



INSPECTION AND EVALUATION DIVISION

EVALUATION REPORT

Evaluation of the Senior Leadership Training of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS)

“Despite the many positive aspects of the training offered, current leadership feels underprepared in the field, where they are expected to immediately master the complexity of Organization’s often-technically demanding rules, lead thousands of men and women from different nationalities and cultures, respond to the demands of varied stakeholders including the Security Council, the Host Country’s government and its citizens, while being surrounded by an increasingly non-permissive and lethal peacekeeping environment.”

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INSPECTION AND EVALUATION DIVISION

FUNCTION

“The Office shall evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the programmes and legislative mandates of the Organisation. It shall conduct programme evaluations with the purpose of establishing analytical and critical evaluations of the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, examining whether changes therein require review of the methods of delivery, the continued relevance of administrative procedures and whether the activities correspond to the mandates as they may be reflected in the approved budgets and the medium-term plan of the Organisation;” (General Assembly Resolution 48/218 B).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Evaluation of the Senior Leadership Training of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS)

Proper selection and training of senior mission leaders are keys to the success of peacekeeping missions. Peacekeeping mission leaders are accountable for the management of operations costing up to one billion dollars annually, leading thousands of uniformed and civilian personnel, and coordinating a wide range of complex activities. The Secretary-General has stated that his appointments of senior officials are critical to the Organization's performance, and the General Assembly has highlighted the need to address senior leadership training.

Member States and DPKO/DFS, together, have committed resources in excess of \$775,000 to senior leadership training in 2014-2015. Leaders were selected from diverse backgrounds including from high-level diplomatic, military and police backgrounds. However, some had little or no prior experience in the United Nations. Overall, the training given had many positive aspects, with participants reporting high utility, especially for the DPKO/DFS 'flagship' Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course. At the same time, the evaluation, conducted upon DPKO/DFS' request and an OIOS risk assessment, has highlighted gaps that require attention and action.

Many senior leaders felt under-prepared for their responsibilities. Preparation was neither consistently taken by newly appointed senior leaders nor offered to them. A significant number of appointees deployed without having completed mandatory training. Only 61.8 per cent of current leaders at the D-2 level and above had done the mandatory Senior Leadership Programme (SLP) course by March 2015. The SML course, while much valued by participants, only produced a limited number of participants who were subsequently appointed or promoted to senior leadership positions in DPKO peacekeeping missions. More than one third of the senior leaders had not undertaken the SLP or SML. 28.4 per cent of current leaders had not undertaken any DPKO/DFS leadership training.

Despite the many positive aspects of the training offered, current leadership feels underprepared in the field, where they are expected to immediately master the complexity of Organization's often-technically demanding rules, lead thousands of men and women from different nationalities and cultures, respond to the demands of varied stakeholders including the Security Council, the Host Country's government and its citizens, while being surrounded by an increasingly non-permissive and lethal peacekeeping environment.

Leaders' feedback also suggested that training had not prepared them adequately for specific issues. These included managing crisis situations and working with a hostile government, resolving management and administrative issues, knowledge of administrative and other procedures required by the United Nations (including conduct and discipline), and civilian-military interactions within the mission. Leaders also reported they were stressed, disconnected and overworked as a result of the training gaps. At the same time, they faced

pervasive information overload.

Both the design and the delivery of the training and related activities contributed to the problems reported by leaders. Training did not adequately address team related challenges. Training were generic and supply-driven, leading to demand for more customized training. Location and time specific training also limited leaders' opportunities for training. The responsibility for the training of senior peacekeeping leaders was dispersed throughout DPKO/DFS and training was largely dependent on extra-budgetary resources.

The issue of senior leaders' appointments emerged as a risk area, with some senior interviewees considering that, in some cases, political considerations had prevailed over those of merit and competence. While the selection and appointment process was outside the scope of the evaluation, these perceptions indicate that it is, potentially, a high-risk area that requires attention.

OIOS-IED made seven important recommendations to address the issues raised by the evaluation, which had been accepted by DPKO/DFS. These included that DPKO/DFS should develop and implement a comprehensive and systematic senior leadership orientation and training strategy for newly appointed leaders, ensuring a 'full spectrum, whole of DPKO/DFS effort'; ensuring that no new appointee to a senior leadership position deploys without completing a specified minimum of training and preparation and providing all new senior leadership appointees with an on-boarding focal point; ensuring that all senior leaders appointed to senior level positions in peacekeeping operations complete at least one DPKO/DFS senior leadership training within the first six month of their appointment; allocating sufficient funds in order to address the issue of ongoing funding of the Senior Mission Leaders course; establishing performance indicators and specific targets for the planned outcomes of the Senior Mission Leaders course; developing mission-specific handbooks tailored to suit the information and knowledge needs of senior leaders; and developing mission specific crisis management training for Mission Leadership Teams.

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Acronyms

ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
ASG	Assistant Secretary-General
D-1, D-2	Director Level 1, Director Level 2
DFS	Department of Field Support
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
FPD	DFS Field Personnel Division
IOC-HoMC	Intensive Orientation Course for Heads of Military Components
IMTC	Integrated Mission Training Centre
ITS	DPKO/DFS Integrated Training Service
JIU	United Nations Joint Inspection Unit
OHRM	United Nations Office of Human Resources Management
OIOS-IED	Inspection and Evaluation Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services
OMA	DPKO Office of Military Affairs
OO	Office of Operations
P-4, P-5	Professional category level 4, Professional category level 5
PD	DPKO Police Division
PBPS	DPKO/DFS Peacekeeping Best Practices Section
RB	Regular Budget
SA	Peacekeeping Support Account
SLIP	Senior Leadership Induction Programme (now SLP)
SLP	Senior Leadership Programme
SMART	Senior Mission Administration and Resources Training programme
SML	Senior Mission Leaders course
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
TIP	Thematic Impact Pathway
USG	Under-Secretary-General
ZIF	Centre for International Peace Operations (Berlin)

I. Introduction

1. In any large organization, senior leaders are conferred the responsibility, authority and trust to act in the name of the organization, and to guide it effectively towards its goals under all circumstances, whether calm or calamitous. In addition, senior leaders combine the representational and operational in a manner no other layer of an organization does.

2. Senior leaders in peacekeeping missions are no exception to this general rule, but as the complexity, size and threats to multilateral peacekeeping operations have increased, so too have the demands on their leaders. Deployed in hostile and often bleak environments, mission leaders are accountable for the management of operations costing up to one billion dollars annually, with thousands of uniformed and civilian personnel, and complex military, police and civilian operations. The risks are high, and mistakes are often highly visible. The Secretary-General has stated that his appointments of senior officials are critical to the Organization's performance and noted the importance of appointing suitably qualified personnel to leadership positions in the field.¹ As such, regardless of the competencies acquired elsewhere, orientation and training is critical to prepare new senior leaders stepping up to the unique challenges of leading UN peacekeeping missions.

3. Training of leaders has long been a focus. Two General Assembly resolutions have highlighted the need to address senior leadership training.² The Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (the "Brahimi report")³ addressed the critical importance of competent mission leadership. The 2008 strategic assessment of current and future training needs for United Nations peacekeeping identified leadership as a main cross-cutting skills gap as perceived by United Nations peacekeeping staff and partner institutions.⁴ The 2012-2013 Global Peacekeeping Training Needs Assessment referred to training as a "strategic investment in peacekeeping" and recommended strengthening senior management training.⁵ The Secretary-General also described peacekeeping training as a strategic investment for both the United Nations and the international community that can enable the provision of personnel more capable of meeting the complex challenges facing UN peacekeeping in its consolidation phase.⁶ Furthermore, he announced that he would explore ways in which training for leaders could be improved within existing means.⁷ Most recently, the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations highlighted that the quality of leadership is one of the most crucial factors in the success or failure of UN peace operations.⁸ In academic literature, too, it is widely acknowledged that individual leadership in peacekeeping operations is a key determinant of mission success or failure.⁹

¹ A/51/950, para. 230; A/61/858, para. 87.

² A/RES/48/42, para. 50; A/RES/49/37, para. 49.

³ A/55/305 S/2000/809, paras. 93-101.

⁴ DPKO/DFS Strategic Peacekeeping Training Needs Assessment, Oct. 2008 (internal document).

⁵ DPKO/DFS Global Peacekeeping Training Needs Assessment, 2012-2013 (internal document).

⁶ A/65/644, para. 3.

⁷ A/66/311-S/2011/527 para 49.

⁸ A/70/95-S/2015/446, para 268-278.

⁹ See, for example, the finding cited by Doyle in http://acuns.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Doyle_BuildingPeace.pdf.

4. The topic of senior leadership training was suggested to OIOS-IED by DPKO/DFS in the course of work-plan consultations in 2013 and was later confirmed as a high-risk topic by the IED peacekeeping risk assessment exercise conducted late that year.

5. The general frame of reference for OIOS evaluation is provided in the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/2000/8). With reference to regulation 7.1¹⁰ the overall objectives of this evaluation were:

- a) To determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the extent to which current DPKO/DFS senior leadership training programmes in general, and the Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course in particular, result in the provision of personnel more capable of meeting the complex challenges facing senior mission leaders in the field; and
- b) To enable the Secretariat and Member States to engage in systematic reflection, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of DPKO/DFS senior leadership training.

Furthermore, the evaluation was designed and conducted in accordance with the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group.

II. Background

6. The DPKO/DFS policy on Training for all United Nations Peacekeeping Personnel outlines the roles and responsibilities in United Nations peacekeeping training.¹¹ Within DPKO/DFS, the Integrated Training Service (ITS) of the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division (DPET), which was established in November 2005, plays a strategic, coordinating role among peacekeeping training actors. It collaborates with and is supported by Member States, DPKO/DFS offices, the Office of Human Resource Management, training sections of other relevant Secretariat departments, and peacekeeping managers and staff (see Chart 1 below).

7. ITS is responsible for the direction and coordination of peacekeeping training, including the identification of training needs, the development of training standards and materials and the delivery of training programmes.¹² Management and leadership training are among those needs, and are managed by a small specialised group within ITS. In discharging these responsibilities, ITS draws on the support of partners in the United Nations and among Member States, who contribute to the funding, development and/or delivery of training programmes.

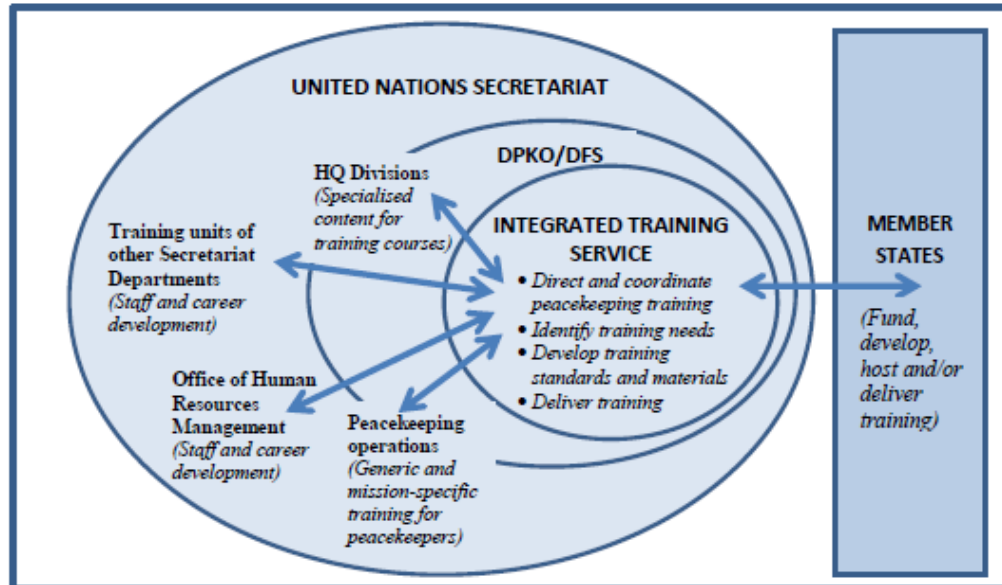
¹⁰ Article VII.

¹¹ DPKO/DFS, Policy: Training for all United Nations Peacekeeping Personnel, 1 May 2010 (unpublished).

¹² ST/SGB/2010/1, 5.5 (c).

Chart 1

DPKO/DFS's Integrated Training Service coordinates with other UN entities and Member States to develop and deliver senior leadership training programmes



8. In 2008 ITS stated it would develop a senior leadership training strategy for peacekeeping which will be part of the overall training strategy for peacekeeping and will also be an integral part of the DPKO/DFS approach to senior leadership selection.¹³ However, this strategy never materialised and remained an informal ITS document.

9. At present, four DPKO/DFS training programmes are directed specifically to actual or potential senior peacekeeping leaders. Two are available to both civilian and uniformed leaders: the Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course (offered primarily to potential leaders) and the Senior Leadership Programme (SLP), intended to be undertaken as a mandatory training by all newly appointed senior staff at a D-2 level and above within the first six months of their appointment. The Senior Mission Administration and Resources Training (SMART) programme is attended only by civilian personnel serving mostly at the P-4 and P-5 level, while a fourth programme, the Intensive Orientation Course for Heads of Military Components (IOC-HoMC), is organised and offered on an ad hoc basis by the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) in conjunction with ITS. See Table 1 for details on the different courses.

10. Other preparatory and ongoing activities include Headquarters-based briefings for new appointees ('in-briefings') by staff familiar with the mission, meetings (where possible) with predecessors or others who have held the role, briefings in the mission, ad hoc discussions with content experts, retreats with peers, and the possibility of mentoring and 360 degree performance feedback. Furthermore, incoming leaders are briefed about the relevant guidance

¹³ A/62/727 para 101.

materials for the missions including end of assignment reports of relevant staff if available. Each of these activities is coordinated by a different part of DPKO/DFS, with involvement from DPA and occasionally OHRM. In addition, military and police personnel receive pre-deployment training delivered by and in their own countries¹⁴, following guidance prepared by the ITS. No central coordination point exists.

11. Within ITS, the Leadership Management and Communications Training Team is responsible for organizing the SLP, SML and SMART programmes. It is staffed with three professional-level posts and one general staff member. The IOC-HoMC is managed jointly by ITS and OMA with a post allocation of one professional-level post.

12. Training activities are funded as a line item in the DPKO/DFS budget. Since 2010-11, when the funding appropriated for the ITS was cut severely from roughly \$4 million to \$2.3 million, the funding for senior leadership training has depended to a large extent on voluntary financial and in-kind contributions by Member States hosting or otherwise supporting the respective training. During the 2014-15 budget period, a total of roughly \$775,000 has been allocated from various funding sources to the DPKO/DFS leadership training. The largest share (55.6 per cent) is allocated to the SMART, 35.3 per cent allocated to the SML, 8.8 per cent to the SLP and 0.4 per cent to the IOC-HoMC.

13. Most other preparatory activities for senior leaders are not separately funded. The input consists chiefly of staff time in meeting face-to-face or otherwise interacting with new or recent appointees. In the case of military preparation, Member State contributions have funded the preparation of guidance documentation for military and police contingent leaders. In the case of police, officers seconded by Member States are stationed within ITS, and are largely dedicated to police-related training. They are not involved in senior leadership training. In addition, while the Standing Police Capacity has officers with training responsibilities, they are focused on field mission activities.

¹⁴ A/RES/49/37.

Table 1
Senior leadership training courses conducted by DPKO/DFS

Course	First offered	Frequency, duration, status	Participants	Budget 2014-15¹⁵	Administration	Objectives
Senior Mission Leaders (SML)	April 2005	Twice per year; 10 days; non-mandatory	Member State nominees/ UN staff with civilian, police and military backgrounds; Director Level 1 equivalent and higher; around 26 participants per course	\$273.579 (35.3 per cent of total senior leadership training budget)	Conducted by ITS (DPKO/DFS); Hosted by a Member State; Funded by supporting Member States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare participants to assume roles and responsibilities associated with serving as a member of a mission's leadership team; • Deepen the understanding of Member State officials of contemporary United Nations peacekeeping missions; • Increase the number of trained leaders available for potential appointments to leadership posts in DPKO peacekeeping missions.
Senior Leadership Programme (SLP) ¹⁶	June 2005	Twice per year, 5 days; mandatory for eligible participants	Senior UN peacekeeping field managers within first 6 months of appointment; Director Level 2 and higher; up to 20 participants per course	\$68.000 (8.8 per cent of total senior leadership training budget)	Conducted by ITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable participants to engage in in-depth exploration of peacekeeping issues and to prepare for the specific challenges of their new assignment
Senior Mission Administration and Resources Training (SMART) programme	2006	Once per year; one year duration (face-to-face workshops and e-learning modules)	UN managers at P-4 and P-5 levels; 40 participants per course	\$430.900 (55.6 per cent of total senior leadership training budget)	Conducted by ITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train and qualify senior support staff managers in peacekeeping support functions.
Intensive Orientation Course for Heads of Military Components (IOC-HoMC)	2012-2013	5-days	Appointed and designated Heads of (UN) Military Components	\$3.000 (0.4 % of total senior leadership training budget)	Organised by OMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable Heads of Military Components to discharge their duties and responsibilities with maximum proficiency in United Nations peacekeeping operations; • Improve the understanding of the structure, institutional context and processes of United Nations peacekeeping missions.

¹⁵ Includes only funds for training delivery; excludes voluntary funds for updating training modules of the SMART programme or in-kind contributions by Member States hosting or otherwise supporting respective training courses.

¹⁶ Formerly Senior Leadership Induction Programme (SLIP).

III. Scope and Methodology

14. The evaluation examined the effectiveness of DPKO/DFS senior leadership training, with particular focus on the Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course, over the period 2012-2015. It sought to establish the contribution of DPKO/DFS training and supportive activities complementing training to the capacity of senior mission leaders to meet the challenges of their roles. In this regard, ‘effectiveness’ was measured as the perceived success of training in preparing senior leaders for the challenges of their roles. While leadership training plays a critical role in preparing senior leaders to assume roles and responsibilities associated with serving as a member of the Mission Leadership Team, training is not the only determinant of their performance.

15. The evaluation also examined the funding, administrative support, conduct, participation and outcomes of the SML. The SML was chosen for more detailed analysis because it is the largest of the senior leadership training programmes targeted at senior leaders as defined below and likely to have the greatest operational impact. The training and induction programmes of two United Nations entities that also place leaders into post-conflict and emergency situations – the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – were used as comparator senior leadership training programmes.

16. The training of senior leaders in peacekeeping is conducted within the broader continuum of their selection, preparation, briefing, induction and support in the field.¹⁷ Each element in the continuum is likely to affect, and be affected by, the others. The evaluation did not include the process by which senior leaders are nominated, selected and appointed but this has been addressed briefly as relevant stakeholders raised it spontaneously and because of the risk associated with this issue. These activities are the first stage in the broader continuum of activities and play a critical role in determining both the type and extent of training and other preparation likely to be required. The evaluation also did not encompass senior leadership of special political missions, although appointees to such missions are eligible for and do participate in similar training programmes as those in DPKO/DFS-led missions.

17. For the purpose of this evaluation, senior leaders were defined as those constituting the core leadership team of a peacekeeping operation as identified by DFS on the list of senior staff in peacekeeping. In the case of the larger, integrated missions, this typically encompassed the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), the two Deputy SRSGs, the Chief of Staff, the Force Commander, the Police Commissioner, the Director of Mission Support, the Director of Political and/or Civil Affairs, and, in some cases, their deputies (among others). These positions are generally classified at Under-Secretary-General (USG), Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) and Director Level 2 (D-2), levels. In smaller missions, including military-led missions, the positions may include a number of Director Level 1 (D-1) and Professional Level 5 (P-5) staff. The latter were excluded from this evaluation, as individuals classified at this level are not generally eligible for the main senior leadership training programmes SML, SLP and IOC-HoMC.

¹⁷ This continuum was first described in June 2005, A/60/696, para. 92.

18. The results of this evaluation are based on:
- (a) Analysis of administrative records and official and unofficial United Nations documents related to senior leadership training and induction in peacekeeping;
 - (b) Analysis of the evaluation forms completed by participants in SML and SLP courses conducted in 2012, 2013 and 2014;
 - (c) An online questionnaire sent to all leaders in current peacekeeping operations at 1 April 2015, which achieved a response rate of 64.6 per cent; and
 - (d) An online questionnaire sent to all participants in SML courses conducted in 2012, 2013 and 2014, which achieved a response rate of 46.7 per cent;
 - (e) 29 semi-structured interviews, in person or by telephone with:
 - (i) Senior leaders in DPKO/DFS Headquarters and in peacekeeping operations;
 - (ii) Personnel in training and operational areas of DPKO/DFS;
 - (iii) Personnel with training responsibilities in UNHCR, OCHA and the Centre for International Peace Operations in Berlin (ZIF); and
 - (iv) Participants in SML courses conducted in 2012, 2013 and 2014.

19. The evaluation had some limitations. Some leaders and course participants could not be contacted for the questionnaires or interviews, or declined to respond to invitations sent to them. It is possible that some non-respondents, or categories of non-respondents, felt differently than respondents about the training and other preparation they had received. However, given the response rates achieved for the questionnaires and the range of interviewees consulted, the results are adequately robust.

20. The evaluation also refers to leaders' perceptions on how their capacity to handle challenges had increased after taking training. However, without knowing the baseline from which each leader entered his or her preparation, the actual increment in knowledge and capacity gained cannot be estimated. Nor can any assessment be made of the extent to which the self-assessed capacity gains coincided with the intentions of the course designers or were proportionate to the time and cost invested in delivering them. Course evaluations conducted immediately after the conclusion of courses indicate participants' expected gains, rather than those that became evident after a period of time.¹⁸

21. OIOS-IED thanks senior mission leaders, current and former DPKO/DFS staff, participants and mentors in recent SML courses, and staff of other United Nations entities for their contribution to the evaluation. The draft report of the evaluation was reviewed by DPKO/DFS before finalization. The formal comments of those Departments on the final draft are included as an Annex to this report.

¹⁸ Course evaluation forms completed by SML participants in 2013 and 2014 listed (*inter alia*) actions that participants planned to take, based on what they had learned from the course, in order to indicate the potential for the application of learning and behavior change.

IV. Results

A. Senior leaders' diverse background and varying degree of United Nations experience created challenges for training

22. The background and qualifications of newly appointed leaders determined the extent to which knowledge of United Nations peacekeeping structures and operations can be assumed, or has to be specifically given to leaders through training or other interventions.

Leaders were from diverse backgrounds

23. Senior leaders were appointed into peacekeeping operations from diverse backgrounds. The candidates included men and women with high-level diplomatic, military and police backgrounds in their own countries, as well as individuals who had held in-country representative roles (including Resident Coordinator and/or Humanitarian Coordinator) for other United Nations entities and individuals who had served in Director-level positions in United Nations headquarters, including in DPKO/DFS.

24. In contrast with some other United Nations entities that placed leaders into post-conflict and emergency situations,¹⁹ there was no defined career pathway to senior leadership positions in a peacekeeping operation or any mandatory requirement for advancement to these positions.

While the majority of leaders had some experience in the United Nations, some had little or no such prior experience

25. DPKO/DFS data indicated that in March 2015, 38 per cent of current leaders at head and deputy head of mission levels had not held a staff position (D-2 level or below) in the United Nations before being appointed to a senior leadership position. The remaining 62 per cent had some previous staff experience, although not necessarily in peace operations.

26. Respondents to the OIOS-IED senior leaders' questionnaire also reflected this diversity. Of the 51 leaders who responded, more than one-third had no previous experience in the United Nations, having come to peacekeeping direct from diplomatic and government roles or other careers.²⁰ Military and police contingent leaders were more likely to have had little or no United Nations experience.²¹ In addition, many current leaders were new to their posts. Close to half of the questionnaire respondents (45.1 per cent) reported having held a senior leadership position in a peacekeeping operation for one year or less.

¹⁹ For example, UNHCR and UNOCHA appoint senior leaders mostly from internal candidates who have generally had prior careers with those entities, including considerable field experience, and have undergone training and assessment to establish their capacity to fill those roles.

²⁰ Two thirds of those with no previous United Nations experience reported that they had come to the United Nations direct from diplomatic and government positions (33 per cent respectively).

²¹ 43.8 per cent of military contingent leaders and 66.7 per cent of police contingent leaders reported having had no previous United Nations experience, compared with 28.1 per cent of civilians. (The differences were not significant in a chi-squared test, although in a population census such as this one significance tests are not required to establish differences).

B. Training was neither consistently offered to newly appointed senior leaders nor taken by them

A significant number of current leaders did not complete mandatory training within the required time period

27. As referred above (see Table 1), the SLP, unlike all other training courses, is a mandatory training for senior UN peacekeeping field managers (D-2 level and higher) within the first six month of their appointment. ITS records show that only 61.8 per cent (42 out of 68) of current leaders at the D-2 level and above had completed the course by March 2015 (see Table 2). The 38.2 per cent (26 out of the 68) of the current eligible leaders who did not complete the SLP all missed the mandatory time period for completion (see Table 3).

Table 2
Almost two thirds of eligible leaders had completed the mandatory Senior Leadership Programme (SLP) course at March 2015

Breakdown of the 42 current eligible leaders (D-2 & above) who have completed the SLP by various categories

Post level	No.	% of leaders	Component	No.	% of eligible leaders	Gender	No.	% of eligible leaders
USG	6	75.0%	Military	9	47.4%	Male	36	63.2%
ASG	14	56.0%	Police	7	100.0%	Female	6	54.5%
D2	22	62.9%	Civilian	26	61.9%			
Total	42	61.8%						

Source: ITS data compiled by OIOS-IED

28. While all eligible police leaders had completed the course, military leaders were the least likely to have completed the SLP (perhaps because they attended the targeted IOC-HoMC course). Among respondents to the OIOS-IED senior mission leaders questionnaire, the self-reported rate of SLP completion among those formally eligible to complete it was somewhat lower than the total ITS rate (53.3 per cent).

Table 3
More than one third of the eligible leaders did not complete the mandatory Senior Leadership Programme within the required time period

Breakdown of the 26 current eligible leaders (D-2 and above) who have not completed the SLP within the first six months of their appointment

Post level	No.	% of leaders	Component	No.	% of eligible leaders	Gender	No.	% of eligible leaders
USG	2	25.0%	Military	10	52.6%	Male	21	28.8%
ASG	11	44.0%	Police	0	0.0%	Female	5	33.3%
D2	13	37.1%	Civilian	16	38.1%			
Total	26	38.2%						

Source: ITS data compiled by OIOS-IED

14.7% of the participants of the DPKO/DFS ‘flagship’ Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course had been appointed to leadership posts in peacekeeping missions

29. SML course completion was neither a prerequisite nor a guarantee of appointment to senior leadership positions in peacekeeping. Despite the objective of the SML to increase the number of trained leaders available for potential appointments to leadership posts in DPKO peacekeeping missions no specific performance target was defined. DPKO/DFS course records showed that 20.5 per cent (18 out of 88) of the senior mission leaders in place in March 2015²² had completed the course. Only a small proportion of course participants – 19% per cent (62 out of 326 participants) – had been appointed or promoted to senior leadership positions in the Organization.²³ Considering only all appointments and promotions to senior leadership posts in DPKO-led peacekeeping missions, the appointment rate decreased to 14.7% per cent (48 out of 326 participants).

30. 18.9% (45 out of 238)²⁴ of the SML participants from Member States held senior positions in their respective government or diplomatic service and could act as advocates, supporters or facilitators for United Nations peacekeeping which was an objective of the SML. The effects of these activities could not be assessed.

31. Table 3 shows the percentage of mission leaders at March 2015 who had completed the SML course, by level, mission component and gender respectively.

Table 4
Only 1 in 5 current leaders had completed the Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course at March 2015

Breakdown of SML completion of current leaders by various categories

Post level	No.	% of all leaders	Component	No.	% of all leaders	Gender	No.	% of all leaders
USG	1	12.5	Military	3	14.3%	Male	6	13.7%
ASG	2	8.0%	Police	1	12.5%	Female	10	53.3%
D2	10	28.6%	Civilian	12	23.7%			
D1	5	25.0%						
Total	18	20.5%						

Source: ITS data compiled by OIOS-IED

²² March 2015 was the cut-off date for administrative data used in this evaluation.

²³ ITS records on SML participants appointed to senior leadership positions, covering 13 SML training courses from January 2008 to October 2014.

²⁴ ITS data for the last 13 SML courses from 2008-2014.

More than one third of the senior leaders had not undertaken the Senior Leadership Programme (SLP) or Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course

32. Analysis of ITS records showed that 38.6 per cent (34 out of 88) of the current senior leaders in peacekeeping operations had undertaken neither the SLP nor the SML training. Of the most senior leaders (USG/ASG) 36.4 per cent (12 out of 33) had not undertaken the SLP or SML training. All of the leaders of the police component had undertaken the SLP or SML whereas among the leaders of the military and civilian component, significant numbers had not undertaken the SLP or SML training (47.6 per cent and 40.7 per cent).

Training given through the Senior Mission Administration and Resources Training programme (SMART) and the Intensive Orientation for Heads of Military Components (IOC-HoMC) had varied take-up rates

33. ITS data showed that 28.6 per cent (4 out of 14) of current senior leaders in mission support roles had completed the SMART and 71.4% (10 out of 14) of current Heads of Military Components had completed the IOC-HoMC. Among respondents to the OIOS-IED questionnaire of current leaders, 12.1 per cent of those responding to the question reported having undertaken the SMART course, and 24.3 per cent the IOC HoMC-course.

Clearly more than one quarter of current leaders and more than one third of the civilian component had not undertaken any of the DPKO/DFS senior leader training

34. ITS records show that 28.4 per cent (25 out of 88) of the current senior leaders had not undertaken any of the DPKO/DFS senior leader training while the most senior leaders (USG/ASG) accounted for 30.3 per cent (10 out of 33). All leaders of the police component had completed at least one senior leader training whereas among the leaders of the military component 19.0 per cent (4 out of 21) did not undertake any DPKO/DFS leadership training. The most likely to deploy without any DPKO/DFS leadership training were civilian senior leaders. The data shows that 35.6 per cent (21 out of 61) of them had not undertaken any DPKO/DFS senior leadership training.

Table 5

A significant number of leaders had not undertaken any DPKO/DFS training at March 2015

Breakdown of current leaders without any DPKO/DFS senior leadership training

Post level	No.	% of all leaders	Component	No.	% of all leaders	Gender	No.	% of all leaders
USG	2	25.0%	Military	4	19.0%	Male	22	30.1%
ASG	8	32.0%	Police	0	0.0%	Female	3	20.0%
D2	6	17.1%	Civilian	21	35.6%			
D1	9	45.0%						
Total	25	28.4%						

Source: ITS data compiled by OIOS-IED

Briefings and other non-course based activities were the most common forms of preparation undertaken.

35. Mission-specific briefings at Headquarters and in-mission briefings were much more likely than any training to have been undertaken by questionnaire respondents (75 per cent and 81 per cent of valid responses respectively), perhaps because briefings were not time-bound in the same way as more formal courses and, at least in the case of in-mission briefings, did not require a trip to New York. Despite this, compliance rates were still well below the expected 100 per cent.

36. 40 per cent of leaders reported in the OIOS-IED questionnaire having done both SLP and Headquarters-based in-briefings in New York. The remainder had had less induction and, in a substantial minority of cases (21 per cent) senior leaders reported having deployed with neither. One leader currently serving in a peacekeeping operation reported in an interview having had no preparation at all prior to his current deployment, despite never previously having served in a DPKO/DFS-led mission.

37. Several reasons were given by questionnaire respondents and interviewees for their inability to complete the required training. These included lack of invitation to participate and time constraints. Almost one in three respondents (30 per cent) reported not having been invited to join the SLP, despite ostensibly being eligible to do so.²⁵ Among those who did have the opportunity, lack of time (including prolonged appointment processes followed by urgency to deploy), inability to travel to New York (particularly once in the mission area) and inconvenient timing were the main reasons given for non-participation. Post-deployment, the training ‘window’ of a new appointee narrowed considerably.

38. Headquarters-based interviewees suggested that attitudes to training also accounted for some of the ambivalence towards it among new appointees. On the organisational side, several headquarters staff reported that there was no compulsion to complete the training, particularly once an appointee has been deployed, and no obvious sanction for non-completion. Some questioned the commitment to training at the highest levels of DPKO/DFS. On the side of the appointees, motivations appeared to vary, with some leaders reporting in interviews that they had actively sought out training opportunities and others said by headquarters to have accorded training a low priority, preferring to “learn on the job” and reluctant to accept guidance.

C. Peacekeeping leaders valued the training they received

39. Among the leaders who had undertaken training and other preparatory activities almost all found them useful. More than 90 per cent of leaders responding to the OIOS-IED questionnaire reported that the training and preparatory support they had received from DPKO/DFS had increased their capacity to deal with the challenges they subsequently faced in mission either a great deal (47.9 per cent) or somewhat (43.8 per cent). Those who had completed the SML course were particularly likely to regard their training outcome

²⁵ That is, a post at the D-2 level or higher.

positively.²⁶ Confidence in their capacity to deal with challenges was greatest amongst those who had undertaken the greatest number of preparatory activities.²⁷ Thus, there was a clear correlation between the number of trainings and preparations taken and the subjective sense of their increased capacity.

40. Different respondents appreciated different elements of the training received. No overall preference was obvious from the responses to the OIOS-IED questionnaire. Topics suggested as being useful include - the discussion of roles and the understanding of relationships within DPKO/DFS and missions,²⁸ United Nations rules and regulations, the legal framework for peacekeeping operations, political engagement with the host government, ethics and conduct, gender issues and the zero tolerance policy on SEA, negotiating skills, and working with a team in a complex environment.

41. Some leaders were able to cite examples of challenges for which they felt well equipped as a result of their preparation.²⁹ However, the examples cited in the questionnaire and in interviews varied widely, reflecting the diversity of roles and mission circumstances in which leaders worked. A considerable number related to situations requiring integrated civilian-uniformed interactions within the mission's management team and challenges associated with alleged violations of rules and regulations (including conduct and discipline) by mission personnel.

42. Those leaders who undertook face-to-face training expressed appreciation to the evaluation team and in post-course evaluation forms for the opportunity to build networks, familiarize themselves with Headquarters staff and structures and sit in a room with a mix of military, police and civilian leaders. Many had not experienced this before and so valued it highly.

A majority of Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course participants reported a high degree of its utility

43. Current peacekeeping leaders who had completed the SML course and had passed two weeks interacting with co-participants in a residential training environment were more likely than other leaders to believe that their preparation had increased their capacity to deal with the challenges they subsequently faced in missions.³⁰ Sixty-five per cent of the current leaders who responded to the survey reported that they found the SML very useful for their subsequent leadership role. Regardless of whether participants did or did not subsequently take up senior leadership positions in peacekeeping, they reported gaining utility from the course, with 33.3 per cent claiming that they had been able to apply the SML learning in their work to a great extent and 53.8 per cent somewhat.

²⁶ This was especially the case when military status was controlled for in the analysis, as military personnel reported significantly higher levels of perceived preparedness than members of other components.

²⁷ When military status was controlled for in the analysis.

²⁸ 5.6 per cent of respondents volunteered this in open-ended responses to the senior leaders' questionnaire.

²⁹ Among questionnaire respondents, 19.6 per cent did so.

³⁰ Especially when military status was controlled for in the analysis.

44. SML course participants were particularly likely to mention that they had benefited from the interaction with their peers and mentors, both in evaluation forms completed immediately post-course and in questionnaires and interviews for this evaluation.

45. Invited through ‘in course’ evaluation forms to suggest changes to the course, most SML participants struggled to find major areas for improvement. Most considered the course to be well designed and delivered, and suggested relatively minor tweaks, if any. These included, inter alia, ‘refreshing’ the case studies to better reflect the current realities confronting peacekeeping, limiting static presentations by content experts, and providing more opportunity for networking and reflection.

Reported utility for the Senior Leadership Programme (SLP) was also high but some participants suggested changes

46. Similarly, a majority of respondents to the OIOS-IED questionnaire who had completed the SLP indicated that they had found it either very useful (61.1 per cent) or somewhat useful (33.3 per cent) for their subsequent leadership role. However, a number of interviewees suggested that more SML-like components, including mentors and the opportunities to apply the information obtained rather than just passively absorbing it, would improve its value to participants.

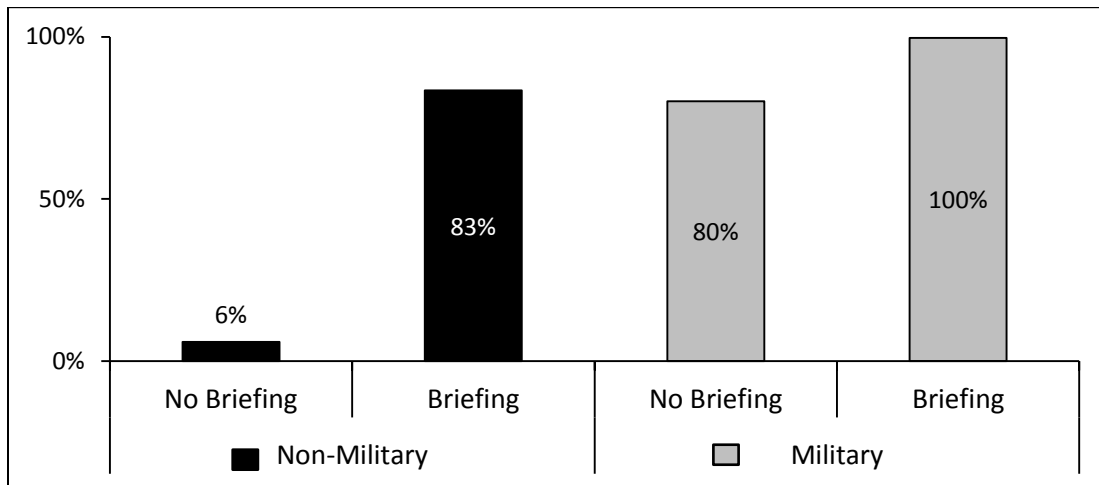
Current senior leaders reported high utility for the other trainings and supportive activities complementing training in particular for briefings from peers and counterparts

47. Although only a limited number of respondents to the OIOS-IED survey had completed the IOC-HoMC and the SMART course, satisfaction with them was high. All but one of the participants in each course considered it very useful for their subsequent leadership role.

48. The briefings offered to new appointees before or just after deployment added mission-specificity to the preparation. Seventy-two per cent of questionnaire respondents who had done mission-specific Headquarters-based briefings found them very useful and a somewhat smaller proportion – 63.6 per cent – found the in-mission briefings very useful. However, two Headquarters-based interviewees pointed out that their quality and intensity varied depending on the personnel and time involved. OIOS noted that the related DPKO/DFS guidelines for in-briefings and debriefings were under revision in September 2015. The opportunity to obtain briefings from peers and counterparts was particularly valuable. Both military and non-military leaders who had done such briefings were much more likely to report in the OIOS-IED questionnaire that their capacity to deal with challenges had increased “a great deal” than those who had not. The effect was higher among civilian leaders than military leaders (see Chart 2).

Chart 2

Leaders who undertook briefings with peers and counterparts reported that their capacity had increased “a great deal”; the effect was higher among non-military leaders



Source: OIOS-IED survey of senior mission leaders, April 2015

49. Truly customised preparation, including the opportunity for new appointees to seek and obtain particular information or access (such as to predecessors or a mentor), remained limited. However, a mentoring programme for Heads and Deputy Heads of Mission was piloted in November 2014 and offered mentoring and leadership partnering with former senior mission leaders to 14 new appointees.

Support after deployment was generally valued

50. Leaders also generally appreciated post-deployment support. The opportunity to share insights and best practices with peers in role-specific retreats was particularly valued. A number of leaders also reported having sought advice from Headquarters staff on a mandate-related or operational matter (81 per cent and 90 per cent of questionnaire respondents respectively), and substantial proportions of those (66 per cent and 41 per cent respectively) were very satisfied with the response they received. Some suggested that improving the discoverability of online reference materials, including best practices, would be helpful. Several Headquarters-based directors of mission Integrated Operational Teams reported that their interactions with leaders varied in usefulness, with some leaders welcoming regular ‘check-ins’ and advice and others preferring fewer approaches or even rejecting guidance.

D. Leaders’ feedback demonstrated gaps in the training offered

Leaders reported having faced challenges for which the training had not prepared them adequately

51. Despite the overall reported utility, almost one-quarter (22.9 per cent) of questionnaire respondents as well as a number of interviewees cited examples of challenges for which they felt the training had not equipped them well. Descriptions of the challenges provided by

leaders in interviews demonstrated the seriousness with which the challenges were regarded. A number of Headquarters staff also provided examples of challenges they believed had not been well handled by mission leaders.

52. The reasons for the sense of under-preparedness were as varied as the challenges themselves. These varied depending on the background, role and mission environment of each individual, and covered different areas of the mission's management and mandate. Vulnerabilities were attributed to lack of experience in particular content areas, work environments or situations and/or lack of resources (including networks and reference materials) to fill those gaps quickly. This is partly caused by the earlier noted diverse background of leaders and their varying degrees of experience in the UN (paragraph 22-26) which in turn makes difficult the tailoring of training to meet specific individual gaps.

53. Difficulties mentioned by interviewees included those with potentially serious consequences for mandate implementation such as managing crisis situations and working with a hostile government. Other concerns cited included:

- Resolving management and administrative issues;
- Insufficient knowledge of administrative and other procedures required by the United Nations (including conduct and discipline);
- Civilian-military interactions within the mission, a tendency (especially among uniformed personnel) to default to the ways particular situations were handled in their own countries; and
- Lack of experience of decision-making in teams requiring military and police and civilians to work together. (This reportedly tested even those with substantial prior United Nations experience.)

54. However, questionnaire responses showed that leaders who had not held a United Nations position prior to taking on their senior leadership role in peacekeeping were no more likely to report challenges for which they felt under-equipped than those who had held such a position.

Under-preparedness contributed to increasing leaders' stress levels and feelings of disconnect and work overload

55. Under-preparedness appeared to have affected leaders adversely at an individual level. Personal stress was the most common consequence mentioned by leaders. Asked for consequences of inadequate training, interviewees reported the following:

- Feeling like "a complete outsider", due to lack of networks to seek information or resolve issues quickly;
- "Painful" situations of not knowing how to get things done;
- Working "12-13 hour days, then going home and reading ...to learn as much as I could as fast as I could", while worrying that he might inadvertently "step outside of [his] remit."; and
- Having "no concept as to how it all fitted" and having to "do a lot of self-learning."

Leaders reported facing information overload

56. Leaders reported being inundated with too much information. One interviewee spoke about a “suitcase” of documents given to senior leaders. Consequently, a number of leaders pleaded for short bulletins providing the non-negotiable knowledge and critical guidance on the issues on which they personally needed only a broad appreciation (one interviewee suggested producing a crash course along the lines of a “Mission Management for Dummies” introduction), and more targeted and detailed curricula on the matters with which they would be dealing in depth.

57. Additional suggestions included holding separate sessions for those with and without prior United Nations experience and gearing the training to individual needs. Several interviewees also referred to the IOC-HoMC as a model that could be replicated, particularly for the police.

Training did not adequately address team related challenges

58. Training did not adequately address the role and importance of the Mission Leadership Team in decision-making. As one interviewee stated, “one of the most important things about training in peacekeeping is creating a sense of the ensemble.”

59. In the OIOS-IED questionnaire and in interviews, many leaders reported tensions and misunderstanding within their teams, often related to roles, responsibilities and procedures. Navigating relationships across the uniformed-civilian pillars was challenging for many new appointees and was the source of considerable frustration, especially where the input of one pillar (e.g. mission support) was critical to the output of another (e.g. military redeployments). The problems were magnified by the frequent turnover of military and police personnel, which regularly placed new leaders into existing teams. The interaction between substantive and support functions in missions was also likely to be problematic.

60. For the broader leadership team in a mission, an under-prepared leader could appear to “parachute in” with little understanding of the institutional culture or the team, and slow down or subvert decision-making processes, frustrating those around him or her. Interviewees cited examples of decisions that had resulted in “experimentation” with different tools that had not been used before, leaders whose approaches had hampered relations with local authorities and forfeited the opportunity to influence local processes, and actions that had resulted in civilian deaths at the hands of mission personnel reacting to a crisis situation. Some emphasised the difficulty of building effective teams across uniformed and civilian boundaries where members “tend to go off in their own direction.” The interaction between substantive and support functions in missions was particularly likely to be problematic.

61. Attempts to train and exercise leadership teams in crisis management through scenario-based training were initiated by DPKO/DFS on several occasions, with varied results. Headquarters staff reported difficulty in achieving buy-in from mission leadership teams, especially when real-life crises required attention, and that the scenarios needed to be carefully chosen.

62. The concept and advantages of ‘collective training’, where leaders with different roles are brought together for training, was mentioned by two interviewees, both currently uniformed leaders in peacekeeping operations.

E. Both the design and the delivery of the training and related activities contributed to the problems experienced by leaders

63. The problem of under-preparation was sufficiently widespread among the leaders and DPKO/DFS officials consulted for this evaluation to warrant more detailed analysis of its causes. Explanations were reportedly found in both the design and delivery of the preparation.

Generic and supply-driven training led to demand for more customized training

64. The SLP and SML were generic in content, with limited opportunity for in-depth exploration. Although they delivered a detailed overview of peacekeeping structures and operation, they did not fully address leaders’ specific training needs.

65. A number of questionnaire respondents and interviewees expressed a wish for more customization in the preparation of leaders for particular needs and functions and less of the “generic omnibus”, “pressure cooker”, “one size fits all” information “squeezes” associated with courses and headquarters-based briefings. One interviewee favoured a “boutique system of learning, not a wholesale system.”

66. Briefings and other elements of the on-boarding process allowed for more mission-specific and role-specific preparation. However, as two interviewees observed, they “[may not] know what they should ask about” or how to “define what [they] don’t know”.

Location and time specific training also limited leaders’ opportunities for training

67. If training design was not customized to individual needs, neither was delivery. Both the training courses and Headquarters-based briefings required face-to-face interaction and hence were location-specific. In most cases, this also implied that they were time-specific. Face-to-face delivery assumed that people would be able and willing to make themselves available for a course where and when it was run, or come to New York for Headquarters briefings. Many leaders could not or would not and as a result, missed the training.

68. Although leaders have been provided electronic copies of the training and preparatory material after the training, little material was available online or through e-learning platforms, despite DPKO/DFS’ training principle on leveraging information technology and partnerships to ensure timely, accessible and efficient delivery of training.³¹ OIOS-IED notes that efforts were made to improve the online availability of resources and the SMART course supplements its workshops with six e-learning modules.

³¹ DPKO/DFS, Policy: Training for all United Nations Peacekeeping Personnel, 1 May 2010 (unpublished), para. 10(d).

Responsibility for the training of senior peacekeeping leaders was dispersed throughout DPKO/DFS

69. Despite the primacy accorded to ITS for directing and coordinating peacekeeping training³², no single office or division had responsibility for, or oversight of, the overall preparation of any particular individual. Every Office and Division within DPKO/DFS had some responsibility in relation to the identification, selection, training, induction, briefing and continuing support of senior peacekeeping leaders (see Table 5). Although its development was announced in 2008, a senior leadership training strategy never materialised.³³ Appointees did not receive a preparatory ‘checklist,’ contact points and a ‘one stop shop’ for inquiries, and in their absence those seeking information or support defaulted to particular units or individuals with whom they had established a rapport (notably staff of the Senior Leadership Appointments Section).

Table 5
Units/offices that support support senior leaders’ training

Activity	DPKO/DFS entity
Identification of senior leaders	Office of the Under-Secretary-General; Senior Leadership Appointments Section; Office of Operations
Selection of senior leaders	Senior Leadership Appointments Section; Office of the Under Secretary General/Executive Office of the Secretary General; Office of Military Affairs; Police Division
Training of senior leaders	Integrated Training Service; Office of Military Affairs
Administrative onboarding for senior leaders	Senior Leadership Appointments Section; Field Personnel Division; Office of Human Resource Management
Briefings and induction for senior leaders	Office of Operations/Integrated Operational Team; Office of Military Affairs; Police Division; Policy, Evaluation and Training Division; Senior Leadership Appointments Section
Continuing support	Office of Operations, substantive areas Senior Leadership Appointments Section
Specialized training of senior leaders	Conduct and Discipline, Police Division, Office of Human Resources Management, Office of Military Affairs, Department of Management

70. Other United Nations entities have developed a more holistic approach to the leader preparation and support. OCHA, for example, offers its series of services to new Humanitarian Coordinators – from selection and induction to continuing support – through its

³² DPKO/DFS, Policy: Training for all United Nations Peacekeeping Personnel, 1 May 2010 (unpublished), para. 19.

³³ A/62/727 para 101.

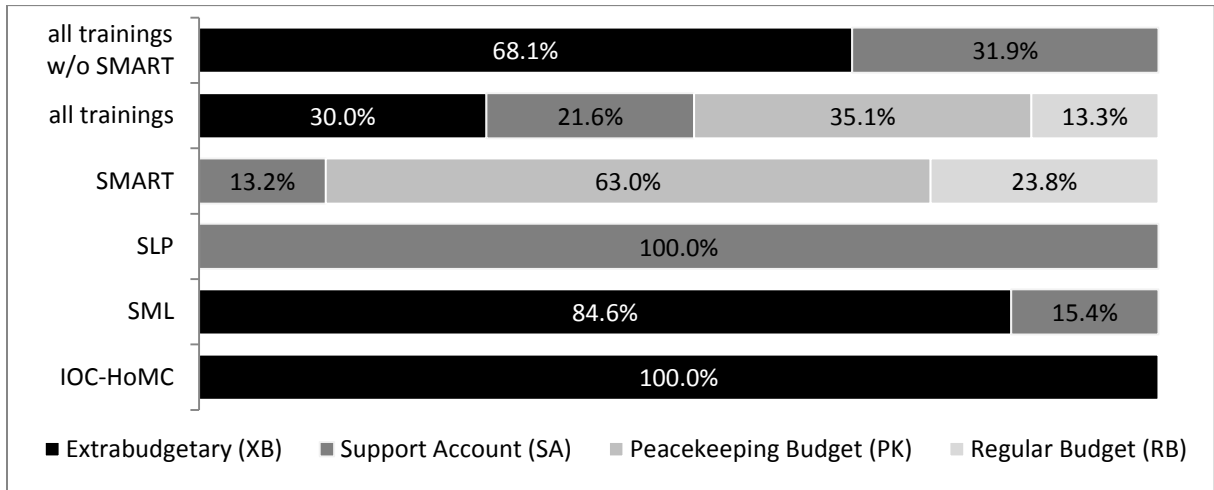
Humanitarian Leadership Strengthening Unit, which is staffed and funded to do so. New Humanitarian Coordinators know exactly where to go for help.

Training was largely dependent on extra-budgetary resources

71. In 2014-15, roughly \$775.000³⁴ and five staff members were dedicated to senior mission leader training (four in ITS and one in OMA). Only the staff, mentor and facilitator-related travel costs of two courses (SML and SLP) were funded from DPKO/DFS budget sources. All other activities relied on extra-budgetary input or support (IOC-HoMC and activities including the preparation of guidance documents for the military component), funded from mission budgets (SMART), or provided in-house (briefing) or on a pro bono basis (mentoring). Police training experts provided by Member States and seconded to ITS did work almost exclusively on police-specific tasks. Limitation of resources within ITS meant that resources allocated to senior leadership training could only be increased at the expense of those available for the totality of other peacekeeping training.

72. Although the budget for the SMART course was funded primarily from mission budgets and the support account OIOS was informed that the funding is not always assured. In contrast, the main training programmes actually targeted at senior leaders relied on extra-budgetary resources to a large extent. More than two-third (68 per cent) of the budget for the SML, SLP and IOC-HoMC came from extra-budgetary-resources. Although considered as DPKO/DFS ‘flagship’ course, the funding for the SML depended to 84.6 per cent on extra-budgetary resources and significant in-kind contributions by Member States. The funding for the IOC-HoMC depended entirely on extra-budgetary resources.

Chart 3
Funding sources of DPKO/DFS leadership training programmes



Source: Analysis of ITS and OMA data, excluding in-kind contributions

³⁴ This does not include significant in-kind contributions by Member States hosting or otherwise supporting the respective training in particular the SML.

73. While Member State support for the SML course and other senior leadership training initiatives was critical, the obligation to solicit funds on a regular basis in order to continue operating the training programme was costly in staff time.³⁵ It also risked creating perceptions that donor countries influenced the training agenda. While continuing efforts were made to balance participation in the SML course along geographic, gender and mission component lines, more than half the participants and mentors in courses conducted in 2012, 2013 and 2014 were from countries designated by the World Bank as ‘high income,’ and much lower proportions (37 per cent of participants and 22.2 per cent of mentors) were from low and lower-middle income countries.³⁶

The issue of political considerations in senior leaders’ appointments emerged as a potential risk factor for the achievement of the objectives of the training programmes

74. A critical assumption in the thematic impact pathway was that training participants are qualified and motivated and that training objectives cannot be met if the assumption is not true. Although the selection and appointment process of senior leaders fell outside the scope of this evaluation, stakeholders, including at senior levels, spontaneously raised this issue and considered that in some cases, there had been political interference by external actors in the selection process of the SRSGs and D/SRSGs. According to these interviewees, political considerations had prevailed over requirements of competence and merit in some cases and they viewed these appointments as having negative effects in the field, with the selected leaders setting poor examples for staff and impacting mission performance. Interviewees highlighted that not all gaps in an appointee’s skills or knowledge can be filled with training.

75. OIOS was not able to assess the substantive basis of these perceptions, but notes that, if true, the failure of the appointment system to select competent senior leaders constitutes a potential high risk, not only for the training objectives of the DPKO/DFS senior leadership training. OIOS notes that these views align with the recent findings of the of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations that, “there has not been a quantum improvement in the appointment of high-quality senior mission leaders”³⁷ and that the “lack of consistent application or a merit-based selection process for the highest level of mission leaders”³⁸ is a factor undermining the selection and preparation of leaders of UN peace operations.

V. Conclusion

76. The many positive aspects of the training offered by DPKO/DFS to their senior leaders are undeniable. The courses and briefings evaluated contained elements almost universally recognised as valuable, with participants reporting many praiseworthy aspects including a

³⁵ In 2007 the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations requested the Secretary-General to submit funding proposals for consideration by the General Assembly in order to address the funding issue of the SML (A/61/19 (Part II), para 207). OIOS was informed that such a funding proposal was never submitted.

³⁶ The World Bank classifies countries into four income levels: high, upper middle, lower middle and low. The 2015 classifications are listed at: <http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups>.

³⁷ A/70/95-S/2015/446 para. 268.

³⁸ A/70/95-S/2015/446 para 270.

high degree of utility of the training undertaken. At the same time, change is required on several fronts to address the gaps in preparation of DPKO/DFS senior leaders.

77. The evaluation highlighted the low degree of training uptake by senior leaders with more than one third not having undertaken the mandatory SLP training, and the high number of leaders with no SML training or, in fact any DPKO/DFS training. On top of this, up to a fifth of leaders reported having deployed without the opportunity of Headquarters-based briefings.

78. In this regard, it is useful to look at the results and operational difficulties of the SML. Despite its pertinent content and high quality, the majority of the SML's graduates end up working in positions other than in the United Nations, as many former SML participants are not nominated by Member States. At the same time, the majority of peacekeeping leaders have not had the opportunity to complete the course. The net result is that the course is not functioning as the career pipeline as originally intended. This missing link between SML participation and appointment to senior leadership positions illustrates the shared responsibility of the Organization and Member States to dignify the SML through use.

79. Despite the many positive aspects of the training offered, current leadership feels underprepared in the field, where they are expected to immediately master the complexity of Organization's often-technically demanding rules, lead thousands of men and women from different nationalities and cultures, respond to the demands of varied stakeholders including the Security Council, the Host Country's government and its citizens, while being surrounded by an increasingly non-permissive and lethal peacekeeping environment.

80. Remedies to address the challenges are available. One improvement would be for DPKO/DFS to shift leadership training from its present uncoordinated state to one that is explicitly predicated on a 'full spectrum, whole-of-DPKO/DFS effort.' This requires the recognition that it is not the ITS 'alone' which can support leadership training; rather, there are many other functional units within DPKO/DFS that deal with issues or topics of direct utility to senior leaders. This will need a move towards a culture of learning and the treatment of senior leadership training as a strategic investment within DPKO/DFS.

81. The new approach requires three specific steps: first, that each of these units relevant to senior leaders' training be identified; second, that such units determine *what* precisely they can offer to support senior leaders and third, *how* and *when* they can communicate this information to the leaders. Finally, all units should be interconnected, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities based on their comparative advantage and under the overall coordination of ITS. OIOS notes that a senior leadership policy was actually developed³⁹ but never implemented. A new updated policy, if developed by DPKO/DFS should be based on the concept of 'full spectrum' approach as enunciated above.

³⁹ A/62/727 para 101.

82. The strong preference expressed by senior leaders for training that is both customized and that reduces their information overload needs to be taken more into account. Both generic and customized training are necessary, with neither a substitute for the other.

83. The feedback from leaders with respect to challenges that arose from team-based situations also suggests that there should be more emphasis on training opportunities for Mission Leadership Teams as no single person can possibly have all the technical and substantive knowledge essential for the smooth running of a mission.

84. Training of leaders cannot be the exclusive responsibility of the Organization. Leaders have the on-going obligation to keep themselves 'fit for purpose.' While the Organization can and must support its leaders to the best of its ability and resources, it cannot provide them with ready, customized answers in all situations. It is here that a leader's own efforts are relevant. Given the many challenges of peacekeeping and the fact that the United Nations is a bureaucracy with binding rules, it is incumbent upon leaders to continually educate themselves about the workings of the Organization, in a broad sense and for their mission specific assignments, both upon and after their appointment.

85. OIOS notes that two of the three main senior training programmes depend largely on unpredictable extra-budgetary funding sources and in-kind contributions. The financial constraints facing peacekeeping are well known, but the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations has expressly indicated that appropriate budgetary proposals be submitted to address the issue of ongoing funding in particular of the SML.⁴⁰ Member States' decisions that support senior leadership training with adequate financial streams are a sine quo non for better aligning the Organization's rhetoric with reality on the issue of senior leaders' training.

86. Finally, OIOS notes that as the Organization, especially peacekeeping, is transitioning to a risk-based approach, it cannot be indifferent to the concerns expressed by senior interviewees on the issue of senior leaders' selection and appointment process. OIOS notes that a senior leadership appointment policy was developed in 2006 but was neither adopted nor implemented.

87. This Office makes the following recommendations to address the issues raised by this evaluation. DPKO/DFS accepted all recommendations.

Important Recommendations:

Recommendation 1

88. DPKO/DFS should develop and implement a comprehensive and systematic senior leadership orientation and training strategy for newly appointed leaders, ensuring a 'full spectrum, whole of DPKO/DFS effort', which covers all aspects of pre-deployment, in-briefing, induction, on-going training and other post-deployment support of senior leaders. (Paragraph 8; Result E paragraphs 69, 71-73)

⁴⁰ A/61/19 (Part II), para 207.

Recommendation 2

89. DPKO/DFS should ensure that no appointee to a senior leadership position deploys without completing a specified minimum of training and preparation (based on an individual training needs assessment) and should provide all new senior leadership appointees with an on-boarding focal point. (Result A paragraphs 22-26; Result B paragraphs 35-37; Result E paragraphs 63, 64-66)

Recommendation 3

90. DPKO/DFS should ensure that all senior leaders appointed to senior level positions in peacekeeping operations complete at least one DPKO/DFS senior leadership training within the first six month of their appointment. This mandatory requirement should only be waived under exceptional circumstances and compliance should become part of the performance review. (Result A paragraphs 22-26; Result B paragraphs 27-34, 37-38)

Recommendation 4

91. DPKO/DFS should allocate sufficient funds in order to address the issue of ongoing funding of the Senior Mission Leaders course. (Result E paragraphs 71-73)

Recommendation 5

92. DPKO/DFS should establish performance indicators and specific targets for the planned outcomes of the Senior Mission Leaders course (as indicated in the Thematic Impact Pathway), in particular for the course objective to increase the number of trained leaders available for potential appointments to leadership posts in DPKO peacekeeping missions. (Results B paragraphs 29-31)

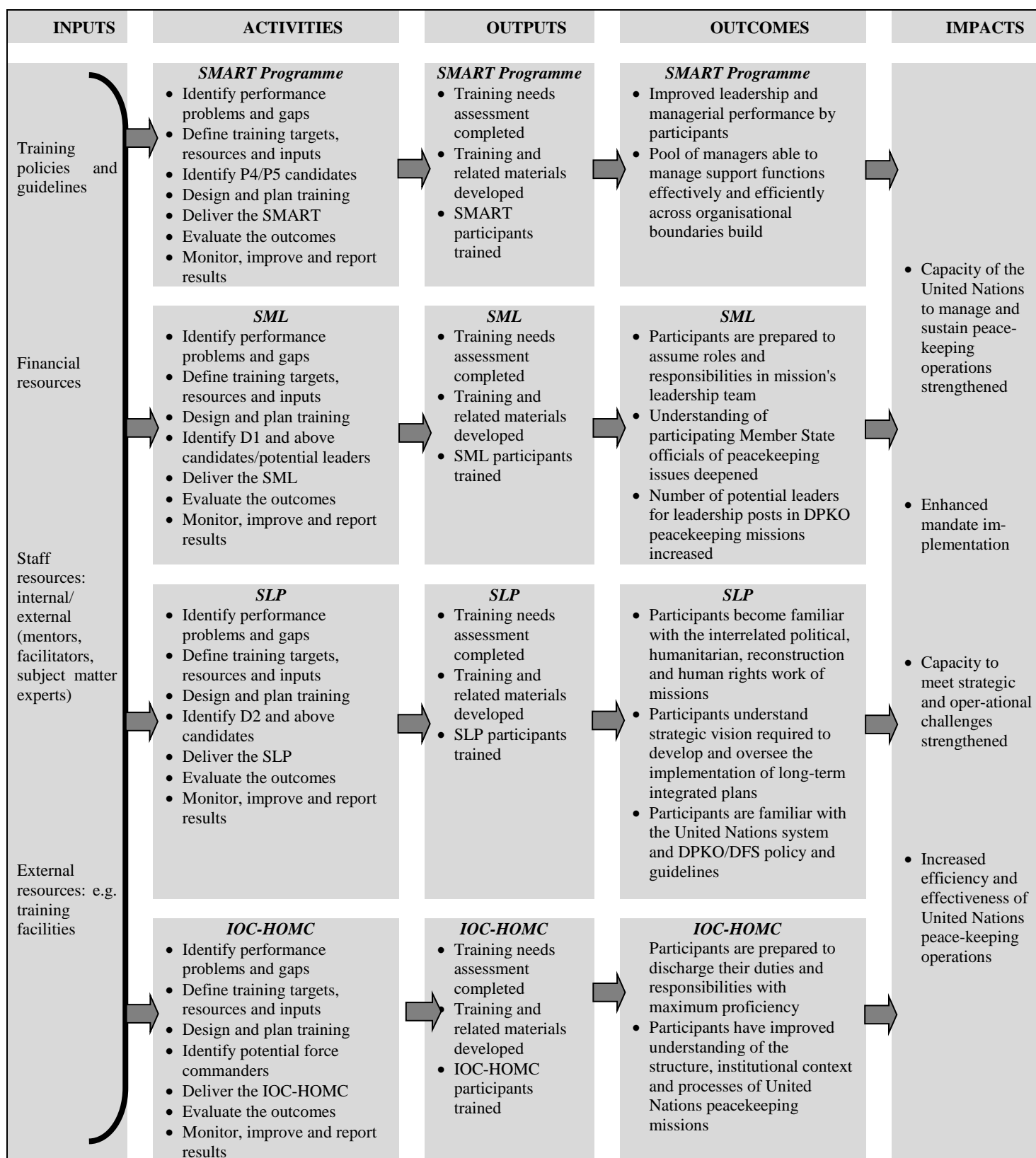
Recommendation 6

93. DPKO/DFS should require all missions to develop brief mission-specific handbooks tailored to suit the information and knowledge needs of leaders for their Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, Force Commanders, Police Commissioners and Director of Mission Support and should ensure that briefings to senior leaders include clear messages that they are expected to read and stay current with both general and specific material, including guidelines and policies issued by HQ. (Result D paragraphs 56-57)

Recommendation 7

94. DPKO/DFS should develop and offer scenario-based, mission-specific training for Mission Leadership Teams in crisis management. (Result D paragraph 58-62)

Annex A: Thematic Impact Pathway for DPKO/DFS senior leadership training programmes



Assumptions: Member States provide resources, Office of Human Resource Management and Field Personnel Division provide support in training standards and materials development, other partners provide support during training delivery, participants are qualified, motivated and attend mandatory training, participants want to be appointed and subsequently become appointed to leadership positions

Annex B: Comments on the draft report received from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) presents below the full text of comments received from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support on the evaluation results contained in the draft report. This practice has been instituted in line with General Assembly resolution 64/263, following the recommendation of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee.

Draft Report of the OIOS on the Evaluation of DPKO/DFS Senior Leadership Training

1. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to OIOS/IED for conducting this evaluation at our request. We welcome the report as it provides a thorough analysis of DPKO/DFS Senior Leadership Training and contains constructive and positive comments and recommendations.

2. There is an underlying and recurrent theme in the report, which is the impact of training on staff performance. While we believe that leadership training plays a critical role in preparing senior leaders to assume roles and responsibilities associated with serving as a member of the Mission Leadership Team, training cannot be perceived as the only contribution to staff performance.

3. For instance, paragraph 5 of the Executive Summary and paragraph 55 mention the issue of stress in the field. Lack of training can contribute to stress in the workplace. However, other factors such as delegation of authority, management style and individual adaptability to the work environment may also have contributed to those perceptions.

4. The issue of training gaps is mentioned in paragraph 55: *“Gaps in training appeared to have affected leaders...”* Other individual and organisational factors, such as prior professional and personal experience and lack of adequate management and crisis management mechanisms within the mission are likely to have played a role as well.

5. The report makes several references to the fact that both the design and delivery of training and related activities contributed to the problems experienced by leaders, for example in the sixth paragraph of the Executive Summary and Heading E. However, this seems to contradict other statements, notably in paragraphs 45 and 46, which indicate that the Senior Mission Leaders and Senior Leadership Programme course participants were generally satisfied (or very satisfied) with the training.

6. The third sentence of the second paragraph of the Executive Summary states that: *“However, many had little or no prior experience in the United Nations.”* Stating that many senior leaders had little to no United Nations experience is not wholly accurate. Approximately two out of three senior leaders appointed in 2014 and 2015 were internal, i.e. have worked within the United Nations system at the D-2 level or below prior to becoming a Head of Mission or Deputy Head of Mission. This statement also contradicts the heading to paragraphs 25 and 26 which reads: *“While the majority of leaders had some experience in the United Nations, some had had little or no such prior experience.”* Based on the above mentioned explanation, we request that the third sentence of the second paragraph of the Executive Summary be deleted from the report.

7. With regard to the comments on “mentoring” in paragraph 49, the Secretary-General’s commitment to the pilot mentoring programme for Heads and Deputy Heads of Mission should be mentioned. The programme, which was piloted in November 2014, has offered mentoring or leadership partnering (with former senior mission leaders) to 14 new appointees.

8. Concerning the current shortcomings in the in-briefing process mentioned in paragraph 67, the DPKO and DFS Guidelines for in-briefings and debriefings has been revised in September 2015 to alleviate these gaps.

9. Regarding Table 5, which outlines the units/offices that support senior leadership training, DPKO would suggest adding:

- OUSG to the first row (identification of senior leaders);
- OHRM as they are involved in administrative onboarding in row 4 (administrative onboarding for senior leaders); and
- SLAS, as they are consulted, to row 5 (briefings and induction for senior leaders).

Annex C:

Recommendation Action Plan

**Evaluation of the Senior Leadership Training of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS)
December 2015**

IED Recommendation	Anticipated Actions	Responsible Entity(ies)	Target date for completion
Recommendation 1: DPKO/DFS should develop and implement a comprehensive and systematic senior leadership orientation and training strategy for newly appointed leaders, ensuring a 'full spectrum, whole of DPKO/DFS effort', which covers all aspects of pre-deployment, in-briefing, induction, on-going training and other post-deployment support of senior leaders.	Develop and implement the comprehensive and systematic senior leadership orientation and training strategy.	OUSG/DPKO, OUSG/DFS and DPET	Second quarter of 2016
Recommendation 2: DPKO/DFS should ensure that no appointee to a senior leadership position deploys without completing a specified minimum of training and preparation (based on an individual training needs assessment) and should provide all new senior leadership appointees with an on-boarding focal point.	Implementation of the new Guidelines for in-briefing.	OO, DPET and SLAS	Second quarter of 2016, with continuous monitoring

IED Recommendation	Anticipated Actions	Responsible Entity(ies)	Target date for completion
<p>Recommendation 3 DPKO/DFS should ensure that all senior leaders appointed to senior level positions in peacekeeping operations complete at least one DPKO/DFS senior leadership training within the first six month of their appointment. This mandatory requirement should only be waived under exceptional circumstances and compliance should become part of the performance review.</p>	<p>Drafting new guidelines for the attendance of the Senior Leadership Programme.</p>	<p>OO, DPET and SLAS</p>	<p>First quarter of 2017, with continuous monitoring</p>
<p>Recommendation 4 DPKO/DFS should allocate sufficient funds in order to address the issue of ongoing funding of the Senior Mission Leaders course.</p>	<p>DPKO/DFS will request regular funding for the SML.</p>	<p>DPET</p>	<p>First quarter of 2017</p>
<p>Recommendation 5 DPKO/DFS should establish performance indicators and specific targets for the planned outcomes of the Senior Mission Leaders course (as indicated in the Thematic Impact Pathway), in particular for the course objective to increase the number of trained leaders available for potential appointments to leadership posts in DPKO peacekeeping missions.</p>	<p>Performance indicators will be established. DPKO/DFS will also remind Members States that it is primarily their responsibility to make sure that participants nominated to the SML have the experience and skills required to be considered as potential candidates for ASG/USG-level positions in peace operations.</p>	<p>DPET</p>	<p>First quarter of 2017</p>

IED Recommendation	Anticipated Actions	Responsible Entity(ies)	Target date for completion
<p>Recommendation 6 DPKO/DFS should require all missions to develop brief mission-specific handbooks tailored to suit the information and knowledge needs of leaders for their Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, Force Commanders, Police Commissioners and Director of Mission Support and should ensure that briefings to senior leaders include clear messages that they are expected to read and stay current with both general and specific material, including guidelines and policies issued by HQ.</p>	<p>DPKO/DFS will consider the feasibility of the first recommendation (mission-specific handbooks). The second recommendation will be implemented.</p>	<p>OO and DPET</p>	<p>First quarter of 2017</p>
<p>Recommendation 7 DPKO/DFS should develop and offer scenario-based, mission-specific training for Mission Leadership Teams in crisis management.</p>	<p>DPKO and DFS will implement this recommendation, possibly in partnership with external entities (UNSSC).</p>	<p>DPET</p>	<p>First quarter of 2017</p>