

## **FAA Notice for the Republic of South Sudan**

The Federal Aviation Administration advises that U.S. civil operators operating into, out, of within, or over the territory and airspace of South Sudan, should operate at altitudes at or above FL260, due to the potentially hazardous situation created by the ongoing armed conflict in South Sudan, between the Government of South Sudan and rebel forces. Civil aircraft operating into, out of, within or over South Sudan at altitudes below FL260 are at risk of encountering small arms fire, rocket-propelled grenades, anti-aircraft fire, and shoulder-fired Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS).

Since becoming an independent country on 9 July 2011, South Sudan has been torn by conflict. There have been border clashes between South Sudan and Sudan. There have also been government struggles to control rebel militia groups since 2012. Following a December 2013 political split between the President and Vice President of South Sudan, the violence increased significantly. The government of South Sudan is currently fighting an insurrection led by the former Vice President. Either active fighting or the potential for fighting is present in several South Sudanese states, particularly in the northern region bordering Sudan.

Aircraft, including civil aircraft, have been attacked during this conflict. In December 2012, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) shot down a United Nations helicopter after mistaking it for a rebel aircraft. In December 2013, three U.S. V-22 Ospreys were hit by small-arms fire while attempting to evacuate U.S. citizens in Bor, resulting in injuries to four U.S. military personnel. In August 2014, a rebel commander warned that his forces would shoot down any UN aircraft overflying territory under his control, because he believed such aircraft were transporting government troops. A UN-contracted helicopter subsequently was shot down in north central South Sudan, killing three crew members and wounding one other. The South Sudanese army and rebels disputed as to who downed the helicopter. Most recently, a Cessna aircraft flying over northern South Sudan was fired on with unidentified weapons by an unidentified entity. While some attacks have been intentional, command and control deficiencies likely have led both military and rebel forces to fire on civil aircraft by mistake.

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