



EXPANSION OF THE RAPID DEPLOYMENT LEVEL OF THE PEACEKEEPING CAPABILITY READINESS SYSTEM

Secretariate Issue Paper #34

Issue Paper Theme: **Cross-cutting**

BACKGROUND

The 2017 Contingent Owned Equipment (COE) Working Group decided to provide 25 per cent of the reimbursement rate for maintenance of the major equipment to all units placed under the rapid deployment level (RDL) of the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS) to help defray a portion of the costs of maintaining equipment for units in the RDL and support their ability to meet the 60 days readiness to start the deployment. This was based on the pretext that while T/PCCs receive reimbursement to support maintenance and upkeep for units deployed to peacekeeping missions, they do not receive reimbursement for the costs of maintaining equipment for units in the RDL at a state of readiness such that they can be deployed at short notice. It was also considered that it was possible that some units pledged to the RDL may never be asked to deploy and therefore there was a financial disincentive to prepare units for rapid deployment.

In 2017, the Secretariat understood that ideally the RDL units should have the equivalent of an integrated brigade containing the following units: 3 infantry battalions, 1 logistics battalion, 1 force headquarters support company, 1 quick reaction force, 1 engineering company, 1 level II hospital, 1 military police company, 1 signals company, 1 medium utility helicopter unit, 1 attack helicopter unit, 1 tactical airlift unit.

The 2020 COE Working Group considered the issue of delays in deployment of military and police units to and its impact on the mandate of the United Nations field missions. The Secretariat informed the Working Group that the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Operational Support (DOS) had asked the Director Uniformed Capabilities Support Division (UCSD) to undertake a study into the issues affecting timelines of United Nations organized deployments of uniformed personnel and COE to field missions. The Working Group recommended the Secretariat to continue the study and present the findings at the 2023 COE Working Group¹.

That study was completed, and the findings and recommendations are contained in Secretariat issue paper #5: Study into delays in the deployment of T/PCCs – Deployment Timelines Project. One of the findings of that study was the UNHQ should consider the expansion of the Rapid Deployment Level (RDL) and the units that comprise that initiative to increase the options available to select units for rapid deployments to meet emerging operational contingencies.

Associated with this recommendation, the operational environment where UN peacekeepers are deployed have considerably changed since 2017. The need to incorporate technology and more reliable major equipment in military units to allow the delivery of mandated tasks, particularly Protection of Civilians and to allow the proper

¹ 2020 COE Working Group Report, page 14, paragraph 40. (b).



safety and security of peacekeepers, the Secretariat understood the need to modify the structure of the integrated brigade that provides the fast response to emerging needs by having, ideally the following units: 3 mechanized infantry battalions, 2 light infantry battalion, 2 quick reaction forces companies, 1 special force company, 1 combat convoy company, 1 force protection company, 1 military engineering company, 1 explosive ordinance disposal company, 1 level 2 hospital, 1 military police company, 1 signals company, 1 medium utility helicopter unit, 1 armed helicopter unit, 1 tactical airlift unit, 1 airfield support unit, one tactical UAS unit and 4 formed police units.

The purpose of this paper is to propose additional unit types for inclusion in the RDL.

PROPOSAL

The operational environment where UN peacekeepers are deployed have considerably changed since 2017. The need to incorporate technology and more reliable major equipment in military units to allow the delivery of mandated tasks, particularly Protection of Civilians and to allow the proper safety and security of peacekeepers, the Secretariat understood the need to modify the structure of the integrated brigade that provides the fast response to emerging needs by having, ideally the following units: 3 mechanized infantry battalions, 2 light infantry battalion, 2 quick reaction forces companies, 1 special force company, 1 combat convoy company, 1 force protection company, 1 military engineering company, 1 explosive ordinance disposal company, 1 level 2 hospital, 1 military police company, 1 signals company, 1 medium utility helicopter unit, 1 armed helicopter unit, 1 tactical airlift unit, 1 airfield support unit, one tactical UAS unit and 4 formed police units.

Based on the 6 years' experience of having units at the RDL, the Secretariat proposes to remove the language that requests to conduct a mission rehearsal exercise, certified and evaluated by the United Nations, as it does not see it as meaningful activity, since all units deployed from the RDL were used to reinforce different existing missions. Besides that, no financial resources have been allocated to conduct such activity.

The Secretariat also proposes to include a clause that grants the T/PCC full RDL reimbursement during its time at RDL if the troop/police contributor is unable to deploy within 60 days when requested, if the delay or cancellation is due to matters beyond their control and as agreed to by the United Nations.

The full details of the RDL are contained in the Guidelines: *The Rapid Deployment Level of the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System*, issued jointly by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the Department of Operational Support. Policy guidance on the RDL within the COE Manual can be found in Chapter 8, page 169, paragraphs 13 to 15. Units pledged and verified for RDL are placed on 60 days' notice to deploy and are paid 25% of the equipment maintenance rate for the major equipment contained in that unit. Because of the financial implications of expanding the RDL, such an expansion should be considered by the COE Working Group and, if recommended, endorsed by the General Assembly.

PROPOSED MANUAL TEXT

It is proposed to replace **paragraphs 13,14 and 15 of Chapter 8** with following text:

Units that reach the rapid deployment level of the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System should be paid 25 per cent of the maintenance component rates for major equipment during the period those units are pledged to the System, as an incentive for troop/police contributors. The reimbursement payment for units not deployed during a peacekeeping budget year should be made at the end of that budget year.



During the course of each peacekeeping budget year, the United Nations may perform at least one inspection of major equipment, certified and evaluated by the United Nations.

Should a troop/police contributor be asked to deploy and then deploy within 60 days, reimbursement for time spent at the rapid deployment level would be paid as soon as possible following deployment. A troop/police contributor that does not deploy when requested or that cannot deploy within 60 days when requested will forfeit any claims and recovery, if needed, of reimbursement for time spent at the rapid deployment level, unless the delay or cancellation is due to matters beyond their control and as agreed to by the United Nations.

The rapid deployment level, ideally, has the equivalent of an integrated brigade containing the following units: three mechanized infantry battalions, two light infantry battalion, two quick reaction forces companies, one special force company, one combat convoy company, one force protection company, one military engineering company, one explosive ordinance disposal company, one level 2 hospital, one military police company, one signals company, one medium utility helicopter unit, one armed helicopter unit, one tactical airlift unit, one airfield support unit, one tactical UAS unit and four formed police units.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

On the basis of generic personnel and equipment tables, the cost of providing 25 per cent of the reimbursement for maintenance of the major equipment for all the current units authorized for the RDL for twelve months amounts to approximately \$3.88 million per annum.

For the expansion and the revision of the types and structures of the new units to be included in the RDL, the cost of providing 25 per cent of the reimbursement for maintenance of the major equipment for twelve months amounts to approximately \$5.74 million per annum.

It is important to highlight that due to the dynamic nature of RDL from which units are constantly picked for deployment to existing missions thus creating vacancies until another unit is verified and elevated, and due to the challenge of shortage of certain specialized units like medium utility and attack helicopter units resulting in deployment of such units straight from PCRS levels 2 or 3, the actual reimbursements made in financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22 were \$2.74 million and \$2.32 million respectively. It is expected that this trend will continue in the coming years.

PREVIOUS HISTORY

This issue has not been previously considered by the COE Working Group, although the overall concept of the reimbursement of 25 per cent of the maintenance component rates for major equipment for units at the RDL has already been approved and is under implementation. The issue of delays to T/PCC deployments, however, was previously considered by the 2020 COE Working Group who recommended a detailed study be conducted into delays in the force generation process and a report provided to 2023 COE Working Group for their considerations – recommendation 40.b. page 14 refers. The findings and recommendations of the Study into the cause of delays are presented to COE Working Group 2023 in separate issue paper.