



# Military English

Lesson: A day in the life of a UN Peacekeeping Officer - Reading

**TEACHER'S COPY**

## Overview:

This lesson covers an account by an Australian Army Major as part of a UN Peacekeeping mission; and vocabulary related to peacekeeping missions.

## In this lesson, you will:

- ✓ read and find general information in a text
- ✓ learn the meaning of new words
- ✓ use new words in a conversation

## Prepare for Reading

- 1) Look at the photos below and answer the questions. Use this activity to encourage students to start thinking about the topic. It is important that students use whatever English they have at this stage. You could direct this stage also by asking other questions: (pointing to the picture): what is he holding? (a (UN) flag) what job is he doing? (peace-keeping)
  - a. What colour hat do UN Peacekeepers wear? **Blue (to make them stand out as peacekeepers)**
  - b. What part of the world is the map showing? **West Asia and Africa**
  - c. What countries in this map do you know? **Students' own answers**



Taken from  
<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p>

## Reading

- 2) Before you read the text about MAJ Freya Ballan, an Australian soldier who worked in a UN Peacekeeping Operation (PKO), look at these everyday activities. Which ones do you **think** MAJ Ballan usually did in her peacekeeping job? **This activity is to engage students with the topic and the ideas in the text they will read to activate any prior knowledge they may have. Ask the students to look at the list of tasks, a – f, and ‘make a guess’ about what she did in her job as a peacekeeper. Any answer is possible here.**
- To go out every day to look at what is happening in the area
  - To tell her boss about anything she saw
  - To find water and food for the local people **check that students know the meaning of *local people*. If not, explain to them**
  - To work with international defence force personnel
  - To take photographs of people in the area
  - To talk to local village leaders **check that students know the meaning of *village leaders*. If not, explain to them**
- 3) Now, read the article below and underline the activities she usually did. Check your answers with a partner/a group. **Answers may vary slightly as some students may not view some activities as routine. If that’s the case, ask them to justify their answer. The answers are underlined in the text below.** Do not use a dictionary yet. You are going to learn the meaning of the words in **bold** in the next exercise.

Tip: When you see a new word in English try to:

- not use a dictionary first, but ask a classmate
- use an English-English dictionary
- use the sentence to help you guess the meaning



MAJ Freya Ballan arrived in Lebanon in December 2018 as a **Military Observer**. Her team came from countries like China, Russia and New Zealand. They had a clear **UN mandate**: daily patrols and engagement with local people. She really enjoyed the first month. Her days were always different. She also really liked working with different cultures. There were the Lebanese people, and many international soldiers in her team. She never thought that one day she would work with a Brazilian or Russian officer! It was exciting to work and spend her free time with them.


Sometimes her team went on static patrols. This means they would drive to an observation point and stay there for a few days. Her team then described anything unusual to the chain of command. At other times she would go out in an armoured vehicle with a UN interpreter to talk to village leaders. This was her favourite job because the Lebanese people were always friendly and kind. Sometimes they would ask to take pictures with her.

MAJ Ballan says her **deployment** in a UN Peacekeeping **mission** made her a better officer. She thinks this is a good job for every soldier.

- 4) Read again, but quickly!  
 Can you find the following (and explain later)?
- three countries **Lebanon, China, Russia, New Zealand (any three)**
  - three nationalities **Lebanese, Brazilian, Russian**
  - one month **December**
  - a year **2018**
  - two jobs **soldier, interpreter**
  - the name of the officer in this story **MAJ Freya Ballan**

## Learning Military Vocabulary

- 5) The words in **bold** in the text are important military vocabulary that you should learn to use. Match the military words on the left to their definitions on the right. Look at the example. **This is both in the table and below it. Ask the students to look through the table first, and then direct them to the example.**

to work as a <b>Military Observer</b> (n)	<b>h</b>	a. a list of things soldiers can do during a UN mission
to have a <b>mandate</b> (n)	<b>a</b>	b. when a soldier moves around an area to make sure there is no problem
to go on a <b>patrol</b> (n)	<b>b</b>	c. to talk to someone so you can be friends
<b>engagement</b> with local people (n)	<b>c</b>	d. a place where you can watch something happening
to go on a <b>static patrol</b> (n)	<b>k</b>	<b>e. an important military job</b>
to drive to an <b>observation point</b> (n)	<b>d</b>	f. the way information or instructions in the military <u>go up</u> , for example, from a soldier to his/her boss; or <u>go down</u> , for example, from a general down to a soldier
the <b>chain of command</b> (n)	<b>f</b>	g. someone who helps people who speak different languages to understand each other
(to go out in) an <b>armoured vehicle</b> (n)	<b>j</b>	h. a soldier who watches and listens to what is happening. They report what they see or hear.
an <b>interpreter</b> (n)	<b>g</b>	i. when a soldier goes to work for a few months in a different place, usually where there is war happening.
her <b>deployment</b> in a UN Peacekeeping mission (n)	<b>i</b>	j. 
a UN Peacekeeping <b>mission</b> (n)	<b>e</b>	k. like a patrol, but instead of moving around, soldiers stay in one place

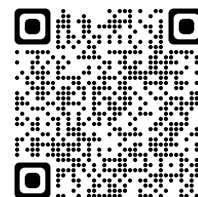
*Example: a mission = e. an important military job*

- 6) Now let's practise saying the words. Listen and repeat. **Play the recording, or you may wish to model the pronunciation. Ask students to try to repeat. Listen and help students with their pronunciation clapping or signalling the main stressed syllable on the WB (indicated by the underlining).**
- 7) Now try to use some of the words from exercise 5 correctly in the sentences below.
- Sometimes MAJ Ballan went on a patrol in an armoured vehicle.
  - Sometimes her team would stay at an observation point, without moving around.
  - Military officers can train to become an interpreter, so they can help their colleagues understand what international people say in another language.
  - A mission with the UN usually means the soldier works as a Military Observer. They are not going to war but they watch what is happening and tell their chain of command.
  - Soldiers from Australia travel to many places to help. This job helps engagement with the people from that place.

## Practice

- 8) Discuss these questions with a partner:
- Did MAJ Ballan like her job as a UN Military Observer? Do you remember why she liked/didn't like it?  
**Yes, she did. She liked that her days were different in the 1<sup>st</sup> month. She liked working and spending free time with people from other cultures. What she liked the most was talking to village leaders.**
  - Would you like to go on a deployment as a Military Observer? Why / why not?  
**Students' own answers.**

- Watch this video about going on patrol in a Peacekeeping Operation.  
Type on YouTube [On patrol with peacekeepers in South Sudan](#) or scan the QR code:



**This is an optional activity. Tips for using it:**

- assign as homework. Students watch and take notes on the main points of the video.**
  - show video in class at the end of this lesson. Students take notes on the main points.**
- This lesson links with → Lesson – On Patrol

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## Exercise 6 Vocabulary Recording Transcript

*Exercise 6: Now let's practise saying the words. Listen and repeat:*

*military observer*

*mandate*

*patrol*

*engagement*

*static patrol*

*observation point*

*chain of command*

*armoured vehicle*

*interpreter*

*deployment*

*mission*