

## **FAA Background Information Regarding U.S. Civil Aviation in the Territory and Airspace of Somalia**

The FAA has determined there is an unacceptable risk to U.S. civil aviation operating in the territory and airspace of Somalia at altitudes below Flight Level (FL) 260 resulting from terrorist and militant activity. The security situation in Somalia remains unstable. As a result, on 12 May 2015, the FAA published Notice to Airmen FDC 5/0120, which prohibited U.S. civil flight operations in the territory and airspace of Somalia at altitudes below FL260. This NOTAM increased restrictions on U.S. civil aviation operations in the territory and airspace of Somalia beyond the restrictions contained in SFAR 107, which remains in effect.

International civil air routes that transit Somali airspace and aircraft operating to and from Somali airports are at risk from terrorist and militant groups potentially employing anti-aircraft weapons, including Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS), small-arms fire, and in-direct fire from mortars and rockets targeting airports. Some of these weapons have the capability to target aircraft at higher altitudes and/or upon approach and departure. The terrorist group al-Shabaab is active in Somalia and has demonstrated the capability and intent to target U.S. and Western interests. Al-Shabaab has conducted multiple attacks against civil aviation, having shot down an IL-76 aircraft using MANPADS in March 2007 and conducted ground assaults against Mogadishu International Airport, the most recent of which occurred in December 2014. Attacks against aircraft in-flight or Somali airports can occur with little or no warning.

The FAA will continually review the situation regarding potential threats to U.S. civil aviation in the territory and airspace of Somalia and make adjustments, as necessary, to its prohibition on U.S. civil aviation operations at altitudes below FL 260 in that airspace.

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