive Director	PG	6G72	
3) Through:	Division	Room	Signature and Date
Mr. Manoj Juneja Assistant Executive Director	RM	6G00	
2) Through:	Division	Room	Signature and Date
Mr. Ramiro Lopes da Silva Assistant Executive Director	OS	6G62	
1) From:	Regional Bureau	Signature and Date	
Mr. David Kaatrud Bangkok Regional Director	RBB-		

SO 200870
Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Afghanistan
BR No. 1

PROJECT	Previous Budget	Revision	New Budget
CD&A (US\$)	13,580,494	14,400,188	27,980,682
DSC (US\$)	1,791,134	1,518,777	3,309,911
ISC (US\$)	1,076,014	1,114,328	2,190,342
Total WFP cost (US\$)	16,447,642	17,033,292	33,480,934
<u>TYPE OF REVISION</u>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Additional DSC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Additional CD&A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Extension in time <input type="checkbox"/> Other			

NATURE OF REVISION:

Budget Revision One (BR 01) seeks to extend Special Operation 200870, 'Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Afghanistan in time for 12 months with a subsequent total budget increase of **US\$17,033,292** to ensure the continued provision of air transport services to the humanitarian community until 31 December 2017. The original budget was approved for **US\$16,447,642** for the period 1 January - 31 December 2016.



BACKGROUND:

1. Afghanistan has suffered nearly thirty-five years of warfare which has inhibited economic development, weakened infrastructure and exhausted the country's coping mechanisms. Natural disasters are a regular occurrence in Afghanistan and given the underlying economic, political and security instability, a large part of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance. External support from the humanitarian community is crucial to the 2.1 million affected people reached in 2016.¹
2. As of 31 October 2016, there are over 1 million people on the move internally and externally across borders in Afghanistan. By the end of the year, a repatriation of 220,000 documented and up to 400,000 undocumented returnees is anticipated². The skyrocket in number of returns is due to a combination of factors, including a drastic deterioration of the protection and political space in Pakistan. This sudden increase is occurring against a backdrop of high levels of continued conflict-induced displacement which resonate with similar patterns in 2015 which recorded the highest level of displacement since 2002.
3. Afghanistan's already weak infrastructure is struggling to host the sudden influx of people. The largest number of returnees are now concentrated in Nangarhar. Classrooms in the province which used to have 30 pupils per teacher are now hosting up to 80 pupils which is far over their capacity³. The Nangarhar Health Department has seen an increase in 15 – 17 percent of out-patient demands at its clinics and regional hospital, and will be expanding to cope with increased needs with ten new mobile health clinics.⁴
4. The security situation at the point of return on the border, Torkham, remains highly volatile. In mid-October, the precarious situation was exacerbated by a serious security incident involving a UN convoy along the Jalalabad – Torkham highway. It was deemed unsafe for humanitarian to travel by road in that area for a period of time. Such incidents highlight the significant role that UNHAS plays in the country by safely delivering humanitarians and their light cargo to project sites.

IMPLEMENTATION TO DATE:

5. UNHAS' support in response to the crisis in the country has allowed the humanitarian community to effectively implement and monitor their projects and scale-up relief activities to assist affected populations. The operational base of the four fixed-wing aircraft is in Afghanistan's capital Kabul, with regular scheduled flights to 25 destinations. From 1 January to 15 November 2016, UNHAS has transported 19,901 passengers and over 54 mt of light cargo on behalf of 147 NGOs, UN agencies and donor and diplomatic organizations.
6. Above figures are despite the aviation fuel crisis generated since mid 2016, when Arrow Petroleum, the UNHAS fuel service provider of JET-A1 stopped delivering fuel in 3 provinces, namely; Bamyan, Kunduz and Faizabad. The company claimed that their subcontractor and local service provider stopped services because the government seized

¹ OCHA, Afghanistan accessed from <http://www.unocha.org/afghanistan> on 21.11.16

² Afghanistan Flash Appeal 2016: One Million People on the Move

³ OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin Afghanistan, Issue 57| 01-31 October 2016

⁴ Ibid



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their assets and declared them bankrupt. This forced UNHAS flights to reduce passenger's payloads trading off for fuel, because aircraft must take all the required fuel from Kabul (round trip), thus taking less passengers. The financial effect/loss due to passengers not being served due to aircraft payload reduction, is estimated in about USD 31,500.00 per week.

After several meetings with the fuel service provider, Arrow Petroleum advised early December that they finally received the Afghanistan Government permission for starting operation to above locations, for which Technical information/Implementation Plan has been submitted to the Afghanistan Presidency of the Airports and it's under evaluation process from Civil Aviation Authority Department.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REVISION:

7. This budget revision is to continue the provision of air services in order to facilitate humanitarian staff travel to various locations in Afghanistan is deemed necessary due to the following factors:

- a. Continuous Need for Humanitarian Assistance

The security environment remains highly volatile, with an upsurge in security incidents in 2016. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) documented 8,400 civilian casualties from January to September 2016 indicating the highest total number of civilian casualties recorded since 2009⁵. Increasing insecurity has also led to a rise in internal displacement with the highest number of conflict incidents by province witnessed in Helmand and Kunduz, and an unprecedented spike in fighting in Baghlan Province. Access to adequate shelter, water, food, and employment opportunities is very limited for people displaced in remote and inaccessible areas of the country. Meanwhile, the number of returnees into the country continues to increase.

- b. Lack of Viable Alternatives

UNHAS remains the only service that provides an extensive air network to the entire humanitarian community in Afghanistan. UNAMA offer some humanitarian air services in the country and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has an air service for its own staff. PACTEC, which used to provide air services for aid organizations in the country, discontinued this service during the course of 2015. UNHAS is therefore the only air service for the larger humanitarian community in Afghanistan offering domestic flights that are approved by the UN Department on Safety and Security (UNDSS) and are considered compliant with international aviation safety standards. As a result, more aid workers are now using UNHAS, increasing the passenger demand by more than 5,000 passengers per year. UNHAS supports the implementation and monitoring of humanitarian actions and the service is widely used by NGOs, foreign diplomats and UN employees to travel around the country, as well as to Islamabad in neighbouring Pakistan when required.

- c. Continued Demand

Access constraints due to inhospitable terrain continues to hamper the humanitarian response in Afghanistan. Remote and mountainous areas can neither be accessed by road nor by fixed-wing aircraft. Furthermore, extreme weather conditions characterise the

⁵ OCHA, Afghanistan accessed from <http://www.unocha.org/afghanistan> on 21.11.16



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country's seasons. Frontal winds often bring large sandstorms or dust storms, while the strong solar heating of the ground raises large local whirlwinds. All these factors require a robust aviation structure such as the one provided through UNHAS to ensure reliable access for humanitarians into all affected areas. The continuation of UNHAS activities in Afghanistan in 2017 has been requested by the UNHAS User Group Committee (UGC) in three meetings held this year, as well as expressed during three Steering Group Committee (SGC) meetings. The extension of relief activities across the country into 2017 was highlighted in a Passenger Satisfaction Survey conducted in October, along with a Provision of Access Survey. Another of both such needs assessment surveys are scheduled for December 2016.

8. User Group Committee (UGC) and other stakeholder meetings will continue to be organized on a regular basis. In addition, UNHAS will continue to implement customer satisfaction and access provision surveys to ensure a user driven service, aligned with the needs of the humanitarian community.
9. The budget revision will enable UNHAS to continue operations in Afghanistan in line with the following SO project objectives:
 - To provide United Nations agencies, NGOs, donors organizations and diplomatic missions safe, effective and efficient access to beneficiaries and project implementation sites;
 - To transport light cargo such as medical supplies, and light and high value equipment, information and communications technology equipment; and
 - To provide adequate capacity for evacuations of humanitarian staff.
10. The key performance indicators for this operation have been revised and, now, include the following 2017 targets:
 - Number of Needs Assessments carried out (target:4);
 - Number of passengers transported (target: 24,000);
 - Percentage of passenger bookings served (target: 95%)⁶;
 - Amount of light cargo transported yearly (target: 72,000 kg);
 - Response to medical and security evacuations duly requested (target: 100%);
 - Number of organizations using the service (target:160);
 - Locations served (target: 25).
11. The operation will be constantly review and tailored to the changing needs of the humanitarian community.

RECOMMENDATION:

In light of the above, this budget revision for an extension in time for twelve months until 31 December 2017 with a subsequent budget increase of **US\$17,033,292** is recommended for approval by the Chief of Staff, with the budget provided.

⁶ This does not include unserved bookings due to flight cancellations resulting from bad weather or insecurity