Meeting Minutes, 9 November 2021
Juba, South Sudan

LOCATION
Juba, online

DATE
9 November 2021

CHAIR
Logistics Cluster

PARTICIPANTS
Alight, Carter Center, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Concern Worldwide, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Medical Corps (IMC), Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Médecins Sans Frontières France, Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF), Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH), Relief International (RI), Save the Children, Tearfund, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), World Health Organization (WHO), World Vision International (WVI)

ACTION POINTS
• Airfield Focal Points (AFPs) who have not completed the UNHAS-provided AFP training should contact unhas.southsudan@wfp.org.
• Logistics Cluster to share notifications for rotations on Monday.

AGENDA
1. Air Operations Basics
2. Process & Responsibilities
3. Prioritisation of Requests
4. AOB/Discussion

1. Air Operations Basics

• The Logistics Cluster reminded participants of the difference between the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) and Logistics Cluster air transport. While UNHAS is for passenger and light cargo transport, the Logistics Cluster facilitates cargo transport only, on a free-to-user basis. Flight plans for the Logistics Cluster air assets are determined on a daily basis according to needs/requests.
• Requests for Logistics Cluster air cargo transport services can be made by submitting a Service Request Form (SRF) to southsudan.clustercargo@wfp.org.
• The Logistics Cluster air fleet currently consists of two fixed wing aircraft based in Juba, and two helicopters based in Bor, of which one is contracted temporarily until January to support the flood response. The Cluster can support on an ad hoc basis from Rumbek using the Bor-based helicopter.
• Air operations are generally reserved for locations not reachable by road or river, rapid missions/emergencies, or extreme life-saving priorities. The air operations cannot be expanded further due to budget constraints.

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The Logistics Cluster retains the right to remain flexible in its operations to ensure maximum efficiency.

Partners should note that the Logistics Cluster determines the most efficient modality, aircraft, and dispatch location for each cargo request. Furthermore, cargo from multiple organisations can be combined on the same aircraft to maximise payload.

The Logistics Cluster does not fly cargo to locations served by commercial options. Explosives, non-collapsible jerry cans, and items with dimensions larger than the aircraft cannot be transported.

2. Process & Responsibilities

The Logistics Cluster explained the process from the stage of SRF submission to the moment that the cargo is received at destination.

The Logistics Cluster strives to respond within 24 hours to service requests during weekdays, shares up-to-date information and transport notifications, publishes transport schedules such as the Weekly Transport Plan, obtains Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JVMM) clearances for special commodities, and transports the cargo from Logistics Cluster common storage to the aircraft.

It is the partner’s responsibility to submit an accurate SRF, pre-position the cargo at the correct location, follow packaging and dangerous goods guidelines, obtain and share the necessary clearances, and support the offloading of the cargo and provide the last mile transport. Organisations are also requested to remain flexible and available to receive cargo, as flights can change last-minute, particularly during the rainy season.

Airfield Focal Point Responsibilities

UNHAS elaborated on the responsibilities of Airfield Focal Points (AFPs), which are critical to perform safe and secure flights. Organisations are responsible for ensuring an AFP is available at destination to fulfil the required tasks.

One day before the scheduled flights, focal points will receive the cargo flight manifest. AFPs should inform the local authorities and other counterparts about the planned rotations and ask for their support.

On the day of the flight, AFPs are to share weather, airstrip condition, and security updates with the UNHAS radio room before 7:30 AM. If any changes to the situation occur after submitting the report and before the flight arrives, these should be reported immediately.

A focal point should be present at least 30-40 minutes before the ETA and wear a reflective jacket. The airstrip should be checked and cleared from people, vehicles, animals, and debris before the flight arrival. Local authorities and other counterparts should again be kept informed on the flight arrival.

Organisations lacking reflective jackets can request support from UNHAS by contacting unhas.southsudan@wfp.org.

During landing and take-off, AFPs should ensure a secure landing zone perimeter, prevent people from nearing the aircraft, and always follow the instructions of crew members. It is expected that focal points assist in the cargo handling.
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- If issues arise, UNHAS or the Logistics Cluster are to be contacted immediately. Contact details for the UNHAS radio room are shared by email together with the flight notification.
- AFPs who have not completed the UNHAS-provided AFP training should contact unhas.southsudan@wfp.org.

Packaging Guidelines

- The Logistics Cluster reminded participants that it is the organisation’s responsibility to package their cargo properly and in a way that it can sustain handling at warehouse, loading and offloading.
- Dos and don’ts for packaging were shared; the documentation can be found here.

Flight Cancellations

- The Logistics Cluster shared the most common reasons for flight cancellations. These include inaccurate weather reports or a complete lack of reporting from the AFP, bad weather, or adverse airstrip conditions. Other reasons can be technical or crew issues, inability to meet the cut-off time, or security challenges.

3. Prioritisation of Requests

- It was reiterated that the Logistics Cluster does not prioritise cargo, locations, or organisations. To determine which location to serve first, the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) prioritisation system is adhered to, with locations for a response scale-up agreed to by all clusters.
- Organisations can request for a location to be added to the priorities through their respective cluster. The Cluster Coordinator, if in agreement, can then raise it at the Needs Analysis Working Group meeting, which formulates recommendations to the ICCG.
- The Logistics Cluster serves non-priority locations too, however, these are served after priority locations.
- Even if a location is an ICCG priority location, the Logistics Cluster will still serve it in the most efficient way. This can be road or river transport.
- The procedure for requesting priority and non-priority cargo requests is the same, and the Logistics Cluster will determine transport modality after receiving the request.
- For emergencies, organisations are advised to indicate the quantities immediately required so that the Logistics Cluster can consider airlifting the most urgent cargo.

Priority Locations

- The updated list of ICCG priority locations is as follows:
  - Reachable by air:
    - GPAA – Pibor;
    - Jonglei - Duk;
    - Jonglei - Twic East;
    - Jonglei – Ayod – Ayod Town (other locations in Ayod reachable by river);
    - Upper Nile – Maiwut.
  - Reachable by road:

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Central Equatoria – Juba;
Lakes – Yirol West;
NBeG - Aweil South;
Warrap - Tonj East;
Warrap - Tonj South;
Warrap - Tonj North;
Western Equatoria – Yambio, Ezio, Tambura, Nagero, Nzara;
Unity – Rubkona.

- Reachable by river:
  - Jonglei – Akobo;
  - Jonglei – Ayod;
  - Jonglei – Canal/Pigi;
  - Jonglei – Fangak;
  - Unity – Panyijar.

- Ganylel and Nyal in Panyijar county are served by river but critical cargo may be supported by airlift from Bor.

4. AOB/Discussion

- The challenge of receiving flight notifications over the weekend for rotations scheduled for Monday was raised. The Logistics Cluster will endeavour to send updates on Fridays going forward.
- One partner shared feedback on the importance of timely notification in case of flight cancellations due to the focal points waiting at the airstrip. UNHAS is currently working on the procedures and compliance to improve this area.

The next coordination meeting will take place online on Tuesday 7 December at 14:00.

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