



# Accountability System for the Protection of Civilians

## Risk Premiums for Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries

1

### SUMMARY

In Resolution 65/289 (2011), the General Assembly requested that the secretary-general establish a Senior Advisory Group to look into the rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and related issues.<sup>1</sup> The Senior Advisory Group submitted a report to the General Assembly in 2012, noting that uniformed personnel should be rewarded and the reimbursement system should take into account the different levels of risks incurred by troops in different UN missions. It recommended two premiums that would be introduced along with a new rate of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries in July 2014. The first premium was related to the provision of key enablers and the second one to the willingness to take higher risks and to operate without restrictions or caveats.<sup>2</sup>

The General Assembly endorsed this recommendation in Resolutions 67/261 and 68/281. As a result, the secretary-general is authorized to award bonuses “to individual units that are operating without restrictions and caveats imposed by troop- and police-contributing countries and that have acquitted themselves well despite exceptional levels of risk.”<sup>3</sup> These awards are paid at the conclusion of service to the individual contingent members, and decisions on the awards are made on a quarterly basis.<sup>4</sup>

The risk premium is awarded in exceptional circumstances to military and police units. It is paid to each individual member of the unit once the unit has completed its service. The risk premium is not greater than 10 percent of the standard monthly reimbursement rate paid per contingent member.

2

### RELEVANCE TO THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

Protection of civilians (POC) is not explicitly mentioned in the policy guidance for rewarding risk premiums, and the connection to POC was left “deliberately vague.”<sup>5</sup> That said, the mission can initiate the process of requesting a premium for specific units and make the link between operational conditions and POC-related performance as a justification. The risk premium, in particular, applies to units that go “above and beyond

<sup>1</sup> UN General Assembly Resolution 65/289 (September 8, 2011), UN Doc. A/RES/65/289.

<sup>2</sup> See also: UN Department of Operational Support (DOS), “Introductory Remarks by Ms. Ameerah Haq, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support: Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Report of the Senior Advisory Group on Rates of Reimbursement to Troop Contributing Countries and Related Issues (A/67/713),” March 8, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> UN General Assembly, “Results of the Revised Survey to Establish the Standard Rate of Reimbursement to Troop-Contributing Countries, as Approved by the General Assembly in its Resolution 67/261 on the Report of the Senior Advisory Group on Rates of Reimbursement to Troop-Contributing Countries: Report of the Secretary-General,” UN Doc. A/68/813, March 26, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> UN General Assembly Resolution 68/281 (August 5, 2014), UN Doc. A/RES/68/281.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Department of Peace Operations (DPO) official, New York, August 2020.

the call of duty” to carry out their mandated tasks, which can include POC tasks, in high-risk and non-permissive environments.<sup>6</sup>

## Examples

Protection of civilians (POC) is not explicitly mentioned in the policy guidance for rewarding risk premiums, and the connection to POC was left “deliberately vague.”<sup>7</sup> That said, the mission can initiate the process of requesting a premium for specific units and make the link between operational conditions and POC-related performance as a justification. The risk premium, in particular, applies to units that go “above and beyond the call of duty” to carry out their mandated tasks, which can include POC tasks, in high-risk and non-permissive environments.<sup>8</sup>

3

## RULES, GUIDELINES, AND METHODOLOGY

### Governing rules

There are three main conditions to be considered for the risk premium:

1. Units cannot have restrictions and caveats placed on their operations by their respective TCC or PCC outside of those accepted by DPO and the Department of Operational Support (DOS) in the memoranda of understanding between DPO/DOS and the T/PCC;
2. Units must be exposed to or subject to exceptional levels of risk; and
3. Units must have acquitted themselves well, meaning they were performing above and beyond the call of duty and executing their tasks with a high level of skill and professionalism.

Personnel who have allegedly engaged in misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse, cannot be rewarded risk premiums. The level of risk is determined by “whether there is an exceptional and sustained level of danger to life, property and premises from hostile actions by parties to the conflict, spoilers, potential aggressors or warlords.” If this has been met, other criteria are taken into consideration, such as high levels of threat or injury due to mines, improvised explosive devices, or unexploded ordnance; the likelihood of frequent hostage-taking, sniping, and attacks on posts; the lethality of different weapon systems available to parties on the ground; the likelihood of UN forces being involved in robust military engagements; and serious deficiencies in the logistics infrastructure and challenges to self-sustainment.<sup>9</sup>

### Process and functioning

In terms of process, the force commander or police commissioner can recommend a unit for the risk premium on a quarterly basis. A panel consisting of senior civilian and

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<sup>6</sup> UN DPO and DOS, “Guidelines, Award of Risk Premium (Formed Units),” July 1, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with DPO official, New York, August 2020.

<sup>8</sup> UN DPO and DOS, “Guidelines, Award of Risk Premium (Formed Units),” July 1, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

uniformed personnel is then established to review the recommendation to see whether the unit meets the criteria. If the criteria are met, the recommendation is then taken to the head of mission for approval. It is then sent to the under-secretaries-general for peace operations and operational support. The Office of Military Affairs or Police Division and the Memorandum of Understanding and Reimbursement Policy Section (MRPS) of the Uniformed Capabilities Support Division (UCSD) also receive the recommendation. At headquarters, the MRPS reviews the recommendation and, if the recommendation is approved, the under-secretary-general of DPO reviews the request and decides whether to award the risk premium.<sup>10</sup>

**4 ANALYSIS**

Risk premiums serve to incentivize and motivate TCCs and PCCs to better implement a UN peacekeeping operation's mandate. They can therefore strengthen the accountability of units to force commanders and police commissioners and of T/PCCs to the UN Secretariat.

The process is undertaken on a quarterly basis.

**Timing**

<b>Regular process</b>	<b>X</b>	Recommendations can be made on a quarterly basis.
<b>Extraordinary measure after incident</b>		

<sup>10</sup> In the case of special political missions, recommendations would be directed to the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA).

## Actors and answerability structure

Force commanders and police commissioners can hold their units accountable for their performance through their decision to recommend them for premiums. The head of mission and the Secretariat also play a role by approving these recommendations. As such, risk premiums enable the Secretariat to hold TCCs and PCCs accountable. Ultimately, risk premiums reward units from a T/PCC and thus evaluate contributing countries' units. This incentive can particularly affect a T/PCC's inclination to use caveats and restrictions, which prevent a unit from being considered for the premium.

Held accountable by		Individuals	Unit			Mission	Secretariat	Contributing countries	Security Council/5 <sup>th</sup> Committee	Member states	Population	Other
			Military	Police	Civilian							
<b>Individuals</b>												
<b>Unit/ section/ component</b>	<b>Military</b>		X		X	X						
	<b>Police</b>			X	X	X						
	<b>Civilian</b>											
<b>Mission</b>												
<b>Secretariat</b>												
<b>Contributing countries</b>			X	X	X	X						
<b>Member states</b>												
<b>Security Council/ 5<sup>th</sup> Committee</b>												

### Scope and objective

Risk premiums contribute to tracking and recognizing outstanding performance.

<b>Collect best practices and lessons learned</b>		
<b>Track performance</b>	<b>X</b>	Recommendations for risk premiums can be sent on a quarterly basis based on the performance of a unit during that quarter. As such, it is implied that force commanders and police commissioners are noting and monitoring the performance of the units under their command. While this is not mandated, regular reporting, it entails a regular form of monitoring.
<b>Establish facts and circumstances</b>		
<b>Establish responsibility</b>		
<b>Identify structural and systemic issues</b>		

### Type of accountability

By rewarding outstanding performance, risk premiums contribute to performance accountability, and constitute a form of organizational accountability.

### Outcome

<b>Learn</b>	<b>Disseminate and integrate internally</b>		
	<b>Account for publicly</b>		
<b>Correct</b>	<b>Improve internal processes</b>		
	<b>Inform the selection of personnel</b>		
<b>Sanction</b>	<b>Recommend sanctions</b>		
	<b>Establish incentives</b>	<b>X</b>	Risk premiums incentivize military and police units to perform and carry out mandated tasks with more skill and courage in high-risk and violent environments. They also incentivize TCCs and PCCs to forgo caveats and restrictions to be considered and rewarded premiums and to train their units to respond in more proactive ways.

### Independence and impartiality

The process of verifying and reviewing a recommendation for risk premiums involves extensive consultation in the field and at headquarters, making the tool relatively impartial. TCCs and PCCs are not consulted as a part of this process, ensuring some level of independence.

### Inclusivity

While the process for recommending a contingent for a risk premium rests mainly with the force commander or police commissioner and the UN Secretariat, the mission—including civilian personnel via a reviewing panel—can weigh in on their recommendation. UN headquarters also plays a role in the approval of the risk premium.

### Transparency

Risk premiums are not publicly reported on, and little information is therefore available on how frequently risk premiums are used. Internally, recommendations require extensive details as to why a unit should be rewarded a risk premium. Required documents include a request for risk premium form, a risk/threat assessment, and a decision-support matrix (in the form of a checklist to ensure the unit meets the criteria necessary for a risk premium).

### Follow-up mechanisms

Nothing occurs after a contingent is awarded a risk premium.

<b>Possible follow-up mechanisms</b>		
<b>Available enforcement measures</b>		
<b>Transmissibility to other mechanisms</b>		