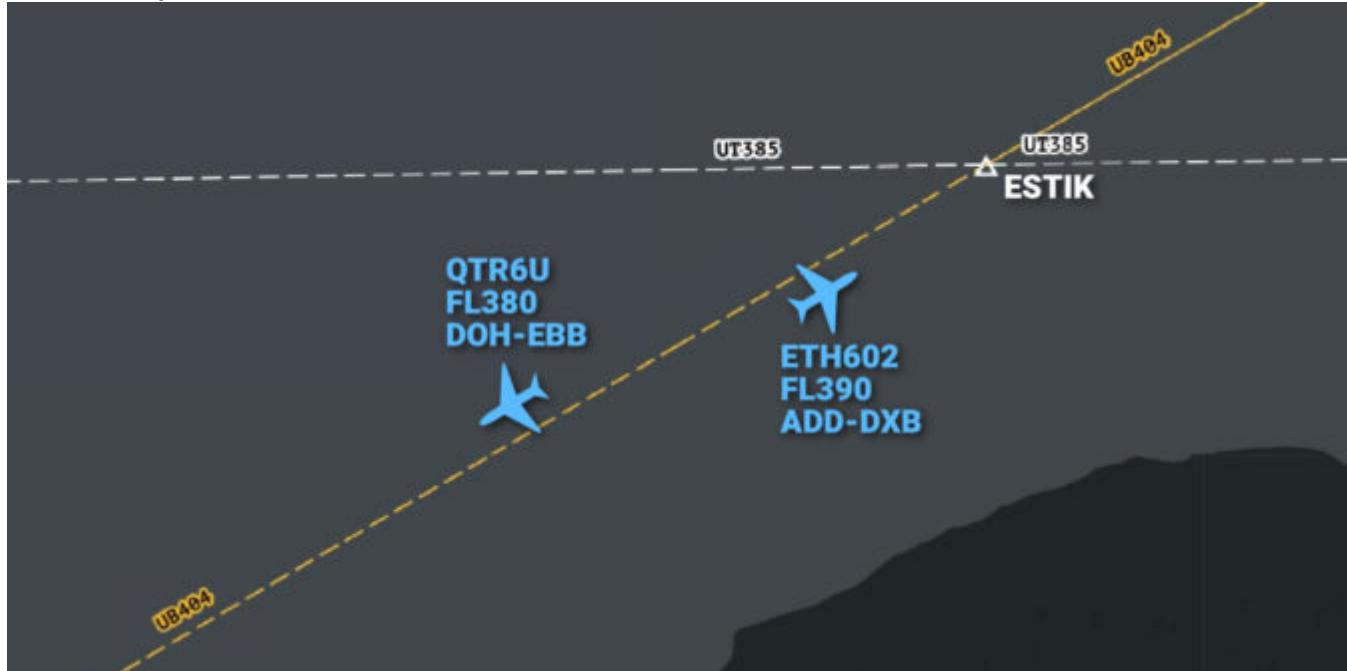


# TCAS Saves the Day in Somalia

David Mumford  
28 February, 2024



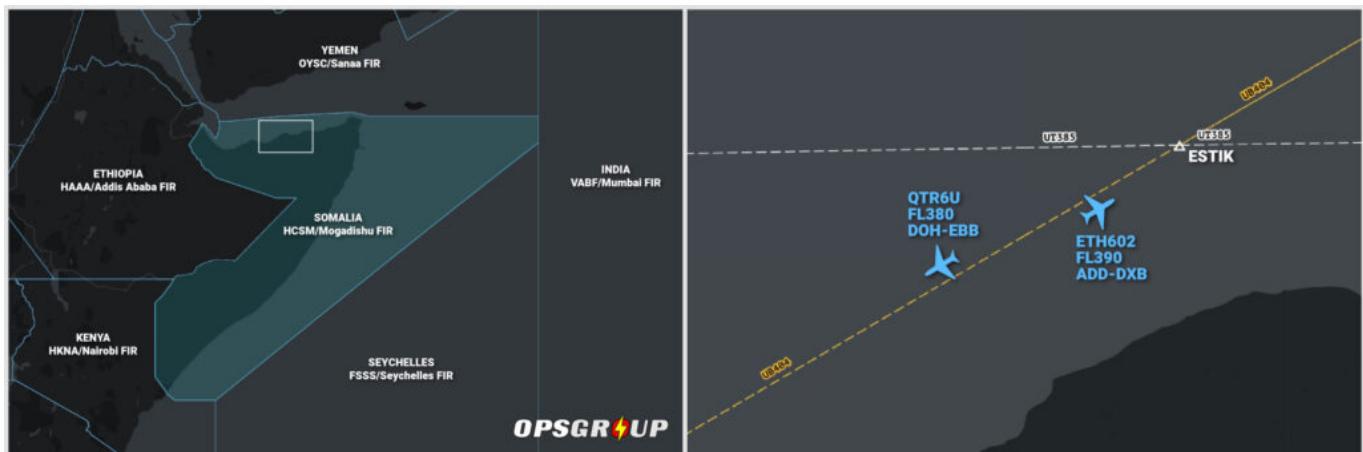
Last week we told you about a new risk emerging over Somalia, where **several enroute aircraft reported being contacted by unauthorized ATC units**. These “fake” controllers have been issuing climb/descent instructions that conflict with the official ones issued by Mogadishu Control.



This week, the very same thing happened to crews of a Qatar Airways 787 and an Ethiopian Airlines A350

**headed towards each other off Somalia's northern coastline.**

The 787 was instructed to climb from FL380 to FL400 whilst the A350 was cruising at FL390 in the opposite direction on the same UB404 airway – near position ESTIK. **A TCAS alert was triggered, and the 787 descended back to FL380 to resolve the conflict.**



From some reports it looks like the two aircraft were **separated by as little as 2.5 nm** when the incident happened, though the situation was helped by the fact that both aircraft were laterally offset from the airway (yay for SLOP!).

### Who should I be talking to?

The two competing ATC centres here are Hargeisa (Somaliland) and Mogadishu (Somalia).

**For aircraft transiting the HCSM/Mogadishu FIR, it's Mogadishu ATC that you should be talking to – not Hargeisa.**

Mogadishu Control holds authority over the entire Mogadishu FIR, responsible for coordinating and providing ATS services in the Upper FIR. **Hargeisa in Somaliland issues secondary transmissions, posing a potential threat to enroute traffic.**

Notably, these transmissions from Hargeisa seem to mimic Mogadishu rather than clearly identifying as "Hargeisa Control" or "Somaliland Control." Reports suggest that **control instructions from Hargeisa aim to create confusion rather than ensure traffic de-confliction**, possibly as a strategy to draw political attention to their recent dispute with Somalia.

### Advice to operators

Check our previous post for a **full Risk Warning**, including Crew Reports, Maps, Analysis, and Guidance. *And if you can't access, just email the team and we'll send you a copy.*

**The main advice is this:**

- 1. If possible, avoid the Mogadishu FIR.**
- 2. If entering the airspace, expect secondary ATC transmissions from Hargeisa.**
- 3. Limit any contact with Mogadishu to CPDLC only. Only controllers in Mogadishu have access to CPDLC.**
- 4. Do not accept any level changes without ensuring they are genuinely from Mogadishu Control.**
- 5. Avoid requesting any level changes while within the Mogadishu FIR.**
- 6. Listen out on 126.9 (IFBP) and follow the IFBP procedure.**
- 7. Note that related NOTAMs issued by Somalia may not present the full picture, or be updated**

regularly.

19 FEB 24 PAGE 1 SOMALIA ATC CONFLICT OPSGROUP RISK WARNING

**RISK WARNING**  
**SOMALIA ATC CONFLICT**

ISSUED BY OPSGROUP TEAM  
EMAIL: TEAMOPS.GROUP  
WINTSTMP: > 1 747 200 1993

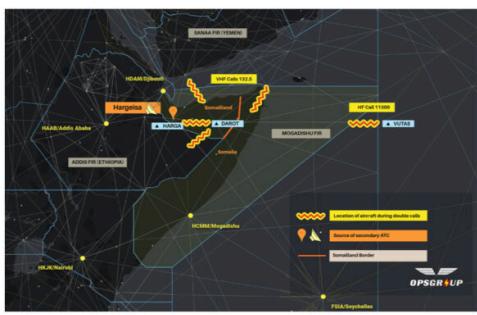
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**⚠️** This information covers a developing event: further versions will likely follow. Check Dashboard / Daily Brief for updates. Please report any additional information you have to [team@ops.group](mailto:team@ops.group). Thank you!

TO: ALL OPSGROUP MEMBERS  
ATTN: OPERATING FLIGHT CREW, FLIGHT OPS DEPARTMENTS, SAFETY DEPARTMENTS

**Quick Summary – ATC Conflict in Somalia**

- This affects aircraft transiting the **Mogadishu FIR**.
- Enroute aircraft are being addressed by competing ATC units on the same frequency.
- Numerous aircraft have received climb/descent instructions from **unauthorized ATC units**.
- Location: Primarily within radio range of **Hargeisa** (VHF 132.5), also via HF (11300)



Legend:  
• Location of aircraft during descent/cruise  
• Source of secondary ATC  
• Separation border  
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**Download the Risk Warning** (PDF, 9 pages, 2Mb)