



OPERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT MISSION FACTORS STUDY

Secretariat Issue Paper #11 - Mandated Study

Issue Paper Theme: **Major Equipment**

BACKGROUND

The General Assembly in its resolution 74/279 endorsed the recommendations of the 2020 COE Working Group to conduct a study proposing options for implementation mechanisms for a new “operational engagement factor”, including the methodology for constructing and validating it, with precise and objective criteria combined with data reporting tools.

Following this recommendation, the Secretariat established a Secretariat multi-offices WG to undertake a comprehensive study to identify a new methodology that allows the implementation of the factor reflecting the changes in the operational environment in which units are performing its missions and tasks.

Mission factors are intended to compensate troop and police contributors (TCC/PCC) for specific conditions prevailing in the area of responsibility that cause unusual wear and tear, shorter life of equipment, increased maintenance costs and/or risk of damage to and loss of the equipment. Currently there are three existing mission factors, the extreme environmental conditions factor, the logistics and road conditions factor and the hostile action or forced abandonment factor. None of them shows the level of activities carried out by the units and furthermore, identifies changes in the operational environment in which these activities are performed.

The existing methodology in some cases is seen by the TCC/PCC as overly restrictive. On some occasions it seems it does not adequately capture the “scope of task assigned” that should reflect the additional wear and tear on equipment resulting for increased levels of operational tasking for certain units.

Moreover, in recent years, United Nations peacekeeping has evolved into one of the main tools used by the international community to manage complex crises that pose a threat to international peace and security.

Peacekeeping missions have been assigned complex mandates requiring increasingly robust and agile engagements, alongside more traditional peacekeeping activities. The security situation in peacekeeping missions can deteriorate fast and there is also an increased probability that deployed units are forced to operate in areas affected by epidemic or natural disasters.

The operational engagement premium is intended to compensate the TCC/PCC for the additional wear and tear on COE for units undertaking additional tasks and/or operating in a more exigent and more challenging environment during a limited period.



PROPOSAL

The Working Group proposes a new operational engagement as a premium that will reflect the changes in the operational environment in which the units perform their activities in a more accurate and precise way than the current mission factors do, causing the additional wear and tear in the major equipment deployed. The premium will be based on qualitative and quantitative analysis comparing the data collected with a baseline that must be defined during the implementation phase.

The WG proposes the testing of the procedure in at least one specific pilot mission before its final approval and implementation throughout all UN missions.

The pilot mission will be chosen by the UNHQ and agreed with the mission HQ.

An implementation phase is needed for testing the procedure with two phases. The first phase, from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, will focus on collecting the data needed to define a baseline for comparison. The second phase, from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, the premium will be on place comparing the new data with the same period of the previous one.

The results of the test and all the data collected will be presented by the Secretariat to the 2026 COE WG for definitive approval of the premium that would be fully implemented in all UN PKO missions from July 2026.

The details on the formula, different scenarios and other specifics on the study are attached as Enclosure 1.

PROPOSED MANUAL TEXT

No update to the COE Manual will be required at this stage.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial impact will be based on the number of requests for the premium to be submitted from units, endorsed by the Head of Mission, and approved at United Nations Headquarters.

Pending the final approval of the recommendation, the financial impact will not be seen until the end of the first year of the implementation phase.

Premiums will be met within the approved appropriations for the applicable budget period.

PREVIOUS HISTORY

This issue was raised in the 2014 COE Working Group which requested the Secretariat to present a revised methodology for the intensity of operations factor, considering the scope of tasks assigned.

The issue was also discussed in the 2017 in context of the discussion of the requested revised methodology (issue paper on “Inclusion of scope of task assigned in the Intensity of Operations Factor”).



The 2017 COE Working Group requested the Secretariat to consider the introduction of a methodology that reflects the intensity of operations for individual units.

Again, the issue was presented in the 2020 Working Group requesting the Secretariat a new study with options for implementation mechanisms for a new factor that reflects the wear and tear of equipment related to the level of activity in the mission area.

ENCLOSURES:

1. Operational Engagement Study



ENCLOSURE 1. OPERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT STUDY

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this document is to set out in detail options to implement the needed mechanism for a new premium, the “operational engagement” that reflects wear and tear of **major equipment**¹ related to the intensified level of activity in the mission area.

SCOPE

2. The General Assembly in its resolution 74/279 endorsed the recommendations of the 2020 COE Working Group (WG) that include the presentation of 15 different studies in the 2023 COE WG. One of those studies is the proposal of options for implementation mechanisms for an “operational engagement factor”.
3. The Operational Engagement Premium reflects a methodology used to measure the additional wear and tear on equipment caused by increased levels of operational tasking to make it better reflect the realities on the ground.

RATIONALE

4. Mission factors are multipliers applied to the reimbursement rates for major equipment and self-sustainment (minor equipment and consumables) to compensate troop and police contributors for specific conditions prevailing in the area of responsibility that causes unusual wear and tear, shorter life of equipment, increased maintenance costs and/or risk of damage to and loss of the equipment².
5. Currently, there are three mission factors defined: an extreme environmental conditions factor, a logistic and road conditions factor, and a hostile action or forced abandonment factor. None of them reflects accurately the level of operational activities of each contingent on the area of operations.
6. The security situation in peacekeeping missions can deteriorate rapidly, hostilities in the mission area may escalate and provoke undesired effects that will impact the missions and tasks carried out by our peacekeepers. There is also an increased probability that deployed units are forced to operate in areas affected by epidemics or natural disasters.
7. Because of the unexpected and unpredictable nature of emerging situations, changes in the operational environment may not have been fully captured during the basic framework planning process and could motivate changes or new Concept of Operations (CONOPS) or even changes in the Mission Mandate.
8. The current methodology for the evaluation of the mission factors has been seen by troop – and police – contributing countries as overly restrictive and does not adequately capture the “scope of task assigned” element, which should reflect the additional wear and tear on equipment resulting from increased levels of operational tasking for certain units.
9. The new operational engagement premium will reflect the changes in the operational environment in which the units perform their activities in a more accurate and precise way than the current mission factors do, causing the additional wear and tear in the major equipment deployed.
10. The new operational engagement premium could indicate the progress of the mission in achieving its objectives and tasks collecting additional data³.
11. This study will be presented to the 2023 COE WG for the approval of a testing period of two years to check the feasibility of the premium.

¹ Major equipment consists of items directly related to the unit mission as mutually determined by the United Nations and the troop/police contributor. (COE Manual definition)

² COE Manual definition of mission factors.

³ The data obtained can be used to analyze trends that indicate progress in the development of the mission



PRINCIPLES

12. Uniformed personnel are currently operating in hostile environments, enduring hardship and subject to a certain degree of challenge.
13. Changes in the reimbursement rate for major equipment motivated by this new premium will be exceptional.
14. Recommendations should be made based on data collected by the mission on a quarterly basis after twelve months of baseline data is established.
15. The Operational engagement will be a premium to acknowledge the tasks and missions performed by units under substantial or extreme changes in operating conditions.
16. The Premium will not exceed five (5) per cent of the quarterly reimbursement for serviceable major equipment deployed in the mission area for the specific military or police unit. Premiums will be met within the approved appropriations for the applicable budget period.
17. After three consecutive periods of eligibility, if data collected continuously shows a substantial or extreme change in the operational environment, a new baseline must be defined, and the premium should be regauged.
18. Adequate Key Performance Indicators (KPI⁴) should be defined to identify to what degree the tasks performed by the unit have been accomplished. On some occasions it will only indicate **how** many times an event has happened. The KPI will have associated the appropriate metrics to get the necessary and consistent data over time.
19. The KPI will allow the measurement of activity answering the following question: Are the actions being executed as planned? (Are we doing things right?).
20. The KPI is based on the mandated tasks.
21. A KPI must:
 - Align to one or more actions.
 - Be observable and defined in sufficient detail so that assessments are produced consistently over time.
 - Be derived from data that is collectable within the means and resources of the operation.
 - Describe specifically how the action is expected to be executed or achieved.
 - Be as specific as possible.
 - Be sensitive to change in a period meaningful to the operation.
 - Have a known deterministic relationship to the action.
 - Have an associated Acceptable Condition⁵.
22. A KPI should ideally:
 - Be reduced to a quantity (number, percentage, level for ordinal data, etc.).
 - Be objective.
 - Be cost-effective and not burdensome to the data collector.
 - Have an associated Rate of Change⁶.

PROCEDURES

23. To be eligible to receive this premium, a full set of conditions must be met:
 - 23.1. The unit must have a signed MOU.
 - 23.2. Units must perform their tasks with a high level of skill and professionalism.

⁴ KPI: a metric used to measure the completion of activity, either routine, repeating activity, or the completion of a specific one-time activity. Also, a number or ratio (a value on a scale of measurement) derived from a series of observed facts; can reveal relative changes as a function of time

⁵ A defined level for the metric at which the task has been accomplished.

⁶ The amount of change in a metric over a specific time for each UN mission.



- 23.3. Units may not have restrictions and caveats placed on their operations by their respective TCC/PCCs outside of those accepted by DPO and DOS in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Recommendations submitted by missions will include documented evidence that T/PCC units are operating without restrictions.
- 23.4. The substantial or extreme change in the operational environment must be documented and explained using the decision support matrix (Annex A).
- 23.5. No premium payment shall be made to units subject to substantiated allegations of misconduct, including, but not restricted to, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).
24. Considerations for applying the operational engagement premium.
- 24.1. To justify and identify possible causes for the operational change, several scenarios should be considered.
- 24.2. These scenarios will serve as supplementary criteria to understand better the overall situation but will not limit or deny the application of the premium.
- 24.3. These are the proposed scenarios that will help the Mission Force Commander to identify the possible causes of the operational change:
- **Scenario A:** Changes in the Mandate under which the Force is operating (with or without changes in the troop ceiling).
 - **Scenario B:** Unplanned / unexpected withdrawal of one or more TCC/PCC
 - **Scenario C:** Surge in operational demands that derives in an OPORD/FRAGO (no seasonal changes).
 - **Scenario D:** Changes in the Threat Assessment.
 - In all scenarios, units must prove objectively that the situational environment has changed, forcing them to react increasing the number of activities performed, or the opposition forces have adopted a more aggressive posture against the UN Force increasing the numbers of attacks/incidents reported, or even a sudden rise in the unserviceable conditions of the different major equipment deployed has occurred.
- 24.4. If none of the proposed scenarios occurred, if comparing the data collected with the previous same period, a substantial or extreme change is appreciated, the Force Commander or the Police Commissioner could initiate the request for the application of the premium.
25. Procedure.
- 25.1. The decision support matrix (Annex A) must be used by field missions to demonstrate that the mandatory conditions have been met and to justify the consideration of applying the operational engagement premium to the reimbursement rates for major equipment.
- 25.2. The request for the Operational engagement factor will be based on qualitative analysis, being key in the whole process, the narrative, description, and comparison with the same quarter of the same last period, reports, and background information.
- 25.3. The request for a particular quarter will be initiated and signed by the Force Commander or Police Commissioner once the quarter has ended.
- 25.4. The Head of Mission should send a Code Cable to the Under Secretary General for Peace Operations and Under – Secretary General for Operational Support. A soft copy of the signed forms should be emailed to the relevant desk officers in the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) or Police Division (PD), and the MOU and Reimbursement Policy Section (MRPS) of the Uniformed Capabilities Support Division (UCSD) at UN Headquarters.
- 25.5. MRPS/UCSD will undertake an initial review and assessment of the request for completeness, accuracy of dates and the inclusion of fully documented justifications.
26. The rate of change to categorize the respective operational conditions should be defined by each UN mission and could be different from one to another based on different threat assessment, historical data, etc.
27. In general terms, the categorization of the KPIs is:
- 27.1. Normal: means there is not significant change from the past studied period.
- 27.2. Moderate: means the rate of change is between 10% to 20%.
- 27.3. Substantial: means the rate of change is between 21% to 30%.



27.4. Extreme: mean the rate of change is above 30%⁷.

KPI (1-3)	Points allocated
Normal	0
Moderate	1
Substantial	2
Extreme	3

28. The resulting factor cannot exceed 5 per cent.

Factor	Points allocated
KPI 1 (maximum 3 points) (A)	
KPI 2 (maximum 3 points) (B)	
KPI 3 (maximum 3 points) (C)	
Total (maximum 9 points) (A+B+C)	Minimum of 4 points required

29. To be applicable, the minimum sum of the KPIs must be four (4) to ensure that, at least one of them, shows a substantial rate of change.

30. The operational engagement premium, in percentage points, equals the total points divided by 1.8, as it must not exceed 5 per cent. The resulting factor is to be rounded off to one decimal place.

IMPLEMENTATION

31. If agreed and approved by the 2023 COE Working Group, this premium will be tested in one specific pilot-mission before its final approval and implementation throughout all UN missions.

32. The pilot-mission will be chosen by the UNHQ and agreed with the mission HQ.

33. The implementation of the operational engagement premium will have two different phases:

33.1. In the first phase, from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, data must be collected to get the requisite baseline and establish a stable reference for comparison. One year will be needed to track the unit to account for seasonal variations.

33.2. In the second phase, from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 units would be eligible and apply for the endorsement of the premium in a four-month basis after comparing the new data collected.

34. The results of the test and all the data collected will be presented by the Secretariat to the 2026 COE Working Group.

⁷ These percentages should be adjusted at the end of the first year during the implementation phase, when a specific baseline for all the data will be identified.



Annex A: Decision Support Matrix

Part I: Eligibility Checklist

To qualify for the operational engagement premium, the following checklist must be completed.

Mandatory Criteria 1 (MC1): Restrictions/Caveats
Q1: Is the unit operating without any restrictions or caveats imposed on them by the TCC/PCC that were not accepted by the United Nations in the memorandum of understanding?
YES: Unit may be eligible.
NO: Unit does not meet this mandatory criterion and is not eligible for this premium. Attach documentation of the caveat or restriction of the unit.

		Supplementary Criteria 1 (SC1)	YES/NO
SCENARIOS	A: Changes in the Mandate under which the Force is operating (with or without changes in the troop ceiling).	Q2: Has the new Mandate assigned new missions and/or tasks for the units?	
	B: Surge in operational demands that derives in an OPORD/FRAGO (no seasonal changes).	Q2: Has the new OPORD/FRAGO assigned new missions and/or tasks for the units?	
	C: Withdrawal of one or more TCC/PCC.	Q2: Has the unit expanded its deployment to new locations?	
	D: Changes in the threat assessment	Q2: Has the alert status been changed in the last period?	

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 1 (KPI1): an exceptional and sustained increase in the number of activities carried out by the unit.

Q3: Increase (percentage) in the number of activities carried out in the last period
Q3a: increase in the overall number of operational activities by type (offensive – defensive operations, cordon and search, training, etc.).
Q3b: increase in the number of patrols (day/night).
Q3c: increase in the number of escort activities.
Q3d: Increase in the number of Checkpoints (CP).

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 2 (KPI2): an exceptional and sustained increase in the number of incidents/attacks suffered.

Q4: Increase (percentage) in the number of attacks with mines, IEDs in the last period.
Q5: Increase (percentage) in the number of Freedom of Movement incidents.
Q6: Increase (percentage) in the number of incidents in the Main Supply Routes or incidents that have affected the normal flow of spare material and parts.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 3 (KPI3): An exceptional and sustained increase in the amount of vehicles/major equipment in unserviceable conditions.

Q7: Increase in the number of vehicles/major equipment in maintenance echelons.
Q8: Decrease in the availability of spare parts (stock level).

Part II: Narrative Report



Once the eligibility checklist has been completed, the Force Commander or Police Commissioner is required to complete a narrative report detailing the specific situation that motivates the premium request

Mandatory Criteria 2 (MC2). Overall situation in the area has changed and/or the KPIs shows a substantial or extreme change in the last four-month period	
Q9: What have changed in the operational environment that motivates the premium request?	
Narrative summary	
(signature of FC or PC)	_____
(printed name)	_____
(date)	_____