

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The framework, structure, and organization of an overhead reconnaissance program for United Nations peacekeeping operations are important considerations. Guidelines and methods by which an effective and efficient operation is to be implemented must be outlined so standard procedures are ensured.

Standard Operating Procedures

Standard operating procedures are generally designed for every peacekeeping operation to suit the particular requirements and circumstances of the situation. In the case of the initiation of a regular airborne patrolling network as well as ad hoc aerial reconnaissance missions, standard operating procedures would include several key aspects. Command and control of the operation by the Force Commander must be understood: the airborne observation team must know to whom they report and from whom they take orders. United Nations control of all aspects related to the operation is essential and can be accomplished with regular briefings given to operations headquarters and newly arrived contingents or units within an area.

The standard operating procedures for an airborne reconnaissance program should also include a complete section on information reporting. Aerial surveillance and patrolling techniques can gather a tremendous amount of information covering a wide area of interest in a relatively short period of time. To use effectively the information gathered by this method, standardized reporting procedures must be implemented. Speed, accuracy and proper analysis of this data is essential. Operational information may have to be transmitted laterally, as well as vertically, to all United Nations officers who could be affected and concerned.