Integrated Training Service
Policy, Evaluation and Training Division
Department of Peace Operations
United Nations

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS
Training Peacekeepers Serving to Protect

TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"We should not forget that our peacekeepers – civilian, police, men and women, military personnel – are saving lives every day. They are protecting civilians and they are helping peace processes be implemented… It is important to recognize the added value of peacekeeping and what we bring to the societies and nations that are destabilized"

- **Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix**

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Introduction

In 1999, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1265 on the Protection of Civilians in armed conflict, noting that civilians account for the vast majority of casualties in armed conflicts and are increasingly targeted by combatants and armed elements. Protection of civilians (POC) is a responsibility that includes military, police and civilian functions within a peacekeeping mission and many missions possess their own mandate on POC which includes a set of guiding principles detailing the responsibilities, capabilities, cooperation, consent and priority pursuant to Security Council resolutions.

The Office of Internal Oversight Services in 2014, the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations in 2015, internal investigations into the violence in Malakal and Juba in 2016, and the evaluation of mission-specific POC strategies in 2016 highlighted the need for further clarification of POC mandate delivery expectations and strengthened POC implementation in-mission through improved training of peacekeeping personnel. In accordance with the 2010 Policy on Training for all Peacekeeping Personnel, the Integrated Training Service (ITS) is responsible for periodic training needs assessments to determine training priorities. In compliance with the policy and taking into consideration the findings from the above reports, ITS conducted a training needs assessment (TNA) on POC.

The aim of the TNA was to identify performance gaps in the implementation of the POC mandate and identify where implementation can be strengthened through training in peacekeeping missions.

The objectives of the TNA were to assess current POC training provided in peacekeeping missions with their own POC mandate, determine the level of POC understanding and knowledge among peacekeeping personnel involved in the delivery of the POC mandate, identify integrated POC tasks mission to mission and make recommendations for a coherent and coordinated POC training strategy in order to address identified gaps.

Nine peacekeeping missions with individual POC mandates were targeted in the TNA: MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MINUSTAH, MONUSCO, UNAMID, UNIFIL, UNISFA, UNMIL, and UNMISS.[1] However, primary focus was given to MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, and UNMISS due to their size, the complexity of their individual POC mandates, and the resources available for the implementation of the TNA.

Some 135 interviews and focus groups were carried out among 955 military, police and civilian peacekeeping personnel, of whom 21% were female and 79% were male. Assessments were issued in both English and French, and involved only peacekeeping personnel with a valid UN email address. In-person interviews were conducted with personnel posted in MINUSCA, MONUSCO, and UNMISS, and telephone interviews were conducted with personnel posted in MINUSTAH, MINUSMA, UNAMID, UNIFIL, UNISFA, and UNMIL.

Key Findings

This section summarizes the key findings of the TNA and identifies gaps in the implementation of POC mandates in peacekeeping missions which can be strengthened by in-mission training.

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[1] UNOCI did not participate as planned due to the successful completion of the mission mandate on 30 June 2017 and subsequent closure

Performance Issues

Successful performance relies first on the understanding of tasks, roles and responsibilities, then the adequate completion of those tasks that contribute to the implementation of a mission's POC mandate. In instances where personnel have demonstrated inadequate performance of POC tasks, performance issues were found to be a result of limited understanding on how to respond to complex POC situations, their relation to mission components and a lack of basic and necessary skills and attributes. The map below gives insight into contributors to failure and areas that can improve performance.
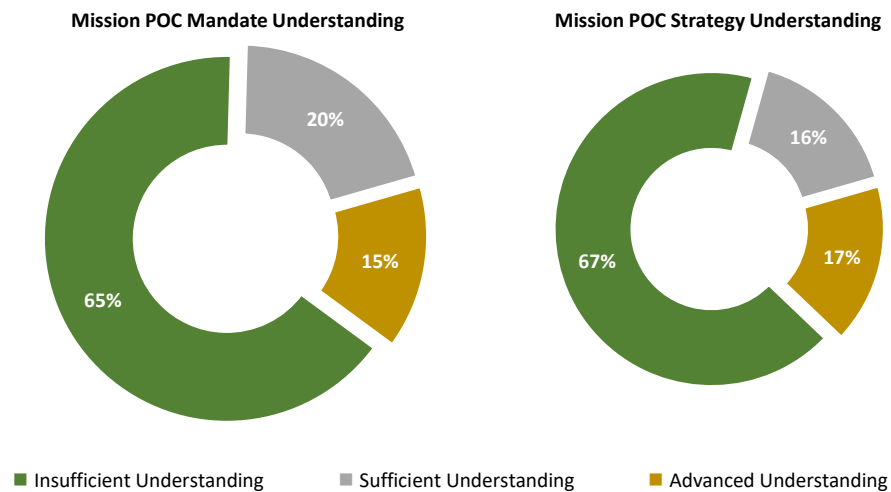
Contributors to Failure				Improves Performance			
Insufficient Knowledge and Understanding	Process and Operations Breakdown	Command and Control Issues	Fear of Penalties Related to Use of Force	Clear and Open Communication		Mission-Specific Performance Expectations	Dissemination of POC Strategies
Poor or Insufficient Coordination	Delayed Authorizations		Unclear Tasks and Responsibilities	Career Development for Civilian Personnel		Correct Force Generation and Assignments	Identification of Inefficiencies
Insufficient Crisis Management	Incorrect Personnel Assignments		Safety and Security Concerns	Continuous Evaluation of Incentives		Solutions for Process Issues	

Performance issues can be addressed through specific training on knowledge and understanding of POC, the operational concept, POC in the mission context; skills needed to implement POC mandates such as threat analysis and risk assessment, sound judgement, rapid response and decision making; attributes such as respect for human rights, promotion of local/national ownership, and ethical principles such as 'do no harm'. Additionally, good guidance and policy can bolster personnel's understanding and knowledge, and the skills and attributes necessary to improve performance when implementing core POC tasks.

Gaps in Knowledge and Understanding

Personnel understand what POC is as defined by Security Council resolutions but lack the necessary knowledge and understanding on how to apply it under mission-specific POC scenarios. Personnel may regard POC as being related to everything, or confine it to physical protection only, or they may only recognize typical POC issues already experienced in their respective missions. Tactical guidance needs to be developed to ensure peacekeeping personnel understand how to implement POC effectively and to recognize and understand how to carry out all POC core tasks and procedures. There is a difference between knowledge of a mission's POC mandate and knowledge in the specifics of its content. As a result of POC strategies failing to break down POC mandates into understandable activities and action plans, personnel lack an understanding of the content. There is also a lack of general understanding of the POC mandate, strategy and tools due to fractured information sharing mechanisms. Of those

surveyed, 42% did not understand their mission's POC mandate and 41% did not fully understand their mission's POC strategy.

Mission POC Mandate Understanding

Mission POC Strategy Understanding

20%

15%

65%

16%

17%

67%

■ Insufficient Understanding   ■ Sufficient Understanding   ■ Advanced Understanding

Personnel also lack an understanding of their responsibilities due to a lack of definition and POC being described broadly as human rights, civil affairs, child protection and women protection. Without clearly defined responsibilities, linked to core POC tasks, peacekeeping personnel will struggle to fully utilize their skills, attributes and knowledge to implement POC mandates. An updated POC policy and handbook that details the what and how and the roles, tasks and responsibilities of personnel engaged in POC could fill knowledge gaps and increase understanding of POC mandates, strategies, tools and mechanisms. Of the total respondents, 41% indicated a need for training on POC tasks, roles and responsibilities and 78% indicated the need for whole-of mission training.

Personnel lack the knowledge necessary to anticipate, plan for and respond to a variety of mission-specific POC threats, situations and challenges. POC challenges are ever changing, context-specific, and complex in nature, and include: POC crises, distinguishing between civilians and combatants, interaction with host state actors that perpetrate violence towards civilians, SOFA violations, entry points for political engagement and political action, community liaison and engagement, management of IDP camps and POC sites, and safety and security of personnel, especially civilians. In response to these challenges, missions should be empowered to develop coherent workplans that include a set of succinct and well-defined responsibilities and core POC tasks related to the mission-context, considers all mission components and the missions POC mandate.
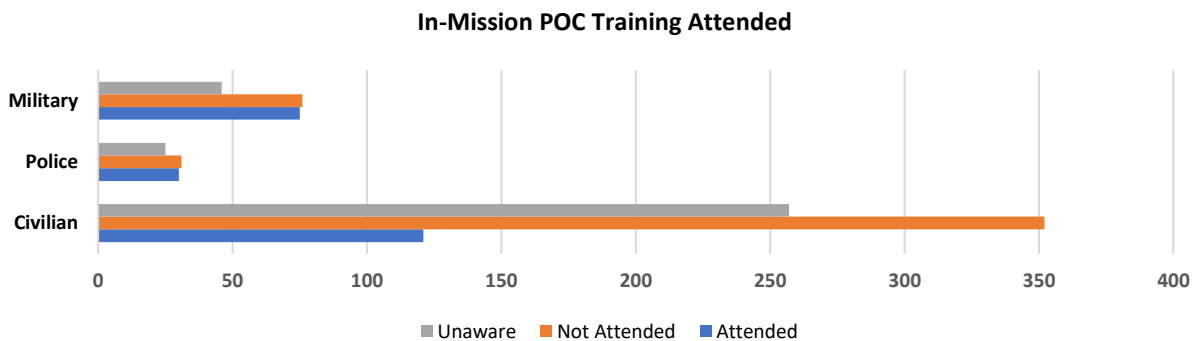
In-Mission POC Training
POC is included in pre-deployment training but is conceptual and only covers the "what", not the "how". Pre-deployment POC training includes lessons on child protection and conflict-related sexual violence and provides an understanding on their cross-cutting nature. However, the training lacks mission-specific POC context and practical elements that make up the daily tasks as part of implementing a mission POC mandate by peacekeeping personnel. In-mission training on POC is not as widespread as needed. Personnel would benefit from a more practical in-mission training to ensure they fully realize their responsibilities and the core POC tasks expected of them under the mission's POC mandate. Personnel would benefit from specialised POC training that includes scenario-based exercises in order to rehearse and practice rapid response to various POC situations.

In-Mission POC Training Priority

Yes a priority	382
No, but necessary	260
No, not necessary	28
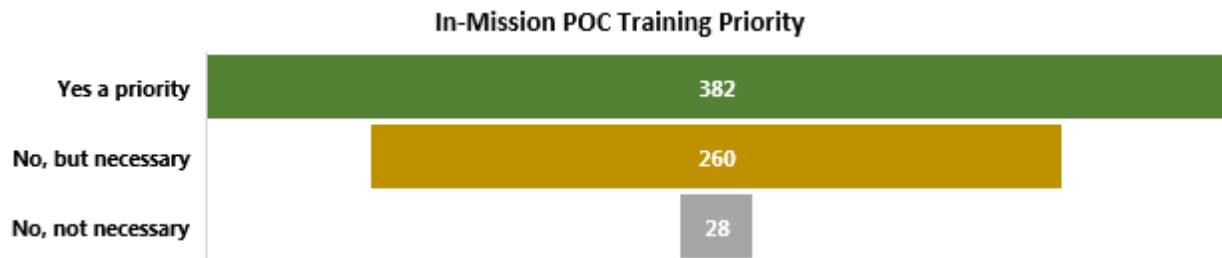
Whereas the majority of respondents reported satisfaction with mission specific induction training (MSIT), more in-depth learning is required in the following areas: protection tools, mission-wide POC strategy, POC coordination mechanisms, and understanding of specialized POC tasks such as human rights, civil affairs, DDR and SSR (particularly amongst civilian personnel). Of those respondents surveyed, 33% reported they have attended in-mission POC training with the majority being civilian personnel. 48% reported they were unaware of POC training being organized or held in-mission their mission.

In-Mission POC Training Attended

Unaware — Not Attended — Attended

In-mission POC training must be driven by the mission-specific context to be effective and should include scenarios, case studies, best practices and lessons learned in order to maintain preparedness of personnel. There is a lack of continuation in learning exercises, for example upon completion of table top exercises and after-action reviews and there is little evidence of any sustained or further learning, best practices or lessons learned. Missions and personnel would benefit from a coherent POC training practice that empowers continuous information sharing and understanding.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Personnel from the nine missions participating in the TNA demonstrated a lack of understanding of their missions POC strategy and how to effectively implement and complete core POC tasks. In-mission training that utilises mission-specific scenarios is required to further develop knowledge of POC tasks and responsibilities in order to improve situational awareness, the response to POC related threats and coordination. Missions must be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to develop scenario-based exercises in order to practice and rehearse challenges and rapid response based on the real-time mission environment. There is also the need to enhance POC guidance and policy to further articulate performance expectations and outline the "what" and "how" of POC for all personnel. In-mission

training requires a coherent strategy to ensure that it becomes a strategic priority in fulfilling POC mandates.

Recommendations
The main recommendations of the TNA are:

1. Support further understanding of POC concepts, components and functions, emphasizing the mission context.

2. Develop scenario-based exercises to practice and rehearse POC challenges and rapid response during in-mission training.

3. Develop a coherent and coordinated POC training strategy from pre-deployment to in-mission training.

4. Build the pool of available trainers and strengthen their capacity to deliver effective training on POC.

5. Support organizational learning through self-assessment and evaluation to capture lessons learned on POC training and related activities.

6. Raise awareness of POC training, concepts and encourage information sharing.