

PAKISTAN

ISSUE OF COVID 19 TESTING ALLOWANCE

Issue Paper Theme: OTHER

BACKGROUND

1. COVID 19 pandemic has greatly affected the United Nations TCCs working environment since early 2020. The pandemic is likely to keep affecting in the foreseeable future. During year 2020 international travelling was also under influence which affected leave of all ranks for a considerable time. Towards the end of year 2020, international travelling kicked up as a result of vaccination. In year 2021 all ranks of Pakistan Army reported to mission areas after vaccination and hold their vaccination cards in person. All ranks of TCCs are authorized recreational leave every six months for which international travelling to neighboring countries is allowed. Similarly, during employment in mission area, some individuals (approximately 6 %) of troops face an emergency for which home country is required to be reached at individual expense. Both movements require administration of Rapid Antigen Test and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) Test from borders and departing / arrival airports, respectively.

ISSUE

2. As per Chapter 9 Annex A para 4 of COE Manual 2020, only USD 1.28 Daily Allowance per day plus USD 10.50 per day for up to 15 days of recreational leave are directly paid to contingent personnel from the peacekeeping missions. Both allowances do not suffice the expenses of COVID 19 testing during recreational or emergency leaves. Furthermore, both allowances are received after specific period and individuals have to pay for COVID 19 testing at own expense. Personnel receive pays at Home Country and do not carry money to bear the expenses.

DISCUSSION

3. An average cost of USD 15 and USD 60 is required to be paid for Rapid Antigen and PCR Tests respectively during recreational and emergency leave requirements. Hence **a minimum total cost USD 150** is borne by individual while going to and returning from one recreational/ emergency leave.

4. Every contingent personnel is entitled two recreational leaves in a tenure of twelve months. Approximately 6 percent of individuals are required to reach home country during a tenure for emergency requirements and involves international travelling.

RECOMMENDATION

5. The current daily and recreational leave allowances do not cover COVID 19 testing expenses for Recreational and Emergency Leaves. Related clause may be incorporated in Chapter 9 Annex A para 4 of COE Manual 2020 accordingly.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

6. Pakistan has a present contribution of 1929 peacekeepers and the proposed issue shall amount to approximately USD **0.596 million per annum**.

Calculation – COVID 19 Testing Allowance

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| a. | Recreational Leave Test Expense | $1929 \times 2 \times 150 = 578700$ |
| b. | Emergency Leave Expense | $(1929 \times 6\%) \times 150 = 17361$ |
| c. | Issue per annum | $578700 + 17361 = \text{USD } 596061$ |
| d. | Approximately USD 0.596 million per annum | |