

# From Cabo Delgado to the Sahel, Crisis Response embedded in Washington's African strategy

Texan defence contractor Crisis Response Co, which already has an extensive presence in Africa, is to strengthen its intelligence-gathering capacities in Mozambique for the US while it continues to expand in West Africa.

US company **Crisis Response Co** (CRC) has been busy days trying to ramp up its intelligence-gathering capacity in Mozambique over the past few days. It has been looking to recruit two strategic advisers as part of the **Trans Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership Program**, which is under US supervision. This is a way for the US to help Maputo deal with the jihadist insurrection causing disruption in Cabo Delgado but also, through CRC, to keep an eye on the fast developing oil and gas province.

Meanwhile, CRC is developing in all directions in West Africa. In early July, Washington extended its contract for the supply of technical support and maintenance training to the air forces of Cameroon, Mali and Chad. The Malian crews of the **Basler** BT-67 aircraft - another version of the **Douglas** DC-3 - and Cameroonian **Cessna** C-208 B pilots will be trained by CRC in ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) techniques and medical evacuation. CRC technicians will also train Chadian Hercules C-130 pilots for these missions, as well for troop transport and parachute operations. This contract prolongs a first agreement signed in August 2019, the total value of which could rise in the longer term to \$4.4m. It is part of the Africa Regional Counterterrorism programme, set up by the US Department of State.

Away from the aviation sector, the US firm has also had extended its contract for the provision of technical support to Mali's special forces unit, the **Bataillon Autonome des Forces Spéciales**. Since September 2019, it has also been supplying

specialist intelligence advisers to the Chadian army and, since 2018, logistical support to the armed forces of the Central African Republic.

In East Africa, CRC has extended its contract with the American army in Somalia, where it has been monitoring US military aid to the **Somali National Army** under a \$2m per year contract signed in 2017 (*Africa Intelligence*, [25/06/20](#)). Since that year, CRC has also been training the **Kenya Air Force** and the **Ethiopian Air Force**. The US firm also advises the **African Union** regarding its peace-keeping missions.

Crisis Response specialises in defence and security consulting, business intelligence, construction and logistics. It is headed by three former US marines, **Robert Akin**, **Craig Kozeniesky** and **Jay Tabb**, a former deputy director of the FBI, and **Tad Eckerle**. Based in Keller, Texas, since 2009, it has offices in Niger, Uganda and Kenya and its personnel are active in nearly 40 different countries.

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