



Lesson 3.1

Basic UN Verification and Investigation Techniques

Content



- Definition and phases of verification
- Definition, preparation, scope and procedures of investigation
- Roles of UNMO in verification and investigation
- Forms, documentation and assessment of evidence
- Definition and approach to witnesses



Learning Outcomes

- Explain the phases of verification
- Explain the procedures for investigation
- Describe the roles of UNMO in verification and investigation
- Identify the practices of effective evidence documentation
- Explain the importance of ensuring the safety and confidentiality of witnesses, and the accuracy of the information they provide



Definition of Verification



The process of establishing the truth or validity of something



Verification

- Aims to support a mandate or agreement to establish compliance
- Authority to conduct verification is defined in a mission's mandate
- Scheduling a verification may be on regular or irregular basis according to an agreement
- Verification tasks is defined by SOPs or UN procedures
- Verification may be followed by an investigation



Phases of Verification

- Phase 1: Planning, preparation and briefing
- Phase 2: Execution
- Phase 3: Debriefing and reporting

Phase 1: Planning, Preparation and Briefing



Planning focuses on:

- Defining the aim and objectives
- Conduct of risk assessment
- Identification of available resources
- Establishment of timelines



Phase 1: Planning, Preparation and Briefing



Preparation covers:

- Checklists, equipment and kits
- Radio checks and procedures
- Liaison Officer (LO)
- Language Assistant (LA)
- Community Liaison Assistant (CLA)
- Compliance with relevant SOPs
- Situational awareness/intelligence
- ID cards and UN flag
- Spot trackers



Phase 1: Planning, Preparation and Briefing



Briefing includes:

- Mission/task/aim
- Objectives
- Timeline
- Risks
- Security situation
- Potential threats
- Safety protocols
- Routes
- Communication procedures
- Relevant SOPs





Phase 2 : Execution

- **Focus on collecting accurate and reliable data**

Key Considerations:



- Do not access the verification area discretely
- Count arms, ammunition, and combatants
- Cover entire area
- Continuous radio contact with HQ
- Log all figures
- All members sign necessary documents
- Report on restrictions and incidents



Phase 2 : Execution

Safety and security considerations:

- Maintain confidentiality
- Report facts only
- Be alert and cautious
- Be impartial, do not yield to pressure
- Observe road conditions, terrain, obstacles and minefields



Phase 3: Debriefing and Reporting

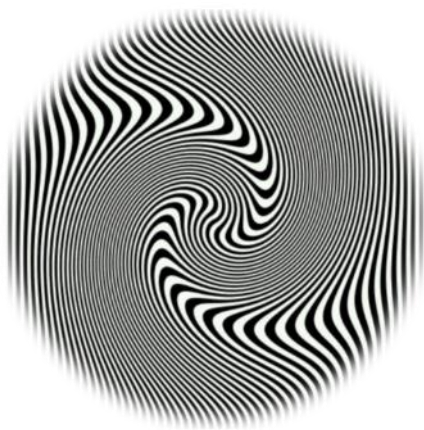


Debrief and prepare a report immediately upon return from the mission including findings, processes and outcomes



Definition of Investigation

Legal and analytical process to gather information to determine whether wrongdoing occurred and, if so, the persons or entities responsible



FACTS





Investigation



- Authority to conduct investigation is stated in a UNSC mandate
- UNMO may be required to be the initial investigating authority for an incident



Scope of Investigation



- Ceasefire violation
- Construction upgrading
- DMZ violations
- Hostage-taking, hijacking, abductions, kidnappings or missing persons
- Assaults and murders
- Human Rights violations



Preparation for Investigation

Planning and Preparation covers:

- Brief investigative team
- Aim of investigation
- Map reconnaissance
- Conduct risk assessment
- Assemble required kit
- Collect and review information/intelligence
- Identify, contact other parties
- Review SOPs, legal considerations
- Verify restrictions and need for LA
- Notify HQ of destination / intentions





Investigation Procedures



- Maintain radio contact and report progress
- Record all aspects of the investigation
- Ensure scene is isolated and protected
- Designate responsibilities
- Attempt to determine what happened
- Draw conclusions based on facts
- Prepare and submit the report



Roles of UNMO in Verification and Investigation



- Receipt of complaints from parties to the conflict
- Submission of complaint(s) to higher HQ
- Conduct verification of non-compliance with peace agreements
- Conduct initial investigations
- Prepare and submit timely and accurate reports



Forms of Evidence



- Verbal



- Material



- Circumstantial



Documentation of Evidence



- Record location
- Document with photos
- Do not distort evidence



- Record evidence
- Scale of reference when taking photos
- Call specialists if required

Documentation of Evidence



- Confirm identities
- Ascertain and record
- Separate witnesses to be interviewed
- Consider witness' motivation to talk
- If LA used, exercise caution
- Establish ground rules for the LA
- Note that witness can become suspects



Assessment of Evidence



- Compare notes
- Assess the credibility of witnesses
- Identify contradictory / corroborating information
- Exercise caution in drawing conclusions
- Cross check different sources of evidences





Witnesses



- Witnesses have direct knowledge of relevant events or information
- They may have observed or experienced incidents, particularly human rights violations
- Their testimony helps establish facts and determine compliance
- Statement of witness clarifies facts, identifies perpetrators, and supports claims



Approach to Witnesses



- Confidentiality
- Impartiality
- Cultural sensitivity
- Safety



Summary of Key Messages

- Verification ensures compliance with mandates, transparency, and accountability, with UNMO playing crucial role in initial investigations
- Investigations proceed through defined phases and protocols under established authority
- UNMO may fulfil various roles in verification and investigation
- Evidence is categorised as verbal, material, or circumstantial, and requires proper documentation
- Witnesses provide essential testimony, necessitating professional and confidential handling by the UNMO

Learning Activity 1



Plenary Quiz
(True or False)

1. These are the phases of verification:

- Phase 1: Planning, preparation and briefing
- Phase 2: Execution
- Phase 3: Debriefing and reporting

() True

() False

Learning Activity 1



2. UNMO receive and process complaints, verify non-compliance, conduct initial investigations, and deliver reports to uphold agreements and ensure accountability

☐ True

☐ False

Learning Activity 1



3. UNMO are normally the lead UN agency for conducting an investigation

() True

() False

Learning Activity 2



Group discussion

Total Time: 15 min

Preparation: 5 min

Discussion: 10 min

Scenario:

You are an UNMO tasked with conducting a verification and investigation of a firing violation in your UNMO TS AOR.

Your mission is to verify compliance with the mandate and document the facts surrounding the violation.

You will also investigate a construction violation in the DMZ and handle a hostage-taking incident.

Learning Activity 2



- List your main roles during the planning and preparation for this verification and investigation mission.
- What steps would you take when investigating a ceasefire violation?
- What types of evidence would you seek during an investigation?
- How would you coordinate with other UN components during a hostage-taking investigation?