

FAA Background Information Regarding U.S. Civil Aviation – Mali

The FAA assesses that the security situation in Mali is unstable, resulting in U.S. civil aviation being at risk while operating into, out of, within, or over the territory and airspace of Mali from hazards associated with ongoing fighting involving military forces and extremist/militant groups. As a result, on 26 February 2016, the FAA published Notice to Airmen A0006/16, advising U.S. civil aviation to avoid flight operations into, out of, within or over the territory and airspace of Mali at altitudes below FL260.

International civil air routes that transit Mali's airspace and aircraft operating to and from Malian airports, particularly in the area north of Mopti, are at risk from anti-aircraft weapons, to include Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS), small arms fire, and indirect fire from mortars and rockets. These weapons have the capability to target aircraft at higher altitudes and/or in the approach and departure phases of flight. Some MANPADS may be able to reach a maximum altitude of 25,000 feet. Militant groups have demonstrated a willingness to target Malian airports, particularly in northern Mali. Attacks against aircraft in flight and/or Malian airports may occur with little or no warning.

These militant groups have also demonstrated the ability to conduct well-planned coordinated attacks against United Nations (UN) bases in northern Mali. In mid-February 2016, the UN base in Kidal was attacked by rockets, small arms fire and a truck bomb driven by a suicide operative that killed seven people and wounded 30 others. Southern Mali has also experienced violence, but at lesser levels. In November 2015, transnational terrorists affiliated with al-Qa'ida attacked the Radisson hotel in Bamako; that attack resulted in 20 people killed. Among the dead were six crew members of a non-U.S. operator.

The FAA will continually review the situation regarding threats to U.S. civil aviation in the territory and airspace of Mali and make adjustments to its advisory for U.S. civil aviation operations as necessary.

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