

## CHAPTER IV

# Security Management



## Section D

### MEASURES TO AVOID RISK

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## **A. Introduction**

1. The United Nations policy on Security Risk Management (SRM) categorizes decisions on how to manage risk as accept, control, avoid and/or transfer (see *Security Policy Manual (SPM)*, Chapter IV, Section A, “Policy on Security Risk Management”, paragraph 14). As part of a broader security risk management strategy, the Designated Official (DO) may temporarily remove personnel and/or eligible family members from an area or situation of unacceptable risk as a means of managing that risk (i.e., avoiding the risk). This chapter lays out the parameters, as well as the roles and responsibilities of relevant actors, regarding the three basic options for avoiding risk used by the United Nations Security Management System:
  - (a) Alternate Work Modalities (temporary closure of offices, “work-from-home” for personnel, “stay-at-home” instructions for eligible family members, etc.)
  - (b) Relocation
  - (c) Evacuation

## **B. Purpose**

2. The purpose of this policy is to lay out the parameters of measures to avoid risk as part of SRM, including alternate work modalities, relocation and/or evacuation, and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of relevant United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS) actors in these decisions.

## **C. Application/Scope**

3. The policy is applicable to all individuals covered by the UNSMS, as defined in Chapter III, Section A of the *Security Policy Manual* (“Applicability of United Nations Security Management System”).

## **D. Conceptual Framework**

4. The SRM process is the fundamental United Nations tool for managing risk. It assesses the level of risk of specific threats to the United Nations. Based on the SRM process, different security measures may be implemented to reduce the level of risk to acceptable levels and enable the United Nations to continue operations.
5. One security risk management option is to avoid risk by temporarily removing persons or assets from a situation of unacceptable residual risk by using alternate work modalities, relocation or evacuation (or their combination). Indeed, until proper measures to control and lower risks are put in place, avoiding risk is the only option when residual risks are deemed unacceptable (see “UNSMS Security Risk Management (SRM) Manual”, page 48-49).
6. Any decision to avoid risk must take into consideration the impact of the removal of personnel and/or eligible family members on United Nations programmes and activities,

including security and/or business continuity plans. Avoiding risk can be a cost-effective way to manage risk, and it is best suited for situations when resource limitations prevent the implementation of proper risk controls or when there has not been enough time to implement proper risk controls (for details on risk control, see “UNSMS Security Risk Management (SRM) Manual”).

### **E. Alternate Work Modalities**

7. For this policy, “Alternate Work Modalities” are defined as measures that limit or totally remove the number of personnel or family members at a specific location(s), short of official relocation or evacuation, with the view to limit or remove their exposure to a sudden situation that creates unacceptable residual risk.
8. Alternate Work Modalities include, but are not limited to, temporarily limiting or removing the number of personnel at United Nations premises, ordering school-aged family members to stay out of school temporarily or creating “no-go” areas in urban areas where personnel and family members cannot visit at certain times.
9. Alternate Work Modalities are effective security risk management strategies for when there is no time to implement proper risk controls, if such controls are not cost-effective or if there is not enough information to determine what risk controls are needed.
10. Decisions on Alternate Work Modalities that involve temporarily closing offices or work-from-home arrangements must be made in accordance with United Nations Human Resources rules and regulations.

### **F. Evacuation and Relocation**

11. Relocation is defined as the official movement of any personnel or eligible dependant from their normal place of assignment or place of work to another location within their country of assignment for avoiding unacceptable risk. Relocation is a risk avoidance measure that can be applied to all personnel and eligible family members.
12. Evacuation is defined as the official movement of any personnel or eligible dependant from their place of assignment to a location outside of their country of assignment (safe-haven country, home country or third country) for the purpose of avoiding unacceptable risk. Except in the situations outlined in paragraph 13 below, evacuation is a risk avoidance measure that can be applied only to internationally-recruited personnel and their eligible family members. The evacuation of eligible family members of internationally-recruited personnel is governed by the same eligibility conditions as for the payment of evacuation allowances as per *Security Policy Manual*, Chapter VI, Section A (“Remuneration of United Nations System Staff and Eligible Family members on Relocation/Evacuation Status”).
13. Locally-recruited personnel and/or their eligible family members may be evacuated from a duty station only in the most exceptional cases in which their security is endangered as a direct consequence of their employment by organizations of the United Nations common system. A decision in this regard can only be made by the Secretary-General, as

recommended by the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security, based on a recommendation by the DO. Personnel and/or their eligible family members not covered by paragraph 12 above may also be assisted to leave the country by the organization, when possible and to the extent feasible and on a reimbursable basis.

14. The generic term “Family Restrictions” will be used to describe situations where the DO has placed restrictions on the presence of any or all eligible family members of United Nations internationally-recruited personnel for a given area. Similarly, the term “Personnel Restrictions” will be used to describe situations where the DO has placed restrictions on the presence of any or all United Nations personnel for a given area.

## **G. Roles and Responsibilities**

15. The DO, in consultation with the Security Management Team (SMT) and based on the advice of the most senior security professional directly supporting the DO,<sup>1</sup> may institute planned or ad hoc Alternate Work Modalities for all or some United Nations personnel and eligible family members to address specific security problems in their area of responsibility in accordance with Section F above. Contingencies for Alternate Work Modalities should be included in the Security Plan and any ongoing Alternate Work Modality (such as “no-go” areas in a city) should be included in the country-specific Minimum Operating Security Standards.
16. Representatives of organizations participating in the United Nations Security Management System can also institute Alternate Work Modalities solely for their personnel in response to agency-specific risks. This derives from their responsibility and authority in the United Nations Framework of Accountability for Security. Representatives wishing to implement such measures should examine any possible negative impact these measures would have on security and/or business continuity plans. They should also consult with other members of the SMT to examine whether these decisions would have any negative impact on the security of other United Nations personnel in the country.
17. The DO, in consultation with the SMT, may recommend the relocation or evacuation of personnel and/or eligible family members when residual risks are deemed unacceptable. This recommendation is submitted through the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security to the Secretary-General. After assessing the situation, the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security makes a recommendation to the Secretary-General for approval of evacuation or relocation.
18. Upon the Secretary-General’s approval of the recommendation, the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security distributes an “All Agency Communiqué” to the United Nations System announcing the details and parameters of the relocation and/or evacuation.

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<sup>1</sup> This is usually the Chief Security Adviser (CSA) or a Security Adviser (SA), including their officer-in-charge *ad interim*. Where a CSA or SA is not present, this term is equivalent to the titles of Chief Security Officer, Chief of Security and Safety Services, Country Security Focal Point (CSFP) or Local Security Assistant (if necessary) in countries where no international professional security adviser has been assigned or is present.

19. If there is an impasse or life-threatening exigencies that impacts the ability of the DO and SMT to make timely risk avoidance decisions, the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security can take such decisions, including by consulting, as necessary, the Executive Group on Security to advise and assist in rapid decision-making.
20. In the event of a breakdown of communication, the DO is authorized to use his/her best judgment to implement relocation and/or evacuation and report on such action immediately thereafter to the Secretary-General, through the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security.
21. If the DO, in consultation with the SMT, recommends that relocation and/or evacuation are no longer needed in any circumstance or area, it is the Secretary-General, on the advice of the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security, who decides when and how personnel and eligible family members can return.
22. Decisions to relocate or evacuate personnel and/or family members are clearly decisions to control the number of personnel and family members as explained in paragraph 2(c) of Chapter V, Section A (“Security Clearance Procedures and the Travel Request Information Process (TRIP)”). Therefore, DOs must institute “manual” security clearance procedures<sup>2</sup> for all locations in relocation or evacuation status.

#### **H. Process of Relocation and/or Evacuation**

23. Authorized relocation and/or evacuation of personnel and/or family members requires the DO to take the following steps:
  - (a) A decision, in consultation with the SMT, on which personnel and eligible family members must be relocated and/or evacuated. The decision as to who remains is based on the “Acceptable Risk Model” (see the UNSMS Security Risk Management (SRM) Manual) and associated mechanisms for determining Programme Criticality and personnel requirements for priority programmes. Personnel who are unable to carry out their assigned tasks effectively due to the security situation and level of residual risk should also be relocated/evacuated. The DO and SMT may determine who will be relocated or evacuated prior to any official authorization of relocation and/or evacuation, including as part of contingency planning or in anticipation of such authorization;
  - (b) Temporary concentration of all personnel and/or their eligible family members, as decided as per paragraph 23(a) above, in one or more concentration points. The DO and SMT may undertake this step prior to any official authorization of relocation and/or evacuation in anticipation of such authorization;
  - (c) Relocation of all personnel and/or their eligible family members, as decided as per paragraph 23(a) above, to alternative locations within the country (note: the temporary concentration and/or internal relocation of locally-recruited personnel and

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<sup>2</sup> See paragraph 18 of Chapter V (“Security Clearance Procedures and the Travel Request Information Process (TRIP)”) for details on “manual” and “automatic” security clearance procedures.

eligible family members is contingent on their desire to avail themselves of this option); and/or

(d) Evacuation outside the country of all internationally-recruited personnel and/or their eligible family members, as decided as per paragraph 23(a) above.

24. Relocation and evacuation movements are official travel, so the Travel Request Information Process (TRIP) must be updated regarding the movements of personnel and eligible family members.

25. Before the evacuation of any personnel or eligible family members, the DO must take all the following actions:

(a) Notify the host Government and local authorities and request assistance as necessary;

(b) Notify the DO in the designated country of evacuation, as well as neighbouring countries and any other countries that may be affected, of the evacuation;

(c) Notify Area Security Coordinators and wardens to instruct all personnel and their eligible family members on actions to be taken;

(d) Brief Area Security Coordinators and wardens, as necessary, on further steps that may be required;

(e) Review financial arrangements, including for the payment of salary advances, allowances or other essential payments as necessary;

(f) Adjust lists of personnel and eligible family members to reflect the evacuation and/or relocation;

(g) Notify personnel in other parts of the country, unaffected by the evacuation and/or relocation, of these developments through the Area Security Coordinator; and

(h) Complete a checklist in respect of those who have been evacuated as per Annex A below, “Follow up after Evacuation of United Nations Personnel”.

#### **I. Return of Evacuated Personnel and Eligible Family members:**

26. Any personnel evacuated may be authorized to return under two conditions:

(a) The Secretary-General, through the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security, authorizes the cancellation of the evacuation status on the recommendation of the DO, in consultation with the SMT, in accordance with paragraph 21 above; or

(b) The staff member is recommended to return to the duty station based on a Programme Criticality assessment, as outlined in paragraph 23(a) above, and is

authorized to do so by the Secretary-General, through the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security).

27. The authorization to evacuate eligible family members means that eligible family members, as described in the evacuation authorization, are not authorized to be present until the Secretary-General, through the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security, cancels the evacuation status on the recommendation of the DO, in consultation with the SMT, in accordance with paragraph 21 above. Compliance is mandatory.

**J. Final provisions:**

28. Field Security Handbook (2006), Chapter V, Section E and G and Annexes I and J are hereby abolished.

**Annex A: Checklist: Follow-up After Evacuation of United Nations Personnel**

NAME OF STAFF MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_  
ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
PROJECT / OFFICE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Personal effects/household goods

- Still remain at duty station? \_\_\_\_\_
- Packed or unpacked, and whereabouts \_\_\_\_\_
- Has staff member: \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) Left packing instructions? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Specified destination and full shipping address? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Specified mode of shipment? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d) Supplied packing list? \_\_\_\_\_
  - e) Arranged insurance? \_\_\_\_\_
  - f) Obtained export permit? \_\_\_\_\_
  - g) Specified any items for disposal locally? \_\_\_\_\_
  - h) Indicated preferred prices? \_\_\_\_\_
  - i) Left instructions for transfer of any income from sales? \_\_\_\_\_
  - j) Left details of any items still in shipment to the duty station? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Private Vehicles

- Still at duty station? \_\_\_\_\_
- Make, type and plate/chassis number \_\_\_\_\_
- Whereabouts? \_\_\_\_\_
- Has staff member: \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) Specified destination and full shipping address? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Specified mode of shipment? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Arranged insurance? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d) Obtained export permit? \_\_\_\_\_
  - e) Specified that vehicle is to be sold locally? \_\_\_\_\_
  - f) Indicated preferred price? \_\_\_\_\_
  - g) Left instructions for transfer of any income from sales? \_\_\_\_\_

3) Rental, etc.

- Has staff member: \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) Surrendered his lease? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Left written instructions for settlement of outstanding rental payments or for recovery of deposits from landlord? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Left written instructions for payment/terminal payment of house servants? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d) Left written instructions for payment of outstanding utilities/recovery of deposits for:
    - gas? \_\_\_\_\_



- electricity? \_\_\_\_\_
- water? \_\_\_\_\_
- e) left written instructions for payment of outstanding school fees? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Bank accounts

Has staff member:

- a) Left bank accounts? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Left local currency? \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Other financial items left? \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Left transfer instructions with bank? \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Left transfer instructions with Designated Official's office together with written authority for DO or his representative to handle account? \_\_\_\_\_