

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

ECHO Flight

AMOUNT : EUR 12 302 500

The present Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) was prepared on the basis of financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2019/01000 (Worldwide Decision) and the related General Guidelines for Operational Priorities on Humanitarian Aid (Operational Priorities). The purpose of the HIP and its annex is to serve as a communication tool for DG ECHO's¹ partners and to assist in the preparation of their proposals. The provisions of the Worldwide Decision (WWD) and the General Conditions of the contracts concluded with the European Commission shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

0. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIP

The initial amount of the 2019 ECHO Flight HIP was EUR 14 800 000. A service contract amounting to EUR 12.4 million was signed on 02/05/2019 with DAC Aviation to operate the ECHO Flight project. The contract is financed by the ECHO Flight HIP 2018 (EUR 97 500) and this current ECHO Flight HIP 2019 (EUR 12 302 500).

The contract covers aerial transport needs for a 10-month period. The amount of the contract includes a budget reserve of EUR 1 171 890 to cover additional flights beyond the flight schedule and/or cover the operational needs for one additional month. The operation started on the 20/05/2019 and will finish at the earliest on 20 March 2020.

As: 1) a budget to cover ECHO Flight air transport needs is already foreseen in the 2020 WWD; 2) the ongoing operation is covered with currently allocated funds well into 2020; and 3) there are other urgent humanitarian needs to be covered before the end of the year, it is appropriate to reduce the amount of the ECHO Flight HIP 2019 and return the corresponding budget to the DG ECHO humanitarian aid operational reserve.

In light of the above, the ECHO Flight HIP 2019 is amended as follows:

- (1) The HIP amount is reduced to EUR 12 302 500, and:
- (2) EUR 2 497 500 is therefore de-committed and returned to the operational reserve.

¹ Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

1. CONTEXT

ECHO Flight provides an important and essential service for humanitarian partner organizations in regions of sub Saharan Africa where it would not be possible to implement humanitarian projects without dedicated air transport support. ECHO Flight aims to open up humanitarian access by providing safe, reliable and cost efficient 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 framework contract resulting from an international call for tenders. A new framework contract was signed on 8 March 2018. The duration of this framework contract is four years. Individual requests for service (or "order forms") are issued each year to cover the needs during the next 12 month period.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), there are no regular, safe or reliable links either by air or overland between a number of major population centres such as Goma, Bunia, Kalémie, Kananga and Kinshasa or to many remote destinations, particularly in North and South Kivu, Province Orientale, Maniema, Equateur, Ituri, Haut Uele, Tanganyika, Haut Katanga, Haut Lomani, Lomani, Maniema, Tshopo, Tshuapa and Kasai.

In Northern Kenya, Uganda and Mali, ECHO Flight serves remote field destinations that are not easily accessible and are not covered by reliable commercial air operators or where road access is deemed unsafe due to the security situation.

ECHO Flight through its Kenya based operation contributes to humanitarian projects along the Ethiopian and Somali borders via destinations operated within Kenya and is available for monitoring missions in Somalia and ad hoc flights in the neighboring countries of South Sudan and Central African Republic.

Due to the humanitarian situation in Northern Uganda and the support provided by DG ECHO and the European Union, a weekly flight to Arua and Adjumani operates since 2017.

ECHO Flight's current scale (at present, six planes operating in specific countries of operations) and flexibility allows it to respond promptly also to small humanitarian emergencies, medical evacuations and security evacuations. It has been the case for instance in DRC in 2018 where ECHO Flight has provide support for the response of humanitarian partners and international organizations to two Ebola crises. ECHO Flight can scale up to meet requirements, when additional needs for dedicated, safe and cost-effective air transport in support of EU funded humanitarian projects are identified in existing or new operational contexts.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

1) Affected people/ potential beneficiaries:

ECHO Flight directly serves the staff of various implementing agencies in the regions where the service is offered and indirectly benefits the population

targeted by humanitarian as well as development programmes funded by the European Union and other donors. Several million people in need of assistance benefit indirectly from the programme.

In DRC, agencies are faced with major challenges in terms of security and logistics as well as the poor state and/or a lack of infrastructure. In particular, there are regularly incidents against humanitarian aid workers, including abductions. The situation in North and South Kivu, Tanganyika, Haut Katanga, Ituri and Haut Uele Province and in the Kasai provinces presents particular risks due to the upsurge of new conflict situations, an increase of criminality, activities of rebel groups and armed combat.

In Uganda, DG ECHO is responding to the humanitarian needs triggered by the large influx of South Sudanese refugees. The scale of the response requires a wide presence of humanitarian actors. ECHO flight contributes to an effective response by facilitating access to the affected areas in West Nile locations. By providing a flight service, it also limits road safety risks taken by partners implementing the response.

The security situation is also of concern in Kenya in particular on the roads and border regions with Somalia, Ethiopia and South Sudan. In Northern Kenya, the main destination is Kakuma where a very large camp hosts South Sudanese refugees and where many DG ECHO partners are providing assistance. Dadaab is the second most important destination for humanitarian flights, where another large refugee camp is located. Two flights per month are also foreseen to Somalia to ensure the adequate monitoring of DG ECHO-funded projects.

In Mali, overland transport and movements are extremely unsafe or even impossible due to poor infrastructure and floods during the rainy season. The security situation has been steadily deteriorating. Air transport is therefore the only viable solution to reach some of the regions where EU-funded humanitarian projects are implemented. DG ECHO support to the population of Northern Mali is significant. Access to peripheral locations in the northern regions is problematic for humanitarian actors. Therefore, there is a strong demand for ECHO Flight support.

Given the tensions and insecurity across the region and the critical situation in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, there would seem to be little prospect of humanitarian and security improvements in the near future. In 2019, it is assessed that ECHO Flight services will need to be maintained at least at the same level as in 2018. New destinations may also be considered in cases where humanitarian partners can ensure the rehabilitation of some airstrips.

2) Description of the most acute humanitarian needs

ECHO Flight directly supports between 300 and 350 projects in the DRC, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and Mali. ECHO Flight transports over 2,100 passengers and 15 tonnes of cargo per month.

The priority is to support firstly EU-funded humanitarian projects, secondly EU-funded development programmes and other humanitarian projects. As a third priority, development projects that are not funded by the EU may also avail of ECHO Flight services, as this enhances the LRRD² and humanitarian-development nexus process.

During 2017, 76% of the passengers and 92% of the cargo transported related to EU-funded projects.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

1) National / local response and involvement

For the most part, there are no local commercial air operators flying the destinations served by ECHO Flight and when existing, reliability and safety are a serious concern. ECHO Flight and other similar humanitarian air services serve regions where local air transport service is very limited or does not exist.

2) International Humanitarian Response

In DRC, Kenya, Somalia and Mali, UNHAS³ offers humanitarian air services. Due to its specific mandate and associated limitations, choice of aircraft and financial constraints, UNHAS does not cover all the needs and/or regions/destinations where humanitarian projects funded by the EU are implemented. In addition, an air service called EU Flight managed by the European Union Delegation in Kenya operates two aircrafts from Nairobi, serving main hub destinations in Somalia.

In DRC, UNHAS manages several aircraft whose schedules complement the schedule of ECHO Flight. MONUSCO⁴ has a large aircraft fleet, but these are only tasked to serve military and political missions. ICRC⁵ charters two aircraft in direct support only of ICRC and MSF⁶ projects. UNHAS, ICRC and ECHO Flight air services comply with the highest aviation safety and quality standards required to operate in challenging humanitarian flight contexts.

In Kenya, UNHAS provides air transport to the refugee camps in Dadaab and Kakuma with a certain number of seats reserved on each flight for UNHCR⁷. UNHAS capacity is not sufficient to cover all the requirements of the humanitarian community. UNHAS is also present in Somalia. UNHAS and ECHO Flight schedules complement each other in order to offer a wider number of options to humanitarian actors.

² Linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD).

³ United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS).

⁴ United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo.

⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross.

⁶ Médecins Sans Frontières - Belgique

⁷ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In Mali, UNHAS has two aircraft based in Bamako, serving only the main field destinations (Bamako, Timbuktu, Gao and Mopti). ECHO Flight provides air links to remote destinations not covered by UNHAS.

3) Constraints and DG ECHO response capacity

The main constraints are linked to the remoteness of ECHO Flight's destinations, tropical weather, security and fuel availability. However, the service has demonstrated the flexibility required to adapt and react to the various situations and emergencies it has to face.

The organization of ECHO Flight's services, particularly the choice of destinations, is based on confirmed humanitarian air transport needs. ECHO Flight's basic operational principle is to provide flexible, safe and reliable humanitarian air transport services, which are well coordinated with other humanitarian air services. It is the policy of ECHO Flight to avoid competing or substituting local commercial air services.

ECHO Flight currently uses a fleet of six aircraft: three in DRC, one in Kenya and two in Mali.

- ⇒ In DRC, one medium-sized passenger/cargo aircraft (37 seats) currently serves locations in Tanganyika, Haut Katanga, Ituri, North and South Kivu and Kasai, and connects the primary operational hubs of Goma, Bukavu and Kinshasa. Once a week, it connects Entebbe to Arua and Adjumani in Uganda. Two small-sized aircrafts (11 seats) link secondary satellite destinations in DRC with short and difficult airstrips in Maniema, South and North Kivu and Tanganyika and Haut Katanga Provinces. During the two Ebola crises in DRC in 2018, ECHO Flight provided additional flights to transport medical personnel, medical supplies and equipment to Ebola-affected area (Mbandaka in Equateur Province and Beni in North Kivu).
- ⇒ In Kenya, a second medium-sized aircraft is used for flights within Kenya and serves the north of the country; its main destinations are Mandera, Kakuma, Dadaab, Lodwar, Wajir and intermediary stops serving humanitarian projects. The same plane ensures monthly DG ECHO's monitoring missions to Somalia.
- ⇒ In Mali, two small-sized aircrafts serve destinations from Mopti to remote field destination in the North and include the capital city, Bamako, once a week.

The fleet capacity is as follows:

Aircraft	Call sign	Country/basis	Passenger capacity *
DHC8/Dash 100	ECHO 1	DRC/Goma	37

Caravan C208	ECHO 3	DRC/Goma	11
Caravan C208	ECHO 4	DRC/Kalemie	11
DHC8/Dash 100	ECHO 2	Kenya/Nairobi	37
Caravan C208	ECHO 5	Mali/Mopti	11
Caravan C208	ECHO 6	Mali/Mopti	11

**The planes' maximum capacity is often reduced following mandatory pre-flight performance calculations factoring in elements such as distance, alternates airfields, airfield limitations and weather forecast*

In addition to aircraft, the operator has offices to manage the service in locations which are essential for operations (Goma, Kalemie, Mopti and Nairobi). This enables the operator to perform all the tasks involved in running an air support service, including operational management, reservations for passengers/cargo and maintenance operations. Also, emergency standby services are available 24/7 in Goma and Nairobi.

- 4) Envisaged DG ECHO's response and expected results of humanitarian aid interventions

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 allow staff to rest and recuperate on a regular basis. ECHO Flight also enables humanitarian organisations to reduce their supplies in the field, 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 implementation of their projects.

ECHO Flight is also an important component of DG ECHO's security plan for the offices located in South Sudan, Central African Republic and DRC.

Full compliance with **visibility** requirements and acknowledgement of the funding role of the EU/DG ECHO, as set out in the applicable contractual arrangements are required.

4. NEXUS, COORDINATION AND TRANSITION

At the global level, ECHO Flight is part of DG ECHO's toolbox when it comes to humanitarian aid air transport operations. In many contexts, DG ECHO contributes to UNHAS and to NGO's⁸ air services. DG ECHO framework

⁸ Non-Governmental Organization.

contract with the transport broker, Kuehne and Nagel is foreseen for the transport of passenger and cargo related to civil protection and humanitarian aid interventions. This framework contract has been used several times for essential humanitarian cargo flights.

ECHO Flight will continue to seek to enhance possible synergies with other humanitarian air service providers including local air service providers in the countries where both services are operating.

ECHO Flight contributes to the NEXUS efforts as it is also used by the development community, notably for development projects implemented in the same remote areas as humanitarian assistance.

ECHO Flight is not in competition with commercial airline companies. If a safe, cost effective and reliable airline company serves on a regular basis ECHO Flight destinations, ECHO Flight service will be gradually phased out through an exit strategy.