

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

ECHO FLIGHT

0. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIP

Fourth modification 12/12/2013

Since 5 December 2013, heavy fighting between armed groups take place in Bangui, but also in several cities of the country leading to a further deterioration of the humanitarian situation and causing important movements of population.

Having regard the sudden and increased need for humanitarian response in the Central African Republic and the interruption of commercial flights, DG ECHO took the decision to establish an air capacity between Douala and Bangui.

In order to cover the costs of Douala – Bangui air bridge until the end of December 2013, the total amount of this HIP shall be increased from 11 600 000 EUR to 12 050 000 EUR (see revised section 5.2).

Third modification 20/11/2013

In Mali, due to the intensification of security incidents on roads between the capital and regional cities, there is an increase in air transport needs, especially between the main cities of the 3 north regions.

In addition to the UNHAS flights, and given the urgency of the situation, DG ECHO recommends the extension of the ECHO Flight project to be able to facilitate access to humanitarian actors in northern Mali.

An ECHO Flight aircraft is going to operate from 1st January 2014 for a duration of 4 months. 70 flying hours per month are planned as well as the opening of an ECHO Flight base either in Mopti or Gao.

To address these new and unforeseen needs, it is necessary to increase the amount of this HIP from 11 000 000 EUR to 11 600 000 EUR (see revised section 5.2).

Second modification 14/11/2013

In Chad, ASF-B will, for the time being, stop its operations at the end of the year. 21 DG ECHO Partners were using the service.

UNHAS is unable to cover the unmet needs in areas left by ASF-B (in particular the west of the country). Moreover, ICRC is also stopping its air operation in Eastern Chad.

In this context, to overcome the discontinuation of ASF-B service, DG ECHO has decided the temporary extension of ECHO Flight project in Chad. An ECHO Flight aircraft is going to operate from 1 January 2014 for a period of 4 months.

60 flying hours by months are foreseen as well as the opening of an ECHO Flight base.

To address these new and unforeseen needs, it is necessary to increase the amount of this HIP from 10 500 000 EUR to 11 000 000 EUR (see revised section 5.2).

First modification 05/08/2013

In North East Kenya, the flight requests from DG ECHO¹ partners have increased. While the DG ECHO funding to the area has not been significantly modified (except for the Daadab refugee camp) the NGO consortia is being funded, consequently increasing the number of partners. Thus the current ECHO Flight schedule is no longer sufficient to respond to the growing number of requests.

In North West Kenya, the DG ECHO funding for resilience, DRR and the Kahuma refugee camp, together with the support to development actors complementary to DG ECHO, imply an increase in the number of flights in the area.

In Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), namely in the Kivus, there are new DG ECHO funded actions and a recurrent humanitarian crisis in North Kivu. In the West, DG ECHO partners, namely UNHCR – the UN Refugee Agency, assist the displaced populations following the Central African Republic crisis. ECHO Flight is regularly asked to support the humanitarian response.

There is a need to increase the extra-costs which are dedicated to respond to emergencies like medical or security evacuations, and to cover those special requests outside the established timetable. Such costs are also used for sudden crisis that imply additional personnel and humanitarian cargo needs. It is also essential to ensure the ECHO Flight capacity to intervene in case of emergency in other areas of the region to perform evacuations or transport humanitarian cargo.

In order to maintain the level of services (frequencies and destinations) provided to DG ECHO partners, the amount of this HIP has to be scaled up from EUR 10,000,000 to EUR 10,500,000.

1. CONTEXT

ECHO Flight is a vital service for most humanitarian partner organisations operating in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region, as it would simply not be possible to implement many humanitarian projects without this service. ECHO Flight aims to open up humanitarian access by providing safe, reliable, efficient and cost-effective humanitarian air transport services to remote locations that would otherwise be cut off from the rest of the world.

The ECHO Flight action is implemented on the basis of a service contract. In 2009 a call for tenders was launched in order to renew the DG ECHO flight operator. The contract holder until April 2014 is DAC Aviation International Ltd.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo** (DRC) there are no regular, safe and reliable links, either by air or overland, between major population centres such as Goma, Bunia

¹ Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO)

and Kinshasa or between the many remote destinations, particularly in North and South Kivu, Province Orientale, Maniema, Equateur, Katanga and Kasai.

In **northern Kenya**, ECHO Flight serves remote destinations that are not easily accessible and are not covered by commercial providers or where road access is unsafe. ECHO Flight also contributes to humanitarian projects along the Ethiopian and Somali borders via the destinations operated in Kenya.

ECHO Flight operates the following priorities for Passengers and freight:

1. Humanitarian projects funded by the European Commission.
2. Humanitarian projects funded by other donors, or development projects funded by the European Commission.
3. Development projects funded by other donors

ECHO Flight's limited scale (four planes; targeted geographic scope) and relative flexibility allow it to respond promptly to emergencies such as medical evacuations, security evacuations, or larger-scale requirements. ECHO Flight could be extended as and when required to other regions of Africa if substantial needs for safe, reliable and cost-effective humanitarian air transport were identified.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

ECHO Flight directly supports around 200 emergency projects in DRC and 90 in northern Kenya. ECHO Flight Kenya travels to the Somali border, thus allowing humanitarian aid workers to also access Somalia. ECHO Flight transports on average more than 1,500 passengers and 25 tonnes of freight per month.

Although the priority is to support DG ECHO funded humanitarian programmes (65% on average of our effort in 2012), other humanitarian and development projects, which are not funded by DG ECHO benefit from ECHO Flight and this enhances the LRRD process.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

ECHO Flight facilitates partners' humanitarian response and improves the quality of humanitarian operations by enabling access to cut-off areas, and allowing more frequent monitoring and evaluation missions. Field staff productivity is increased because rotations can be organised to enable staff to rest and recuperate on a regular basis. ECHO Flight also enables humanitarian organisations to reduce their supplies at field sites, which are often exposed to the risk of confiscation or pillage by armed groups or local militias. Moreover, the capacity to carry out emergency evacuations by air is for many organisations a prerequisite for the continued implementation of their projects.

The organisation of ECHO Flight's services, particularly the choice of destinations, is based on practical humanitarian air transport needs. ECHO Flight's basic operational principle is to provide safe and reliable humanitarian air transport services, properly coordinated with other such services, where they exist, and as far as possible to avoid competing with commercial airlines operating according to equivalent standards.

The service contract with DAC Aviation International Ltd. started on 1st May 2010 and can be extended 3 times for one year. It covers mainly DRC and Kenya, with the

possibility of extension to include other areas of sub-Saharan Africa. DAC has operated ECHO Flight since May 2006 under the close surveillance of DG ECHO to ensure a professional service complying with strict safety and security rules.

ECHO Flight currently uses a fleet of four aircraft: three in DRC and one in Kenya. One medium-sized passenger/cargo aircraft currently serves locations in Equateur, Ituri, Province Orientale and serves as a link between the main centres of Goma, Kinshasa and Bunia. The smaller aircraft links the main centres in DRC with short and difficult airstrips in Maniema, South and North Kivu and the Province Orientale. A second medium-sized aircraft is used for flights within Kenya and serves the north of the country, its main destinations being Mandera, Dadaab, Lodwar, Turkana and intermediary stops serving humanitarian projects. A medium-sized passenger/cargo aircraft, available upon request, provides surge capacity.

The fleet capacity is as follows:

Aircraft	Quantity	Maximum Passenger capacity per flights*
DHC8/100 (Dash 100) E1 in Congo	1	37
C208 (Caravan) E3 and E4 in Congo	2	20
Sub-total DRC/RoC	3	57
DHC8/100 (Dash 100) E2 in Kenya	1	37
Grand Total	4	94

**The planes' maximum capacity is often reduced depending on scheduled itinerary, airfields quality, and climate.*

In addition to aircraft, the operator has set up bases for managing the service in locations which are essential for operations (Goma, Bunia, Kinshasa, and Nairobi). This enables the operator to perform all the tasks involved in running an air support service, including operational management, reservations for passengers and goods and maintenance operations.

An emergency standby service is available 24/7 in Goma and Nairobi.

4. COORDINATION

ECHO Flight will continue to enhance possible synergies with other humanitarian air service providers, notably in DRC and Kenya. As fixed air-wing aircraft of the type available to ECHO Flight, cannot reach areas without a landing strip, DG ECHO started funding in 2012 a helicopter service in Eastern DRC which is complementary to ECHO Flight.

In DRC, UNHAS² manages several aircraft whose schedules are fully complementary with those of ECHO Flight. The United Nations Mission in DRC (MONUSCO) has a large fleet of aircraft, but these are principally for military and political use. The

² United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)
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International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) charters 2 aircraft and implements compatible safety rules. These are dedicated to implementing ICRC and MSF projects.

Humanitarian Air Services are managed by UNHAS for UNHCR³ and provide air transport to the refugee camps in Kenya. UNHAS is present in Somalia and is thinking of starting an operation in Kenya. An air service called EC flight managed by the European Union Delegation is operating two aircrafts from Nairobi serving mainly destinations in Somalia.

5. OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL DETAILS

The provisions of the financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2013/01000 shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

5.1. Contacts

Operational Unit in charge: ECHO/B/2 - Central Africa, Sudan and South Sudan.

Contact at HQ level

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Contact in the Field

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5.2. Financial info

Indicative Allocation: 12 050 000 EUR

Transport/Logistic: Hum. Aid: 12 050 000 EUR

5.3. Proposal assessment

Not applicable.

³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)