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United Nations  
Department of Peace Operations  
Department of Operational Support



Reference: 2019.02

## Guidelines

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# The Rapid Deployment Level of the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System

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Approval date: 1 January 2019  
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Review date: 1 January 2021

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## **GUIDELINES ON THE RAPID DEPLOYMENT LEVEL OF THE PEACEKEEPING CAPABILITY READINESS SYSTEM**

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### **ANNEX**

A. Structure of the UN Vanguard Capability

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### **A. PURPOSE**

1. The purpose of these guidelines is to detail the procedures related to the registration and reimbursement of units at the Rapid Deployment Level (RDL) of the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS).
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### **B. SCOPE**

2. These guidelines outline the pledging, selection, verification, registration, deployment and reimbursement of units to the RDL. The guidelines are complementary to the PCRS

Guidelines and the 2017 Contingent-Owned Equipment (COE) Manual. The COE Manual remains the official reference for reimbursement of military and police equipment deployed to UN peace operations.

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### **C. RATIONALE**

3. In its 2015 report, the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations recommended the creation of a Vanguard Brigade to allow the UN to quickly insert a military and police capability into a new mission area or reinforce an existing mission. This recommendation was endorsed by the Secretary General, who directed the development of a UN Vanguard Capability concept. The UN Vanguard Capability is conceived as a brigade-size integrated military and police force comprised of infantry units, attack helicopters, enablers and other support units. The total strength of the Vanguard Capability is approximately 4,000 troops and police.
4. The PCRS, also created in 2015 as part of the Strategic Force Generation and Capability Planning Cell (SFGCPC), established four levels of readiness of registered capabilities. The highest readiness level of the PCRS is the RDL, for which units are to deploy within 60 days of a request by the Secretary-General. Troop- and police-contributing countries (T/PCCs) that pledge units to the RDL have made a political commitment to deploy within 60 days to any existing or new UN peacekeeping mission. From the date the United Nations formally requests the T/PCC to deploy, the T/PCC has 60 days to assemble the unit and be fully prepared to deploy from the port of embarkation.
5. The UN General Assembly, based on the recommendation of the 2017 COE Working Group, agreed on financial compensation to cover a portion of the costs of maintaining standby forces at RDL, with those troop and police contributing countries to be paid 25 per cent of the maintenance component of set reimbursement rates for major equipment during the period these units are registered to the RDL.

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### **D. PROCESS OVERVIEW**

6. The registration, deployment and reimbursement of a unit at RDL will follow the steps below. The procedures, roles and responsibilities regarding each step will be subsequently detailed in the following chapters of these guidelines.

## 6.1. Registration:

- 6.1.1. DPO sends out the request to all Member States for pledges of units to the RDL at least six months prior to the start of the next UN peacekeeping fiscal year (i.e. 1 January). By 1 March, Member States with a unit(s) registered in the PCRS make a pledge for that unit(s) to be considered for the Rapid Deployment Level.
- 6.1.2. After consultations with relevant DOS entities, SFGCPC makes a recommendation to the DPO Military Adviser (or, if a police unit, the Police Selection and Recruitment Section recommends to the Police Adviser) whether to accept the pledge for the RDL and advance with the process. Units not selected for the RDL at this stage, may be added to a stand-by RDL list to replace RDL units that are deployed or removed from the RDL.
- 6.1.3. For a unit to be accepted at the RDL, the Member State will be requested to submit Major Equipment tables and Load Lists from the templates provided and based on the RDL Statement of Unit Requirement (SURs). These SURs are already available for consultation in the PCRS website (<https://pcrs.un.org>). For police units, specific documents are included in the Formed Police Assessment Team (FPAT) SOP.
- 6.1.4. Once the Major Equipment tables are submitted and draft RDL agreement is completed, DPO/DOS conducts an RDL Verification Visit (VV).
- 6.1.5. During the Verification Visit (VV) the T/PCC must demonstrate that all major equipment (100%) and self-sustainment (samples of equipment and supplies) of the pledged unit is available and able to be ready for deployment within 60 days (i.e. a mobilization plan). The T/PCC must also show that the unit's commander and personnel selection has been done and that a mobilization plan is in place; that their human rights vetting, and core pre-deployment training requirements are met and can be guaranteed to be maintained until the deployment. Upon a successful VV, the RDL Agreement will be signed. The Member State will be formally informed that the unit will or will not be officially elevated to the RDL. The Member State will be eligible for RDL reimbursement at the start of the UN peacekeeping fiscal year (1 July)

in case the Agreement is signed before that date, or from the day the VV report is signed, if it is signed after that date. The RDL agreement will be valid until the end of the UN peacekeeping fiscal year (30<sup>th</sup> June).

6.1.6. Member States with units on the RDL might be requested to participate with their contingent commanders in a Rapid Deployment exercise during the UN peacekeeping fiscal year.

6.2. Deployment:

6.2.1. DPO invites a Member State to deploy a unit from RDL to a UN Peace Operation via a Note Verbale.

6.2.2. Following the official response, the T/PCC may conduct a reconnaissance visit to the mission area.

6.2.3. If necessary, and, as long as the 60 days' time limit is respected, based on mission requirements, the T/PCC may be requested to adjust the unit's list of Major Equipment contained in the RDL Agreement and provide a revised cargo load list. The MOU for reimbursement will be created based on the final list of Major Equipment and the RDL Agreement.

6.3. Reimbursement:

6.3.1. If a unit is deployed to a UN Peacekeeping mission under the conditions listed in these guidelines and an MOU is signed, DOS will start the normal in-mission quarterly reimbursement process. DOS will also process the RDL COE reimbursement for the period the unit remained at RDL. The RDL reimbursement period will end on the date the transportation to the mission area begins (cargo collection day). After that day, COE reimbursement will follow the regular reimbursement process as per the COE Manual.

6.3.2. If a unit is not invited to deploy by the end of the UN peacekeeping fiscal year (30 June), at the discretion of the UN Secretariat, the T/PCC may undergo a final verification visit or provide self-certification to ensure that it has met and sustained all the RDL requirements. If so, the unit will be eligible for RDL reimbursement for the full period during which the unit was registered at RDL.

6.3.3. If a T/PCC is unable to deploy a unit within 60 days or takes the decision not to deploy when requested by DPO, the Member State forfeits claim to RDL reimbursement for that unit. OMA/PD will remove that unit from the RDL and it may place the unit at Level 3 of the PCRS, if agreed with the T/PCC.

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## **E. PROCEDURES**

### **7. Registration of a unit at the RDL of PCRS**

7.1. The annual process begins when DPO communicates the general RDL requirements and requests pledges of all Member States. RDL pledges should be made no less than four months before the start of the next UN peacekeeping fiscal year (i.e. 1 March). To ensure continuous unit coverage on the RDL, off-cycle pledges may be accepted on an on-demand basis. The only accepted form of communication for a Member State to pledge a unit at RDL is a Note Verbale. The Note Verbale should contain the following information:

7.1.1. Unit type and description;

7.1.2. Commitment by the T/PCC that the unit will be able to deploy from the port of embarkation fully equipped, with training conducted and certifications signed within 60 days of a request by DPO (subject to verification);

7.1.3. Certification that the unit personnel have undergone all required UN pre-deployment training up to the mission-specific training stage, as well as all human rights screening and non-mission-specific medical requirements (subject to verification);

7.1.4. Time period proposed to stay on the RDL: proposed time period should be for twelve months starting at the beginning of the UN peacekeeping fiscal year (1 July to 30 June). T/PCC may propose a shorter period but may not propose a time greater than twelve months. Priority for selection will be for units that offer to commit to a twelve-month RDL availability;

- 7.1.5. Proposed form of deployment (self-deployed under a Letter of Assist, or UN arranged deployment). Final deployment form will be decided once the MS has accepted the invitation to deploy;
- 7.1.6. Port and/or airport of embarkation for troops and equipment.
- 7.1.7. Invitation from the Member State for a UN visit to certify that the T/PCC has the required equipment and personnel. This visit should, preferably occur before 30 June.
- 7.2. Once DPO receives an RDL pledge, the DPO Military or Police Adviser will decide whether to provisionally accept the pledge at the RDL (until the VV is conducted) following a recommendation from the SFGCPC in consultation with DOS and PD/SRS (if applicable) and considering the following factors (in no particular order):
  - 7.2.1. Vanguard Brigade composition;
  - 7.2.2. The other units that have been pledged and accepted for that period;
  - 7.2.3. The T/PCC's contribution history (e.g. national decision-making process timeline, unit preparation timeline, regional preferences or caveats, etc.);
  - 7.2.4. The T/PCC's recent peacekeeping performance record, including COE compliance history, conduct and discipline record, and, if suitable, steps taken to investigate, hold accountable and inform on the progress of investigations, as requested in SC Resolution 2272;
  - 7.2.5. The ability of the unit to be transported rapidly from the port of embarkation.
  - 7.2.6. The capabilities, composition and gender balance of the pledged unit;
  - 7.2.7. The current PCRS level of the unit and the relevant AAV report conclusions, if applicable;
  - 7.2.8. Geographic diversity among RDL contributors;
  - 7.2.9. Length of proposed pledge (if less than 12 months).
- 7.3. Once the unit is accepted to continue the process to reach the RDL, DPO will notify the respective T/PCC in writing and request DOS, in consultation with OMA, to start the RDL Agreement process based on the respective unit's SUR.

- 7.4. DPO will also notify T/PCCs of any RDL pledges that were not accepted. Such pledges will be considered for a standby list, and may be asked to, on an exceptional basis, commence the verification process in order to expedite potential replenishment of units deployed from the RDL during the remainder of the fiscal year. These units will not be eligible for maintenance reimbursement during their time on the reserve roster and are not guaranteed deployment but would be considered for new deployment opportunities.
- 7.5. The T/PCC will be requested to populate the Major Equipment tables provided by DOS. Once the tables are received, verified and found suitable by the Secretariat, a draft RDL Agreement will be sent to the T/PCC for concurrence. The preferred modality for deployment (self-deployment, T/PCC-contracted or UN-contracted) should be specified in the draft RDL Agreement.
- 7.6. As a part of the draft RDL Agreement negotiation, the Member State will provide the necessary Cargo Load Lists to DOS.
- 7.7. DPO/DOS will conduct an RDL VV to the Member State to ascertain that all required equipment listed in the draft RDL Agreement is available, in good working order, and able to deploy immediately following a request from the UN Secretariat. The T/PCC shall provide and show to the RDL verification team confirmation that the requisite pre-deployment training, medical clearance and human rights certification processes are in place according to UN standards, and are aligned with the confirmation sent when pledged in the PCRS (see 8.1.3). T/PCC must also show documents related to personnel selection and mobilization plan. The verification team may include a MOVCON representative to assess the ability for the unit to rapidly deploy and required additional representatives to review MS readiness and commitments if the unit in question is registered from below Level 2 of the PCRS.
- 7.8. Once the VV is completed (including a successful FPAT for police units), and all the details confirmed (including ME verification, or the ME list adjusted to what was verified and accepted by DPO/DOS), the MS will be requested to sign the RDL agreement.
- 7.9. Once the RDL agreement is signed, DPO will formally confirm acceptance of the pledge in writing and the unit will be registered at the RDL of PCRS

at the start of the UN peacekeeping fiscal year (1 July) in case the Agreement is signed before that date, or from the day the VV Report is signed, if it is signed after that date. The following steps characterize a unit at the RDL: 1) RDL verification visit report completed and accepted; 2) PCRS RDL Agreement finalized and signed; 3) cargo load lists properly received; and 4) Self certifications documents received as attachments with the pledged unit(s) in the PCRS, and checked during the VV.

7.10. A Member State may choose to remove a unit from the RDL at any time, through formal notification. In doing so, the Member State forfeits any claim to reimbursement for time spent registered at the RDL.

## 8. RDL Verification Visits

8.1. Units accepted for the RDL process will undergo an RDL verification visit before being elevated to that level and to be eligible for RDL reimbursement as appropriate.

8.2. The aim is to hold the RDL VV within 60 days of the completion of negotiations on the draft RDL Agreement, and before the beginning of the UN peacekeeping fiscal year. The RDL verification team will be composed with appropriate members as determined by DPO/DOS (see 7.7).

8.3. The purpose of the RDL VV is to ascertain that the unit is fully ready for a deployment in 60 days after a formal invitation from the UN Secretariat is received (personnel and COE). The VV will inspect all major equipment listed in the RDL agreement and verify that the unit meets all self-sustainment requirements. The VV team will also check if all arrangements were made for the unit's personnel selection (including commanding officer), medical check, UN core pre-deployment training, and human rights vetting. In case of police units, assessment of operational readiness will be conducted, if not done prior, to ensure unit personnel meets all requirements (experience, language, driving, shooting, and demonstration of operational capability of the unit including public order management (POM) techniques). The verification of major equipment and self-sustainment facilities will be governed by the standards established in the COE Manual.

8.4. Units must demonstrate the presence and functionality of all major equipment and self-sustainment to be eligible for RDL reimbursement. At the time of the RDL VV, the T/PCC must also certify that all unit personnel have undergone requisite pre-deployment training, are medically cleared

and have no allegations of human rights abuses (see 8.1.3). For police units, some of these documents are required prior to the VV.

8.5. T/PCCs may be requested to perform a rapid deployment exercise or mission rehearsal exercise that is evaluated by the UN.

## 9. Deployment

9.1. The UN Secretariat will invite a Member State to deploy a unit placed at RDL via Note Verbale. The 60 day countdown will start on the date the Note Verbale is sent to the Permanent Mission. The Note Verbale can be delivered by e-mail, fax, courier or by any other means in order to ensure timely confirmation.

9.2. Within 60 days of the request for deployment, the Member State must conduct all required pre-deployment activities (T/PCC reconnaissance in mission area, if found necessary, MOU negotiation, PDV if necessary, region-specific vaccinations, COE final preparation, painting of additional required equipment, mission-specific pre-deployment training, etc), and have all COE ready to deploy at the port of embarkation through one of the following means:

9.2.1. Self-deployed option (national assets, commercial contract or other means): all personnel and major equipment and self-sustainment capabilities of the unit should arrive at the final (agreed) destination in the host country of the mission.

9.2.2. UN deployed option: all personnel and all major equipment and self-sustainment and self-sustainment capabilities should be ready to board at the port or airport specified in the MOU.

9.3. The deploying Member State may conduct a recce visit to the mission area. The recce visit should not delay the deployment timeline (dates will be determined by the Secretariat).

9.4. The UN Secretariat (DOS) will produce a final MOU based on the RDL Agreement taking into account applicable mission factors and necessary adjustments in COE.

## 10. RDL Reimbursement

10.1. At the end of each fiscal year:

- 10.1.1. If no request is made to a T/PCC to deploy its RDL unit before the end of its period on the RDL, a final verification visit, or self-certification will be requested – at the discretion of the UN Secretariat – to ensure that the T/PCC has met all requirements during the length of the RDL period. If successful, the respective T/PCC is entitled to receive 25 per cent of the maintenance reimbursement rate of all major equipment as per the negotiated RDL Agreement (see item 3 at “Registration at PCRS RDL” above) for the applicable period the unit was on the RDL.
  - 10.1.2. If a unit deploys within 60 days of a request in accordance with items 1 to 6 of “Deployment” above, the respective T/PCC is entitled to receive 25 per cent of the maintenance reimbursement rate of all major equipment as per negotiated RDL Agreement (see para 7.3 above) from the RDL start period (i.e., start of the UN peacekeeping fiscal year (1 July) in case the Agreement is signed before that date, or from the day the VV report is signed, if it is signed after that date). The reimbursement payment for the RDL period will occur as soon as possible after the unit is fully deployed.
  - 10.1.3. If a unit is requested to deploy by DPO but the T/PCC decides not to deploy the unit, fails to deploy within 60 days or fails to meet any of the criteria listed on items 1 to 6 of “Deployment” (see above), the T/PCC will forfeit the right to any reimbursement for the period the unit was placed at RDL of PCRS. The Secretariat will remove that unit from the RDL for the remainder of the fiscal year.
- 10.2. Reimbursement for units at RDL of the PCRS does not preclude the unit also receiving, once deployed and at the UN Secretary-General’s discretion, the premium for enabling capacity approved by General Assembly resolution 67/261, where applicable.
  - 10.3. T/PCCs may still be eligible for RDL reimbursement in cases where the requested deployment of any unit is delayed or cancelled due to matters beyond their control and as agreed to by the United Nations.
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## **F. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **11. DPO**

- 11.1. The SFGCPC, in coordination with PD/SRS, is responsible for general coordination with T/PCCs, including soliciting RDL pledges for the required capabilities, recommending selection of units for RDL in consultation with DOS to OMA and PD leadership and coordinating RDL verification visits.
- 11.2. OMA/MPS, in consultation with DOS, is responsible for preparing and periodically updating RDL SUR for all military units of the Vanguard Brigade. OROLSI/PD, in consultation with DOS, is responsible for RDL SUR for police units.

## 12. DOS

- 12.1. DOS/UCSD is responsible for coordinating the negotiation of the RDL Agreement with Member States that have been selected for the RDL.
- 12.2. DOS/LD is responsible for recommending if the T/PCC can be rapidly transported from the port of embarkation, verifying load lists submitted by RDL T/PCCs and liaising with T/PCCs to address any load list related problems.
- 12.3. DOS/UCSD is responsible for providing the sample major equipment (ME) list to be populated by the T/PCC, reviewing the populated ME list against the SUR, participating in RDL verification visits to T/PCCs pledged to the RDL and providing the verification inspection report.

## 13. T/PCCs

- 13.1. T/PCCs are responsible for notifying DPO of their intention to pledge a unit(s) to the RDL. They are responsible for procuring and preparing the necessary major equipment and self-sustainment, conducting proper human rights screening of unit personnel, and ensuring that unit personnel are selected, undergo UN core pre-deployment training, undergo medical checks and provide self-certification prior to the RDL verification visit. The T/PCC will be requested to show during the VV all above mentioned requirements as well as the plans to mobilise the unit's personnel and COE for deployment.
- 13.2. T/PCCs must provide necessary major equipment lists and load lists; and negotiate with DOS an RDL Agreement.
- 13.3. T/PCCs are responsible for hosting RDL verification visit(s) to display the presence and proper functioning of 100% of major equipment listed in the agreed RDL Agreement (draft) as well as samples of self-sustainment.

13.4. T/PCCs are responsible for ensuring that unit personnel, major equipment and self-sustainment are prepared to deploy to any new or existing UN peacekeeping mission within 60 days of a request from DPO. For police units all pre-selected personnel will need to be ready for assessment.

13.5. T/PCCs are responsible, if requested by the UN, to perform at least one mission rehearsal exercise that is certified and evaluated by the UN.

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## **G. Terms and Definitions**

14. PCRS - The Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS) is a system administered by DPO to register and deploy pledges of military and police units for UN Peacekeeping. The PCRS replaced the United Nations Standby Arrangement System (UNSAS) in July 2015. The PCRS does not guarantee deployment but aims to establish a more predictable and dynamic process of interaction between the UNHQ and T/PCCs for ensuring readiness and timely deployment of quality peacekeeping capabilities.

15. RDL – The Rapid Deployment Level (RDL) is a fourth level of the PCRS. Once a pledged military or police unit has been properly registered (Level 1), it can be considered for RDL. Preference, however, will be given to units at Levels 3 and 2 respectively. Once a Member State receives a positive result from an Assessment and Advisory Visit, the pledge can be elevated to Level 2. Upon mutual agreement, a unit can be considered for Level 3 of the PCRS after discussions and agreements are made on requisite for deployment and provision of Cargo Load lists (details are available in the PCRS Guidelines).

16. Vanguard Capability – The Vanguard Capability is an integrated military and police force composed of a permanent core command element, a brigade-size force of infantry units, two formed police units and the required force multipliers and enablers to be rapidly mobilized and deployed on the authority of the Secretary-General following a Security Council resolution to a new mission or to reinforce an existing mission.

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## **H. REFERENCES**

1. 2017 Contingent-Owned Equipment (COE) Manual (A/72/288).

2. 2012.18 - United Nations Policy on Human Rights Screening of United Nations Personnel (11 December 2012).
  3. DPKO-DFS 2015.16 - Policy on Operational Readiness Assurance and Performance Improvement (1 January 2016).
  4. DPKO/DFS 2016.08 – Guidelines Operational Readiness Preparation for Troop Contributing Countries in Peacekeeping Missions (1 January 2017).
  5. DPKO/DFS 2016.10 – Policy (revised) on Formed Police Units in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (1 January 2017)
  6. DPKO/DFS 2017.02 - SOP on Assessment and Advisory Visits (Draft).
  7. DPKO/DFS 2017.03 - SOP on Contributing Country Reconnaissance Visits (Draft).
  8. DPKO/DFS 2017.04 - SOP on Planning and Implementing Pre-Deployment Visits (Draft).
  9. Generic Guidelines for Troop Contributing Countries Deploying Military Units to the UN Peacekeeping Missions dated 2008.
  10. Guidelines for Police Contributing Countries Deploying Formed Police Units to Specific UN Missions.
  11. SOP Assessment of Operational Capability of Formed Police Units for Service in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions (REF 2017, 9)
  12. Guidelines for the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS), December 2018.
  13. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2272, dated 11 March 2016.
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#### **I. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE**

17. The implementation of this policy is monitored by DPO and DOS. Compliance with this policy is mandatory. All DPO/DOS staff involved in the PCRS shall make arrangements to support the implementation of these guidelines.
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#### **J. CONTACT**

18. Point of Contact for this policy is DPO/OMA/DPET/SFGCPC.
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**K. HISTORY AND AMENDMENTS**

19. The policy was approved on 01 January 2019 and shall be effective from that date. The policy shall be reviewed no later than 01 January 2021.
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**APPROVAL SIGNATURE :**



**Jean-Pierre Lacroix  
Under-Secretary-General  
Department of Peace Operations**

**APPROVAL SIGNATURE:**

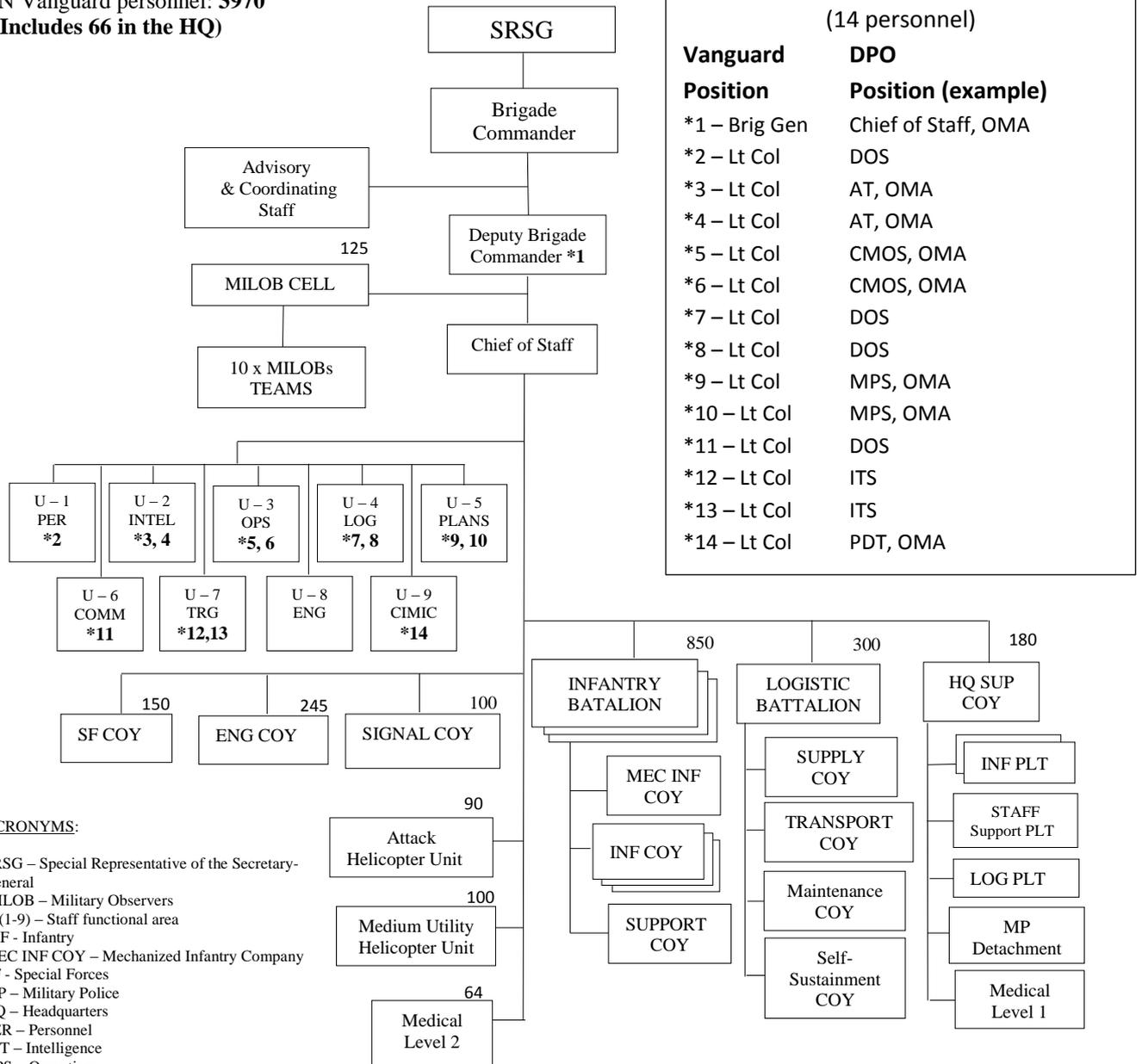


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# Annex A

## Generic Composition of a UN Vanguard Capability

Total UN Vanguard personnel: **3970**  
(Includes 66 in the HQ)



Permanent Core Command Element (14 personnel)	
Vanguard Position	DPO Position (example)
*1 – Brig Gen	Chief of Staff, OMA
*2 – Lt Col	DOS
*3 – Lt Col	AT, OMA
*4 – Lt Col	AT, OMA
*5 – Lt Col	CMOS, OMA
*6 – Lt Col	CMOS, OMA
*7 – Lt Col	DOS
*8 – Lt Col	DOS
*9 – Lt Col	MPS, OMA
*10 – Lt Col	MPS, OMA
*11 – Lt Col	DOS
*12 – Lt Col	ITS
*13 – Lt Col	ITS
*14 – Lt Col	PDT, OMA

**ACRONYMS:**

- SRSG – Special Representative of the Secretary-General
- MILOB – Military Observers
- U (1-9) – Staff functional area
- INF - Infantry
- MEC INF COY – Mechanized Infantry Company
- SF - Special Forces
- MP – Military Police
- HQ – Headquarters
- PER – Personnel
- INT – Intelligence
- OPS – Operations
- LOG – Logistics
- COMM – Communications
- TRG – Training
- CIMIC – Civil and Military Affairs
- COY – Company
- PLT – Platoon
- ENG –Engineer