



A Study About Managing corruption risks in the work of the Civil Defense Agency

**“Department of Prevention and
Public Safety”**

Report No 279



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A Study About

Managing corruption risks in the work of the Civil

Defense Agency

«Department of Prevention and Public Safety»

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Executive Summary

This study aimed to analyze and identify the risks of corruption in the work of the Palestinian Civil Defense Service, specifically in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the agency, and the degree of its probability, its various forms and effects, in order to come up with recommendations that help decision-makers avoid these risks, and establishing procedures and mechanisms to protect workers from exposure to these risks while carrying out their assigned tasks, which will reflect positively on the provision of public services to citizens and reduce the chances of corruption.

The corruption risk management methodology has been adopted, in accordance with the methodology developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the corruption risk management methodology includes a set of steps, including defining the flow map of decisions or procedures for work or service provision, and assessing the risks of corruption by identifying the types and forms of expected deviations in the administrative decision, the possibility of their occurrence, evaluating the resulting impact, and then controlling the risks, by searching for available reform options to avoid the occurrence of deviations or acts of corruption and treating their negative effects.

The work map was followed in the tasks of **“Managing corruption risks in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the Civil Defense in the West Bank.”** This is based on the sensitivity of the work in this department, and its direct contact with citizens and stakeholders, including companies, investors, businessmen, and others. A map of the flow of decisions or procedures related to work in the Prevention and Public Safety Department in the Civil Defense Agency “Decision Tree and the authorities responsible for issuing these decisions” has been determined. Work was done to determine the decision flow map through two paths: Path (A) in the event of granting permits for new facilities, and Path (B) in the event of renewing permits for existing facilities.

The study concluded with a number of conclusions, the most important of which are: The legislative framework regulating the work of civil defense is available, and it is one of the first legislations regulating the work of security services, but it has been outdated for a quarter of a century, and does not keep pace with the many developments in the work of civil defense, and an administrative structure is available for the civil defense agency and specific tasks. Accordingly, institutional building is available, there is a shortage in the number of employees in the agency, and the percentage of females is still low at about (6%). The Palestinian Code for Fire Prevention and Protection is available, approved by the Council of Ministers in the year 2021, and there are still challenges and obstacles that affect the work of the device, most notably the lack of human staff, limited financial resources and budgets, and limited logistical capabilities. There are also shortages and challenges in computing and automation systems in the civil defense agency in general, and in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety.

There are several levels of oversight in the civil defense agency, some of which are internal, such as the Department of Oversight and Inspection, and some are external, represented by the Bureau of Financial and Administrative Oversight. There are opportunities and possibilities for corruption in the work of the Department of Prevention and Public Safety, especially in the stages of the cycle of granting permits for new establishments. Or in existing constructions and occupancy permit permits, or in renewing permits for existing facilities, there is a need for analysis and procedures to manage corruption risks and work to control those risks. There are a number of procedures that must be implemented in order to manage corruption risks in the work of the Prevention and Public Safety Department. And to protect and protect its employees from the risks of corruption, including computerizing all operations, providing a detailed procedures guide, forming committees from several administrative levels, codifying exceptions, and others.

The study concluded with a number of recommendations, the most important of which are: the necessity of activating legislation related to the civil defense agency, and issuing executive regulations and systems to create legislative integration, including special articles on preventing the risks of corruption, in consultation and partnership with civil society institutions, the private sector, and academics.

The need to provide the civil defense agency with the human resources required to carry out its tasks, raise its budget in proportion to the priority of its service to citizens, and enhance its logistical

capabilities to keep pace with development and modern urban expansion, reduce response time, and increase the number of technicians for inspection and oversight. It is necessary to provide space for private sector companies to work as audit offices accredited to the extent that the engineering plans of various facilities adhere to the Palestinian code, which contributes to the governance of procedures, and the necessity of working to fortify those working in inspection, technical office examination, and field examination of new facilities and those renewing their permits, through special bonuses for them.

There is also the need to implement what is stated in the matrix of possible proposals to enhance reform options and mitigate the risks of corruption, and the need to strengthen governance in the work of the civil defense agency through the shift towards digitization and automation in work procedures, archiving and documentation, and the necessity of granting initial or final “occupancy” permits through specialized committees of no less than three in each committee, and through at least two administrative levels, with rotation of the committees.

It is necessary to prepare a comprehensive procedures guide that includes all procedures for dealing with potential cases so that it becomes a reference framework for work, limits jurisprudence, and identifies and reduces exceptions, as they are a potential gateway to opportunities for corruption, and to issue a clear list of violations that can be dealt with.

These are essential ones that cannot be excluded in any way, and the necessity of working to provide sufficient logistical and human capabilities necessary for the work of the Prevention and Public Safety Department in order to reach the largest possible number of facilities in the West Bank, in order to enhance prevention and public safety.

Introduction

The Palestinian Civil Defense Service is the body working within the structure of the Ministry of Interior to protect the lives and property of citizens in times of peace or war, whether in natural or industrial disasters. The Palestinian Civil Defense Service was established in 1996, and a law was issued to regulate its work in 1998 under the name of Law No. (3) of 1998, regarding Palestinian Civil Defense.

¹In the year 2000, Resolution No. (19) was issued by the President of the Palestinian National Authority granting judicial control status to the Director General of the Palestinian Civil Defense Service, and to categories of the Service's employees, and the Service was attached to the Ministry of Interior pursuant to Presidential Decree No. (12) of 2002².

Workers in the Palestinian Civil Defense Service are a force within the Palestinian Internal Security Forces. They perform their duties and exercise their jurisdictions in accordance with applicable legislation, and are subject to the Service Law in the Palestinian Security Forces issued in 2005.

According to the law, **civil defense** means a group of necessary measures to protect civilians and their property, ensure the safety of all types of transportation, ensure the regular functioning of public facilities, and protect public and private buildings, facilities, and institutions, whether from the dangers of air strikes and other acts of war or from the dangers of **natural disasters, fires, or marine rescue, or any other dangers**³.

Procedurally, civil defense is defined as a set of necessary procedures to protect civilians and their property and ensure their safety, and to protect buildings, facilities, and public and private institutions from dangers such as: natural disasters, fires, or any other dangers.

Objective of the study: To analyze and identify the risks of corruption in the work of the Palestinian Civil Defense Agency, specifically in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the device, and the degree of its probability, its various forms and effects, in order to come up with recommendations that help decision makers avoid these risks, as well as establishing procedures and mechanisms to protect workers from exposure to these risks while carrying out their assigned tasks, which will reflect positively on the provision of public services to citizens and reduce the chances of corruption.

Study methodology

The study adopts the corruption risk management methodology, in accordance with the methodology developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)⁴. The corruption risk management methodology includes a set of steps as follows:

First: Determine the flow map of decisions or procedures related to work or service provision, which is called the decision tree and the authorities responsible for issuing these decisions.

Second: Assessing corruption risks by identifying the types and forms of expected deviations in administrative decision and the possibility of their occurrence by analyzing the motives that increase the possibility of deviations occurring and the controls that make deviation unlikely, and evaluating the resulting impact. The probability of deviation and its resulting impact are expressed according to the following indicator:

1. Law No. (3) of 1998, regarding Palestinian Civil Defense.

2. Presidential Decree No. (12) of 2002, regarding the attachment of the police forces, preventive security forces, and civil defense to the Ministry of Interior.

3. Law No. (3) of 1998, regarding Palestinian Civil Defense. Article No. (2).

4. Conceptual Framework, Corruption Risk Assessment At Sectoral Level, United Nations Development Program UNDP, United Nations Plaza New York, NY, 10017 USA, 2018. 2020.

Very Weak	Weak	Medium	Strong	Very Strong
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الاحتمالية	قوي جداً	قوي	معتدل	ضعيف	ضعيف جداً
قوي جداً	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
قوي	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
معتدل	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
ضعيف	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
ضعيف جداً	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
	ضعيف جداً	ضعيف	معتدل	قوي	قوي جداً
	الأثر				

Third: Controlling risks by searching for available reform options to avoid the occurrence of deviations or acts of corruption and addressing their negative effects by reducing the benefit that a corrupt person can obtain from deviations in an administrative decision and increasing the risks that he can face when causing deviations in decisions and committing acts of corruption.

The legal and institutional framework regulating the work of civil defense

First: The legal framework for Civil Defense

A law was issued to regulate the work of the civil defense agency in the year 1998, under the name of Law No. (3) of 1998, regarding Palestinian Civil Defense⁵. The law came to replace Civil Defense Law No. 12 of 1959 in force in the governorates of the West Bank, and Civil Defense Law No. 17 of the year 1962 enforced in the Gaza governorates. The law included (31) articles, and the agency was attached to the Ministry of Interior pursuant to Presidential Decree No. (12) of 2002⁶.

According to the law, there are civil defense tasks, the most important of which are:

1. Organizing fire extinguishing means.
2. Contributing to preparing places suitable for receiving those injured from air strikes and natural disasters.
3. Preparing rescue teams, rubble removal teams, air raid and fire observer teams, and teaching and training civilians on civil defense methods by various means.
4. Organizing and determining the conditions for transporting and storing hazardous chemicals on the roads of the Palestinian National Authority⁷.

Several legislations related to the work of the civil defense agency were also issued, including:

- **Resolution No. (19) of 2000 granting the status of judicial control to the Director General of Civil Defense and to categories of employees of the General Directorate of Civil Defense**, which granted the status of judicial control to the following:
 1. Center leaders in the General Directorate of Civil Defense.
 2. Directors of departments in the General Directorate of Civil Defense.
 3. Heads of industrial security departments at the General Directorate of Civil Defense.
 4. Engineers working in the industrial security departments of the General Directorate of Civil Defense.
 5. Legal personnel working in the General Directorate of Civil Defense.
 6. Inspection personnel and follow-up workers in industrial security at the General Directorate of Civil Defense⁸.
- **Resolution No. (27) of 2000 regarding the adoption of regulations for safety conditions and fire prevention**

It is a decision that states regulations for safety and fire prevention conditions, which are:

1. A list of safety and fire prevention conditions and means of protection that must be available in industrial facilities.
2. A list of safety conditions, fire prevention methods, and alarm and extinguishing equipment that must be available in high-rise buildings and public and private facilities.

5. Law No. (3) of 1998, regarding Palestinian Civil Defense.

6. Presidential Decree No. (12) of 2002, regarding the attachment of the police forces, preventive security forces, and civil defense to the Ministry of Interior.

7. Law No. (3) of 1998, regarding Palestinian Civil Defense, Article No. (6).

8. قرار رقم (19) لسنة 2000م بمنح صفة الضبط القضائي لمدير عام الدفاع المدني ولفئات من موظفي المديرية العامة للدفاع المدني، المادة رقم (1).

3. A list of safety and fire prevention conditions and means of protection that must be available in quarries.
4. A list of safety and fire prevention conditions and means of protection that must be available in wood warehouses.
5. A list of safety and fire prevention conditions and means of protection that must be available in storage warehouses.
6. A list of safety and fire prevention conditions and means of protection that must be available in bakeries.
7. A list of safety and fire prevention conditions and means of protection that must be available in car and machinery workshops.
8. A list of safety and fire prevention conditions and the means of extinguishing, monitoring, and alarm that must be available in lecture halls, meetings, conferences, weddings, theaters, and similar activity buildings.
9. A list of safety and fire prevention conditions and means of protection that must be available in all trades, industries, professions and other activities.
10. A list of safety and fire prevention conditions, means of protection, and specifications of firefighting and alarm means that must be available at fuel transport stations and vehicles.
11. A list of safety conditions, means of protection and firefighting, and specifications of the extinguishing and warning methods that must be available at gas filling stations, transport and distribution vehicles, and storage places for liquefied petroleum gas cylinders⁹.

The presidential decision entrusted the civil defense agency with the responsibility of following up on the implementation of regulations, as the decision stated: "The General Directorate of Civil Defense must implement and follow up on the implementation of these regulations and ensure that their texts and articles are strictly implemented¹⁰."

- Presidential Decree No. (12) of 2002 attaching the police forces, preventive security forces, and civil defense to the Ministry of Interior, which stipulated in its first article:

1. The police forces, preventive security forces, and civil defense forces, with all their agencies and administration, are attached to the Ministry of Interior¹¹.

- Cabinet Resolution No. (17) of 2008 regarding the licensing system issued by the General Petroleum Authority, which included articles related to the role of the Civil Defense Authority in the licensing system issued by the General Petroleum Authority, especially the initial approval for granting licenses to stations, and membership of the operating committee for stations¹².

- Minister of the Interior Resolution No. (1) of 2011 regarding organizing the work of volunteers in the work of the Palestinian Civil Defense, which included details of organizing the work of volunteers in the agency¹³.

Conclusion: Although the legislative framework regulating the work of civil defense is one of the first legislations regulating the work of security services, it is incomplete in a comprehensive way, to keep pace with the many recent developments in the work of civil defense, such as the use of computerized technologies, positioning systems, and the Palestinian code...

9.Resolution No. (27) of 2000 AD regarding the adoption of regulations for safety conditions and fire prevention, Article No. (1).

10.Resolution No. (27) of 2000 AD regarding the adoption of regulations for safety conditions and fire prevention, Article No. (2).

11.Presidential Decree No. (12) of 2002 attaching the police forces, preventive security forces, and civil defense to the Ministry of Interior, Article No. (1).

12.Cabinet Resolution No. (17) of 2008 regarding the licensing system issued by the General Petroleum Authority, Articles No. (9+10).

13.Resolution of the Minister of the Interior No. (1) of 2011 regarding organizing the work of volunteers in Palestinian Civil Defense work.

Second: The institutional framework regulating the work of civil defense

According to Civil Defense Law No. (3) of 1998, especially Article No. (2), the General Directorate of Civil Defense is subordinate to the Ministry of Interior¹⁴.

The Civil Defense Agency is administratively, technically and organizationally linked to the Ministry of Interior as a security agency affiliated with it. As for the organizational structure of the Civil Defense Agency, it consists of the main headquarters, (11) directorates, the Search and Rescue Office in Jericho, and (49) centers distributed across the northern governorates of the West Bank¹⁵.

The structure of the device includes (15) departments:

- **Office of the Director General:** The Office of the Director General of Palestinian Civil Defense works within an approved system to coordinate the flow of information and ensure flexible communication between departments and governorates, as the Office of the Director General directs the departments towards the compass of the agency's general goals.
- Public Administration.
- Central operations.
- Department of Prevention and Public Safety: The Department of Prevention and Public Safety is concerned with achieving the security and safety of the citizen, and directing expertise and energies to enhance public safety throughout the country. The Department of Prevention and Public Safety works to implement safety procedures to maintain the security and safety of the citizen and his property in all governorates of the country.
- Public Relations and Media Department.
- Planning and Development Department.
- Disaster management.
- Training Administration.
- Volunteer management.
- International Relations Department.
- financial management.
- Support and support management.
- Security and Protection Department.
- Fire and Rescue Department: Communicating with field fire crew members to support and refine their morale and experience, and to support field crews in locations and governorates to ensure the proper performance of their tasks and their safety.
- Control and Inspection Department¹⁶.

14. قانون الدفاع المدني رقم (3) لسنة 1998، المادة رقم (2).

15. التقرير السنوي 2022، الصادر عن جهاز الدفاع المدني، صفحة (83).

16. Civil Defense Agency website, departments <https://pcd.ps/departments>

Number of Civil Defense members

- The number of the agency's members in the year 2022 reached: (1,500) male and female members.
- The number of female members in the agency reached (83).
- The agency suffers from a lack of human staff¹⁷; This means that the percentage of females in the system is about 5.5%.

Oversight of the work of civil defense

The Civil Defense Service is subject to oversight from several internal and external bodies. At the internal level, the Department of Oversight and Inspection is responsible for monitoring the performance of various departments, detecting errors, ensuring that civil defense personnel adhere to their plans, policies and procedures, and the extent to which employees follow the legal provisions, regulations and instructions that regulate their work.

As for the external oversight parties, they are:

- Ministry of Interior (Internal Control Unit).
- Bureau of Financial and Administrative Control.
- Anti-Corruption Commission.
- Community oversight and accountability.

Work is currently underway to prepare a new strategic plan for the Civil Defense Agency, which keeps pace with the strategic plan cycle 2024-2029 in Palestine, and includes enhancing civil protection capabilities provided to citizens, enhancing the ability to confront emergencies, and raising community awareness.

- **The agency's vision:** a safe and stable Palestinian state with high-quality civil protection.

- **The agency's mission:** Access to a civil defense that has high-quality expertise and services for humanitarian missions in all societal sectors in a way that ensures the safety of society and enhances the feeling of security in the face of dangers of all kinds, within international standards with transparency, responsibility and integrity.

- **The agency's values:** respect for laws and regulations, respect for human rights, honesty and honesty, integrity and accountability, neutrality and objectivity, quality and excellence, courage and courage¹⁸.

The most prominent strengths and weaknesses in developing corruption risk management Strengths:

- The existence of a law regulating civil defense.
- Having a planning team and taking care of it.
- Clear diversity in different specializations.
- The presence of qualified and trained staff.

17. Annual report 2022, issued by the Civil Defense Service, page (84).

18. The Palestinian Civil Defense Strategic Plan 2017-2022.

- The existence of the Supreme Council of Civil Defense.
- The presence of flexible organizational structures.
- Leadership's interest in new ideas.
- Having a code of conduct.

Weaknesses:

- Failure to complete the institutional development system.
- Weak technology, electronic archiving, and electronic connectivity.
- Shortage and outdated machinery and vehicles.
- Failure to adjust the career path to the training path.
- Weak community awareness.
- Poor training and specialized training.
- Absence of executive regulations.
- Lack of specialization in human resources.
- Lease contracts for civil defense centers.
- The absence of sub-plans to confront disasters.
- Absence of incentive system.
- Weak logistical capabilities and lack of operational expenses.
- Lack of human resources.
- Old laws and legislation related to civil defense¹⁹.

Safety and Prevention Department activities for the year 2022:

- The number of permits granted reached (26,755), which included:
 - Detecting (16,185) commercial and industrial establishments and crafts, and issuing permits for them.
 - Inspecting and licensing (10,570) elevators and escalators.
- Implementing (59,590) field visits to inspect public safety procedures in various facilities and occupancies.

Total revenues from fees reached (4,975,617) shekels in 2022²⁰

19. Annual report 2022, issued by the Civil Defense Service, page (85).

20. Annual report 2022, issued by the Civil Defense Service, page (72).

Third: The Palestinian code for prevention and protection from fire

The Palestinian Code for Fire Prevention and Protection was issued pursuant to Council of Ministers Resolution No. (01/113/18/M.W./M.A.) dated 6/14/2021²¹, as the Palestinian Code included 12 main sections, and six sections as appendices. It included the rules, regulations, and basic general requirements that are expected to be applied to most buildings, facilities, and occupancies and their classifications, and included engineering drawings and explanatory tables.

Article No. (3) of the code states: “This code shall apply to all buildings and facilities, and to all buildings owned by the state, or that it manages or exploits, and for which licenses are issued after adopting and ratifying this code.” As for establishments for which licenses were issued before the adoption of this code, they will be dealt with in accordance with the regulations and laws in force at that period. If the facility requires finding alternatives to the requirements of prevention and public safety, the Director General of Civil Defense has the right, as he deems appropriate, to refer it to a youth committee specialized in existing buildings, in accordance with the decision of the Council of Ministers regarding existing buildings²².

As for Article No. (4) of the code, it states: “The competent official body is the Civil Defense Agency, and its powers shall be to form the relevant committees in partnership with the concerned authorities to address issues not included in this code.” or studying special cases in which it is difficult to implement any of the requirements of this code, and requires providing alternatives according to what the competent official authority deems appropriate.

21. Cabinet Resolution No. (01/113/18/M.W./M.A.) dated 6/14/2021, regarding the adoption of the Palestinian Code for Prevention and Protection from Fire.

22. Palestinian Code for Fire Prevention and Protection, 2021, Articles No. (3+4).

Managing corruption risks in the work of the Civil Defense Agency

"Managing corruption risks in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the Civil Defense in the West Bank"

In this chapter, the work map for the tasks of **"managing corruption risks in the Prevention and Public Safety Department in the Civil Defense in the West Bank"** will be traced, based on the sensitivity of the work in this department, and its direct contact with citizens and stakeholders, including companies, investors, businessmen, and others, as the Department of Prevention and Public Safety issues public safety certificates for various establishments and determines their safety conditions, along with conducting inspection tours of public facilities to ensure the safety of the prevention measures followed in them, and organizing the collection of fees related to public safety and prevention permits.

The goal is to identify and analyze potential corruption risks in the services provided by the Department of Prevention and Public Safety, their degree of probability, and their various effects in order to come up with recommendations that help decision-makers avoid these risks and develop procedures and mechanisms to protect workers when they are exposed to these risks while providing the service they are assigned to, which reflects positively on the provision of public services to citizens. Accordingly, the study does not reveal cases of corruption, but rather comes within the framework of cooperation with public institutions in building capabilities in managing corruption risks and preventing it²³.

According to the report of the Office of Financial and Administrative Control for the year 2022, there are observations about the performance of the Prevention and Public Safety Department, which are summarized in the fact that a group of petroleum stations did not obtain a fire prevention and safety permit, and they were only informed of the Civil Defense conditions, and they were not followed up or legal action was taken against them. Some stations did not pay their due fees, did not obtain a prevention permit for years, and no action was taken against them. Some directorates did not issue any safety permits for public buildings, and some directorates issued permits to a small number. All facilities included within the jurisdiction of the Civil Defense / Department of Prevention and Safety are not obligated to issue and obtain public safety permits during the year 2020, such as gas stations, public buildings, schools, universities, olive presses, hospitals, hotels and hotel apartments.

The report also pointed to problems in the financial aspect, including a mismatch between the value of fees deposited in the bank and those recorded on the computerized program, and procedural problems that provide opportunities for corruption²⁴.

In an exclusive interview with Professor Jaffal Jaffal, Director General of the Bureau of Financial and Administrative Control, indicated that an audit was carried out by the Bureau on the work of the Civil Defense Bureau, including the Department of Prevention and Public Safety, explaining that the observations contained in the annual report were the result of audits in the year 2020. The observations were responded to by the agency, and the agency expressed its readiness to take into account the recommendations contained in the report²⁵.

23. A special interview was held with Lieutenant Colonel Ayman Brouk, Director of the Prevention and Public Safety Department in the Civil Defense Service, October 2023, to review the work stations in prevention and public safety procedures at the directorate and general directorate levels.

24. Bureau of Financial and Administrative Control, Annual Report 2022, page (71).

25. Special interview with Prof. Jaffal Jaffal, Director General of the Bureau of Financial and Administrative Control, October 2023.

Regarding the financial violations mentioned in the report, Lieutenant Colonel Ayman Brouk, Director of the Public Prevention and Safety Department in the Civil Defense Agency, said that the department and the agency have taken into account the recommendations of the Audit Bureau, and that payment of permit fees is now made through banks and for the account of the public treasury. There is no manual collection, explaining that the agency was the one who initiated and notified the Financial and Administrative Oversight Bureau about a case of corruption in one of the directorates in collecting permit fees²⁶, and this was confirmed by the Director General of the Financial and Administrative Oversight Bureau, as the suspected employee was transferred to the competent authorities²⁷.

Professor Jaffal Jaffal, Director General of the Financial and Administrative Control Bureau, pointed out that the Bureau works to audit the work of the civil defense agency through two axes: governance and the extent of its enforcement, and effective services, and within the best international standards for the work of civil defense agencies, taking into account the specificity of the Palestinian reality.

He explained that adopting the standard aims to measure and not necessarily achieve it completely, stressing that the civil defense agency is primarily services, and vital for citizens, and there is a need to improve its services and enhance its capabilities.

Lieutenant Colonel Ayman Brouk, Director of the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the Palestinian Civil Defense Service, noted that the agency worked to strengthen internal control, especially with regard to inspecting establishments and granting permits. Today, fees are collected through the bank, inspections and follow-up operations are documented on paper, and the department is currently working on preparing a comprehensive computerized system for all the work of the oversight and public safety departments in the directorates, which includes the names and data of all establishments, their legal status, and the permits granted, and the collected revenues, and that the computerized program will be implemented at the beginning of the year 2024, and will include multiple indicators to enhance the governance of the work of the Prevention and Public Safety Department, and enhance internal control, oversight and follow-up.

The Director of the Prevention and Public Safety Department said in an interview with the researcher that work is being done to automate administrative processes by providing computerized services to the relevant authorities, through a special computerized application that includes data about the facility and the possibility of obtaining approved permits and paying automatically, in addition to having an action plan to expand horizontally and reach a greater number of facilities in all regions, especially with the complexity of the Palestinian reality and classifications of regions, to examine and ensure the conditions of prevention and public safety, and to follow up on facilities in all sectors.

In order to apply governance principles, work is currently underway to prepare a computerized system for the operations and tasks of the Prevention and Public Safety Department, through which data will be provided about the number of facilities in each directorate, the status of each facility in terms of visits and follow-ups, and the revenues of each directorate. The computerized program can be developed to include alerts or indicators about establishments whose permits have not been renewed²⁸.

26. Special interview with Lieutenant Colonel Ayman Brouk, Director of the Prevention and Public Safety Department at the Civil Defense Service, October 2023.

27. Special interview with Prof. Jaffal Jaffal, Director General of the Bureau of Financial and Administrative Control, October 2023.

28. Special interview with Lieutenant Colonel Ayman Brouk, Director of the Prevention and Public Safety Department at the Civil Defense Service, October 2023.

Managing corruption risks in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the Civil Defense in the West Bank

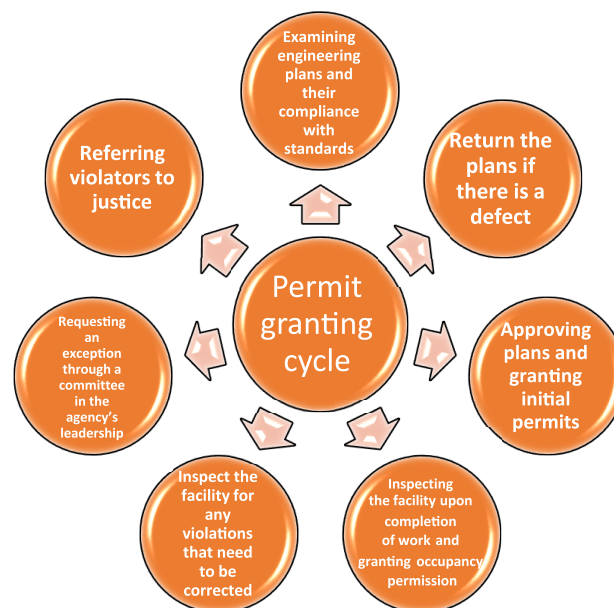
First:

Defining a map of the flow of decisions or procedures for work in the Prevention and Public Safety Department in the Civil Defense Authority, “the tree of decisions and the authorities responsible for issuing these decisions.”

Work will be done to determine the decision flow map through two paths:

- **Path (A), in the event of granting permits for new facilities.**
- **Path (B), in the event of renewing permits for existing facilities.**

(Work Flow Map – Track “A” - Granting permits for new facilities)



Explaining and evaluating each stage of the permitting cycle for new facilities:

1.1 Decision Point No. (1): Submitting the plans to the Department of Prevention and Public Safety

- **Who submits plans:** people, companies, investors, and anyone who wants to build a large public or home facility, through licensed and accredited engineering offices.
- **Who examines the plans:** A committee in the Civil Defense Directorate consisting of a technical staff of three engineers (architectural/electrical/mechanical). Based on the technical examination of the drawings, the department director approves.
- **The administrative levels supervising the process of examining plans:** two administrative levels, the technical committee consisting of three engineers, and the director of the Department of Prevention and Public Safety.
- **Other administrative levels that can be contacted:** You can contact the Prevention and Public Safety Department centrally, if necessary, or one of the supporting departments.
- **Documents supporting the process of inspecting plans:** engineering plans issued by a licensed and accredited engineering office, and the Palestinian code for fire protection and prevention.

- **Documenting the process of inspecting plans:** It is documented on paper. A computerized program is being worked on to document all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2024.
- **Enhanced procedures for the blueprint inspection process:** unified procedures through the approved Palestinian code.
- **Regulatory authorities:** Department of Oversight and Inspection in the agency (internal oversight), in addition to the subject of the agency's work to the oversight of the Office of Financial and Administrative Oversight.

Chances of corruption in the process of inspecting engineering plans: The chances are very weak and their impact is moderate, because they require agreement between the engineering inspection team, in addition to the engineering office, the facility owner, and the department director, in addition to a subsequent field inspection to grant the occupancy permit. In the event of plans that violate the terms, they will be detected.

1.2 Decision point No. (2): Return the engineering drawings if there is a defect

- **Who returns the plans:** The Civil Defense Directorate, based on the examination of the plans by the competent technical committee, and their conformity with the Palestinian code, and they are returned to the engineering office or the person concerned.
- **The administrative levels supervising the process of returning the plans:** two administrative levels, the technical committee, and the director of the Public Safety and Prevention Department in the Civil Defense Directorate.
- **Other administrative levels that can be contacted:** You can contact the Prevention and Public Safety Department centrally if necessary, or one of the supporting departments if necessary.
- **Documents supporting the process of returning plans:** engineering plans issued by a licensed and accredited engineering office with notes, and the Palestinian code for fire protection and prevention.
- **Documenting the process of returning plans:** It is documented on paper. A computerized program is being worked on to document all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of the year 2024.
- **Enhanced procedures for the process of returning plans:** standards approved through the Palestinian Code.
- **Regulatory authorities:** Department of Oversight and Inspection in the agency (internal oversight), in addition to the subject of the agency's work to the oversight of the Office of Financial and Administrative Oversight.

Chances of corruption in the process of returning the plans: These are very weak opportunities and their impact is weak, since the process was based on examination, and no approval of the plans was made.

1.3 Decision point No. (3): Approval of engineering plans and granting the initial permit

- **Who approves the engineering plans and grants the initial permit:** a committee in the Civil Defense Directorate composed of a technical staff consisting of three engineers (architectural/electrical/mechanical), and approval by the Director of the Public Prevention and Safety Department.
- **The administrative levels supervising the process of approving engineering plans and granting the initial permit:** two administrative levels, the Technical Committee, and the Director of the Public Safety and Prevention Department in the Civil Defense Directorate.
- **Other administrative levels to be contacted:** You can communicate with the Prevention and Public Safety Department centrally if necessary, or with the supporting departments in the agency.
- **Documents supporting the process of approving engineering plans:** engineering plans issued by a licensed and accredited engineering office with notes, and the Palestinian code for fire protection and prevention.
- **Documenting the process of approving engineering plans and granting the initial permit:** it is documented on paper. A computerized program is being worked on to document all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2024.
- **Enhancing procedures for the process of approving engineering plans:** standards approved through the Palestinian Code.
- **Financial procedures:** Permit fees are paid through banks, and direct payment is not made, and there is a trend in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety towards automating payment processes.
- **Regulatory authorities:** Department of Oversight and Inspection in the agency (internal oversight), in addition to the subject of the agency's work to the oversight of the Office of Financial and Administrative Oversight.

Chances of corruption in the process of approving engineering plans and granting the initial permit: The chances are weak because it requires an agreement between the engineering inspection team, in addition to the engineering office and the director of the department, in addition to a subsequent field inspection to grant the occupancy permit. In the event of plans that violate the standards, they will be revealed. As for financial issues, referring payment to banks reduces the possibility of corruption in them, knowing that its impact is very strong if it is done.

1.4 Decision point No. (4): Inspecting the facility upon completion of the “construction and finishing work” and granting occupancy permission

- **Who inspects the facility to grant occupancy permission:** a technical committee from the Department of Public Safety and Prevention in the Directorate.
- **The administrative levels supervising the process of inspecting the facility and granting occupancy permission:** two administrative levels, the technical committee consisting of the three engineers, and the director of the Department of Prevention and Public Safety.
- **Other administrative levels to be contacted:** You can contact the Prevention and Public Safety Department centrally if necessary, or one of the supporting departments in the agency.

- **Documents supporting the process of inspecting the facility and granting occupancy permission:** engineering plans issued by a licensed and accredited engineering office, and the Palestinian fire protection and prevention code for comparison.
- **Documenting the process of inspecting the facility and granting occupancy permission:** it is documented on paper. A program is being worked on to erase the means of documenting all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2024.
- **Enhanced procedures for the facility inspection process and granting occupancy permission:** unified procedures through the approved Palestinian code.
- **Financial procedures:** Permit fees are paid through banks, and direct payment is not made, and there is a trend in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety towards automating payment processes.
- **Regulatory authorities:** Department of Oversight and Inspection in the agency (internal oversight), in addition to the subject of the agency's work to the oversight of the Office of Financial and Administrative Oversight.

Chances of corruption in inspecting the facility upon completion of the "construction and finishing" work and granting occupancy permission: Chances of corruption are moderate and possible, especially if the inspection is carried out by only one engineer, or the director of the department. Especially since this is a final statement and not preliminary, as for financial issues, it refers to transferring payment to banks, and reducing the possibility of corruption in them, knowing that its impact is very strong if it is done.

Article No. (10) of the Palestinian Code states: "It is not permissible to obtain a license from the licensing authorities for any new establishment subject to this code, or to renew a license, or to restore or expand an existing one, or to change occupancy, or starting construction work, before the license applicant submits a technical study prepared by one of the classified engineering offices, clarifying the extent of compliance with the requirements and conditions contained in this code, and after sealing the plans and obtaining an initial permit from the Civil Defense Directorate.

While Article No. (11) states: The office that prepared the study mentioned in the previous article shall be fully responsible before the Directorate of Civil Defense and other relevant parties for the seriousness and accuracy of the study, and the office supervising the supervision of the facility's implementation according to the approved plans, he is also obligated to submit a final certificate confirming the facility's compliance with the requirements contained in this code. He is also jointly responsible with the facility owner or license holder for any error or negligence in this work²⁹.

1.5 Decision point (5): Examination of the facility for occupancy permission, and the presence of violations that need correction

- Who inspects the facility to grant occupancy permission: a technical committee from the Department of Public Safety and Prevention in the Directorate.
- The administrative levels supervising the process of inspecting the facility and granting occupancy permission: two administrative levels, the technical committee consisting of the three engineers, and the director of the Department of Prevention and Public Safety.
- Other administrative levels to be contacted: You can contact the Prevention and Public Safety Department centrally if necessary, or the supporting departments in the agency.

29. .Palestinian Code for Prevention and Protection from Fire, 2021, Articles No. (10+11)

- Documents supporting the process of inspecting the facility and granting occupancy permission: engineering plans issued by a licensed and accredited engineering office, and the Palestinian fire protection and prevention code for comparison.
- Documenting the process of inspecting the facility and granting occupancy permission: it is documented on paper. A computerized program is being worked on to document all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2024.
- Procedure in the event of violations: The owner of the facility or his authorized representative is informed of the need to address the violations within a specific time frame, and amendment can be made through a “compensatory alternative.” If this is done, the final permit “occupancy permit” is granted.

If this is not done, an exception request may be submitted to a special committee in the agency’s leadership consisting of the director of the safety department and a number of department directors, which meets on a monthly basis to decide on the cases referred to it, and relies in its work on a manual of guidelines and standards.

- Enhanced procedures for the facility inspection process, following up on correcting modifications and granting occupancy permission: unified procedures through the approved Palestinian code.
- Regulatory authorities: Department of Oversight and Inspection in the agency (internal oversight).

Chances of corruption in examining the facility for occupancy permission, and the presence of violations that need to be corrected: Chances of corruption are moderate, especially if the modifications are examined by only one engineer, or the director of the department, especially since this is a final permit and not preliminary. If the occupancy permit is approved, work will take place in the facility. Note that its effect is very strong once it is done.

1.6 Decision point No. (6): Request an exception through a committee in the agency’s leadership

- Who requests the exception through a committee in the agency’s leadership: the facility owner, or his authorized representative.
- Committee to study exceptions in the agency’s leadership: A committee of 3-4 department directors, including the director of the Prevention and Public Safety Department, and meets on a monthly or periodic basis for special exceptions, and in accordance with the instructions of the Palestinian code.
- Administrative levels participating in the exceptions committee: a committee of department directors, and a higher administrative level than the agency’s leadership for accreditation, and a specialized committee may participate if necessary.
- Documents supporting the committee’s work: the Palestinian code for fire protection and prevention, and written instructions.
- Documenting the process of inspecting the facility and granting occupancy permission: it is documented on paper. A computerized program is being worked on to document all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2024.
- Procedure in the event of fundamental violations: The facility owner or his representative is notified of the rejection of the exception, the necessity of amending, or referring the file to the judiciary.
- Participation by oversight bodies from outside the agency in the process of requesting an exception through a committee in the agency’s leadership: none.

Chances of corruption in requesting an exception through a committee in the agency's leadership: Moderate chances, due to the presence of a culture of nepotism and favoritism in the Palestinian reality, despite the presence of multiple parties, but the procedures can be lenient since the decision is made by higher authorities, and there is no review after it. Note that its effect is very strong once it is done.

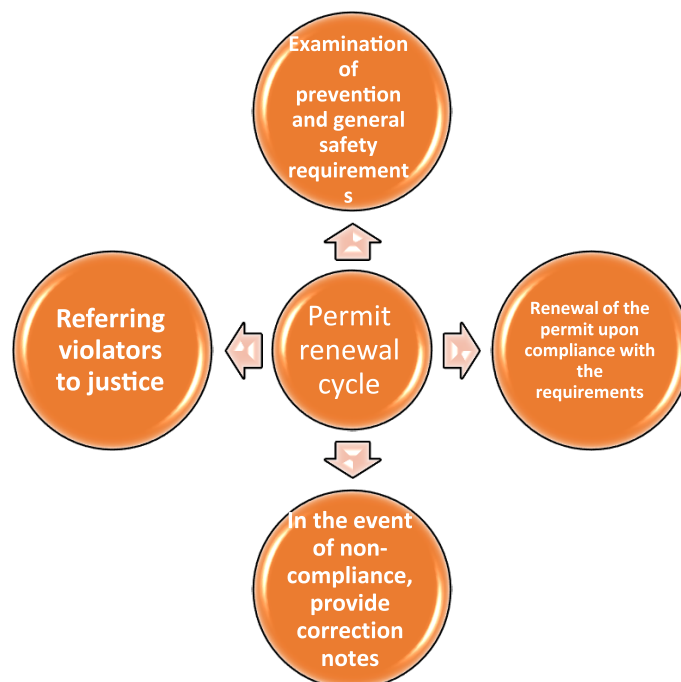
1.7 Decision point No. (7): Referring violators to justice

- Who refers violators to justice: the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the Civil Defense Agency and the directorates.
- When will violators be referred to the judiciary: If there are fundamental violations and the amendment has not been made by the facility owner.
- Administrative levels involved in referring violators to justice: several administrative levels, the Department of Prevention and Public Safety, and the Legal Department.
- Enhanced documents for referring violators to justice: existing violations, and an explanatory memorandum.
- Documenting the process of inspecting the facility and granting occupancy permission: it is documented on paper. A computerized program is being worked on to document all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2024.
- Regulatory authorities: Department of Oversight and Inspection in the agency (internal oversight), in addition to the subject of the agency's work to the oversight of the Office of Financial and Administrative Oversight.

Chances of corruption in the process of referring violators to the judiciary: Chances are very weak, as the file will be decided by the judiciary. Note that its effect is moderate once it is done.

Note: The Palestinian code applies to new establishments, and to existing buildings for which license applications are submitted to introduce expansions or modifications, or to modify their occupancy load or class³⁰.

(Work flow map - Track B - Renewal of permits for existing facilities)



30. Palestinian Code for Fire Prevention and Protection, 2021, Article No. (15).

“The permits issued by the Civil Defense Directorate are renewed annually, with the exception of permits for residential buildings, which are one-time only. The concerned party must place the permit for prevention and public safety of the building and facility in a prominent place so that the relevant civil defense representative can view it upon inspection.”

Explain and evaluate each stage of the permit renewal cycle for existing facilities

2.1 Decision Point No. (1): Examination of prevention and public safety requirements

- **Who conducts the examination:** a committee from the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the Civil Defense Agency.
- **The administrative levels supervising the facility inspection process:** two administrative levels, the field technical committee, and the department director.
- **Other administrative levels to be contacted:** The Department of Prevention and Public Safety can be contacted centrally, if necessary.
- **Documents supporting the facility inspection process:** inspection form, and instructions for the inspection.
- **Documenting the facility inspection process:** It is documented on paper. A computerized program is being worked on to document all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2024.
- **Enhanced procedures for the establishment inspection process:** approved instructions, and the Palestinian code for newly constructed establishments.
- **Regulatory authorities:** Department of Oversight and Inspection in the agency (internal oversight).

Chances of corruption in the process of examining prevention and public safety requirements: Chances are moderate, because it is done through a committee, and needs an agreement between them and the facility owner. The chances increase if the examiner is only one person. Note that its effect is strong once it is done.

2.2 Decision point No. (2): Renew the permit upon compliance with the requirements

- **Who undertakes the renewal:** a committee from the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the Civil Defense Agency.
- **The administrative levels supervising the permit renewal process:** two administrative levels, the field technical committee, and the director of the department.
- **Other administrative levels to be contacted:** The Department of Prevention and Public Safety can be contacted centrally, if necessary.
- **Documents supporting the permit renewal process:** the permit form, and instructions for the examination.
- **Documenting the permit renewal process:** It is documented on paper. A computerized program is being worked on to document all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2024.
- **Enhanced procedures for the permit renewal process:** approved instructions.

- **Payment of fees:** They are paid in the bank to the account of the public treasury, and the department is provided with a paper stamped by the bank.
- **Regulatory authorities:** Department of Oversight and Inspection in the agency (internal oversight).

Chances of corruption in the permit renewal process if the requirements are adhered to: weak chances; The process is carried out based on examination by a technical committee and multiple administrative levels, unless the renewal is done by one person. As for financial issues, referring payment to banks reduces the possibility of corruption in them. Note that its impact is very strong if it is done.

2.3 Decision point No. (3): In the event of non-compliance, provide correction notes

- **Who conducts the examination:** a technical committee in the Civil Defense Directorate.
- **The administrative levels supervising the process of directing correction observations:** two administrative levels, the technical committee, and the director of the Public Safety and Prevention Department in the Civil Defense Directorate.
- **Other administrative levels to be contacted:** The Department of Prevention and Public Safety can be contacted centrally, if necessary.
- **Documents supporting the process of providing feedback for correction:** an approved model.
- **Documenting the process of directing notes for correction:** It is documented on paper. A computerized program is being worked on to document all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2024.
- **Enhancing procedures for the process of adopting guidance notes for correction:** standards approved through the Palestinian Code for Modern Establishments, or relevant instructions, and the facility is given a period of time to amend.
- **Regulatory authorities:** Department of Oversight and Inspection in the agency (internal oversight).

Chances of corruption in the process of providing feedback for correction: The chances are weak, because they require agreement between the technical inspection team, but if there is one technician, the chances and probability of corruption increase, knowing that its impact is strong if it occurs.

2.4 Decision point No. (4): Referring violators to justice

- **Who refers violators to justice:** the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the Civil Defense Agency and the directorates.
- **When will violators be referred to the judiciary:** If there are fundamental violations and the amendment has not been made by the facility owner.
- **Administrative levels involved in referring violators to justice:** several administrative levels, the Department of Prevention and Public Safety, and the Legal Department.
- **Enhanced documents for referring violators to justice:** existing violations, and an explanatory memorandum.

- **Documenting the process of inspecting the facility and granting occupancy permission:** it is documented on paper. A computerized program is being worked on to document all procedures, and it is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2024.
- **Participation from oversight bodies outside the agency:** None, noting that the Financial and Administrative Oversight Bureau visits the agency more than once and inspects all the procedures it undertakes.

Chances of corruption in the process of referring violators to the judiciary: Very weak chances, as the file will be decided by the judiciary, knowing that its impact is moderate if it takes place.

Second:

Assessing the risks of corruption by identifying the types and forms of expected deviations in the administrative decision related to the work map of the Prevention and Public Safety Department in the Civil Defense Agency, and the possibility of their occurrence, by analyzing the motives that increase the possibility of deviations occurring and the controls that make deviation unlikely. The probability of deviation and its impact are expressed according to the following indicator:

Very Weak	Weak	Medium	Stong	Very Strong
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Matrix for identifying and evaluating corruption risks in the cycle of granting permits for new establishments and renewing permits in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in the Civil Defense Agency

الاحتمالية	قوي جداً	قوي	معتدل	ضعيف	ضعيف جداً
الأثر	قوي جداً	قوي	معتدل	ضعيف	ضعيف جداً

Third:

Working to control risks in the work of the Public Safety and Prevention Department in the Civil Defense Agency by searching for available reform options to avoid the occurrence of deviations or acts of corruption and address their negative effects.

A matrix of possible proposals to enhance reform options and mitigate corruption risks in the work of the Prevention and Public Safety Department in Civil Defense

Stage	Subject	Propability	Effect	Proposal to mitigate the risks of corruption
Track (A) – Stages of permit granting cycle for new facilities				
1.1	Submitting engineering plans to the Department of Prevention and Public Safety.	Very Weak	Moderate	- Complete computerization of processes, with the inclusion of diagrams for random auditing purposes. - Commitment to the technical committee consisting of 3 engineers, in addition to the director of the department. - Adherence to the instructions of the Palestinian code without exceptions. - Auditing the work of the technical committee. - Detailed procedures guide. - Opening the way for private auditing companies to grant plans a certificate of compliance with the Palestinian code.
1.2	Return engineering plans if there is a defect.	Very Weak	Weak	- Complete computerization of processes. - Coding the violating plans and entering them into a special file for follow-up. - Detailed procedure guide.

1.3	Approving engineering plans and granting the initial permit.	Weak	Very strong	- Complete computerization of processes, with the inclusion of diagrams for random auditing purposes. - Computerization of financial procedures. - Commitment to the technical committee consisting of 3 engineers. - Auditing the department director. - Adherence to the instructions of the Palestinian code without exceptions. - Periodic audit by the Prevention and Public Safety Department centrally. - Detailed procedures guide. - Opening the way for private auditing companies to grant plans a certificate of compliance with the Palestinian code.
1.4	Inspecting the facility upon completion of the “construction and finishing” work and granting occupancy .permission	Moderate	Very Strong	- Complete computerization of processes, with detailed documentation. - Computerization of financial procedures. - Commitment that the technical committee consist of at least 3 engineers, and engineers different from those granting the initial permission. In addition to the department director. - The department director’s audit, not just the signature. - Adherence to the instructions of the Palestinian code without exceptions. - Detailed procedures guide. - Auditing the work of the technical committee through the Central Prevention and Public Safety Department. - Coordination with a specialized central committee for large facilities, or those of a dangerous nature, such as petrol stations, commercial complexes...

1.5	Inspecting the facility for occupancy permission, and the presence of violations that need to be .corrected	Moderate	Very Strong	- Complete computerization of processes, with the inclusion of diagrams for random auditing purposes. - Commitment to the technical committee consisting of 3 engineers, with the importance of rotating the engineers, in addition to the department director. - Adherence to the instructions of the Palestinian code without exceptions. - Auditing the work of the technical committee. - Detailed procedures guide. - Coordination with a specialized central committee for large facilities, or those of a dangerous nature, such as: commercial complexes, petroleum stations...
1.6	Requesting an exception through a committee in the .agency's leadership	Moderate	Very Strong	- Complete computerization of procedures. - Exceptions should be made based on fixed criteria, not discretionary criteria. - Providing written standards for acceptable violations that can be overcome, or those that are essential and cannot be overcome, and adhering to them. - Reduce exceptions as much as possible. - Rotating exceptions committees. - A detailed and published procedures guide. - Participation of oversight bodies from inside and outside the agency in the sessions of the exceptions committees.
1.7	Referring violators to .justice	Very Weak	Moderate	- Fast judicial procedures. - Prepare a blacklist of violators. - Detailed procedure guide.

Track (B): Stages of the permit renewal cycle for existing facilities				
2.1	Examination of prevention and general safety requirements	Moderate	Strong	- Complete computerization of processes. - Commitment that the technical committee consist of at least 3 specialists. - Auditing the department director. - Adherence to the instructions of the Palestinian Code for establishments to which it applies, without exceptions. - Periodic audit by the Prevention and Public Safety Department centrally. - Detailed procedure guide.
2.2	Renewal of the permit upon compliance with the requirements	Weak	Very Strong	- Complete computerization of processes. - Computerization of financial procedures. - Commitment that the technical committee be composed of 3 specialists, with rotation of specialists, in addition to the director of the department. - Auditing the department director. - Detailed procedures guide. - Adherence to the instructions of the Palestinian code without exceptions for the establishments to which they apply. - Periodic audit by the Prevention and Public Safety Department centrally. - The computerized program should include indicators about establishments that have not been visited and whose permits have not been renewed.

2.3	In the event of non-compliance, provide notes for correction.	Weak	Strong	- Complete computerization of processes. - Commitment to the technical committee consisting of 3 specialists, with rotation of specialists. - Adherence to the instructions of the Palestinian Code for establishments to which they apply, without exceptions. - Auditing the work of the technical committee. - Coordination with a central committee, if the observations are essential. - Detailed procedures guide. - The existence of written standards about violations that can be overcome, or those that are fundamental and cannot be overcome.
2.4	Transferring violators to the judiciary.	Very Weak	Moderate	- Fast judicial procedures. - Prepare a blacklist of violators. - Detailed procedures guide.

Important note: If the same technical team of engineers participates in more than one stage of examining and granting initial and final permits, the chances and possibilities of corruption increase, and can be high in the different stages, and its impact is very high. Which constitutes a danger that needs to be addressed in order to prevent the risks of corruption and the work of the Department of Prevention and Public Safety.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions:

First: The legislative and institutional framework

- The legislative framework regulating the work of civil defense is available, and it is one of the first pieces of legislation regulating the work of security services, but it has been outdated for a quarter of a century, and there are no executive regulations or adequate systems for it, and it does not keep pace with the many developments in the work of civil defense.
- There is an administrative structure for the Civil Defense Service and specific tasks. Accordingly, institutional building is available. Directorates and centers of the Civil Defense Service are distributed in the northern governorates. There is a shortage in the number of employees in the Service, and the percentage of females is still low. About (6%), and there are strengths and weaknesses of the device. The Safety and Prevention Department works to follow up on permits for facilities, and carries out various field visits to uncover public safety and prevention measures.
- The Palestinian Code for Fire Prevention and Protection is available, approved by the Council of Ministers in 2021, and represents a frame of reference for civil defense and relevant authorities.
- There are still challenges and obstacles that affect the agency's work, most notably the lack of human staff, limited financial resources and budgets, and limited logistical capabilities.
- The Civil Defense Agency contributes to supplying the public treasury with permit fees, and the revenues of the Prevention and Public Safety Department amounted to about (5) million shekels in the year 2022.
- There are shortages and challenges in computing, automation and electronic archiving systems in the civil defense agency in general, and in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety.

A strategic plan is available for the Civil Defense Agency, and the agency is currently working on preparing a new plan within the new government planning cycle 2024-2029. The agency also issues its periodic reports, which are available to the public.

Second: Managing corruption risks in the Department of Prevention and Public Safety in Civil Defense in the West Bank

- There are several levels of oversight in the civil defense agency, some of which are internal, such as the Department of Oversight and Inspection, and some are external, represented by the Bureau of Financial and Administrative Control.
- The amount of work for the Prevention and Public Safety Department is large, and the Department carries out about (60) thousand field visits to uncover public safety procedures in facilities and various occupancies.
- There are opportunities and possibilities for corruption in the work of the Prevention and Public Safety Department, especially in the stages of the cycle of granting permits for new facilities, specifically in the event of violations in engineering plans, or in existing construction and occupancy permits, or in renewing permits for existing facilities. It also needs analysis and procedures to manage corruption risks, and work to control those risks in the work of the Public Safety and Prevention Department in the Civil Defense Agency.

- Computerized information systems are still incomplete in the work of the Prevention and Public Safety Department, which affects the internal control of the department's work, especially following up on inspections of various facilities and ensuring all of them are followed up.
- The financial procedures related to permit fees have been processed by transferring them for payment through banks, and the Department of Prevention and Public Safety is currently working on launching a computerized application related to establishment data related to permits, including electronic payment.
- The Financial and Administrative Control Bureau audits the work of the civil defense agency in general, and the management of prevention and public safety, and focuses on the two axes of governance and effective services.
- There are a number of procedures that must be implemented in order to manage the risks of corruption in the work of the Prevention and Public Safety Department, and to protect and protect its employees from the risks of corruption, including computerizing all operations, providing a detailed procedures guide, forming committees from several administrative levels, and others.

Recommendations:

First: Recommendations directed to the government

- The necessity of activating the legislation for the civil defense agency, taking into account Palestinian privacy, and issuing executive regulations and systems to create legislative integration, including articles and texts related to preventing the risks of corruption, and this should be done in consultation and partnership with civil society institutions, the private sector, academics, and researchers.
- It is necessary to provide the civil defense agency with the human resources required to carry out its tasks, raise its budget in proportion to the priority of its service to citizens, and enhance its logistical capabilities, to keep pace with development and modern urban expansion, reduce the response time to the best standards, and increase the number of technicians for inspection and control, and the division of work.
- The necessity of allowing private sector companies to work as audit offices accredited to the extent that the engineering plans of various facilities adhere to the Palestinian code, which contributes to the governance of prevention and public safety procedures, invests in precise specialization, and saves the time and effort of the prevention and public safety department.
- The necessity of working to reinforce workers in inspection, technical office examination, and field examination of new establishments, and those whose permits are renewed, through special bonuses for them, especially since they are exposed to multiple risks.

Second: Recommendations directed to the Civil Defense Agency

- The necessity of implementing what was stated in the matrix of possible proposals to enhance reform options and mitigate the risks of corruption in the work of the Prevention and Public Safety Department in the Civil Defense Agency.
- The necessity of strengthening governance in the work of the civil defense agency through the shift towards digitization and automation in work procedures, archiving and documentation, especially in the work of the Prevention and Public Safety Department, through modern and interactive information systems.
- The necessity of working on granting initial or final “occupancy” permits through specialized committees of no less than three in each committee, and through at least two administrative levels: a technical level and an administrative level, with these committees rotating between the governorates, and increasing their number.
- The necessity of preparing a comprehensive procedures manual for workers in the Prevention and Public Safety Department, which includes all procedures for dealing with potential issues, so that it becomes a reference framework for work and limits diligence.
- Identifying and reducing exceptions, as they are a potential gateway to opportunities for corruption, and issuing a clear list of violations that can be dealt with, and those that are essential and cannot be excluded under any circumstances.
- The necessity of working to provide sufficient logistical and human capabilities necessary for the work of the Prevention and Public Safety Department in order to reach the largest possible number of facilities in the West Bank, in order to enhance prevention and public safety.

If the government works to provide the civil defense agency, specifically the Department of Prevention and Public Safety, with the required material and human resources and budgets, this may be costly in the short term, but it will bring a greater return to the government in the medium and long term, through the administration’s ability to access additional facilities. And supply the public treasury with at least twice the current revenues.

Resources and References

«Arranged according to their occurrence in the study»

- Law No. (3) of 1998, regarding Palestinian Civil Defense.
- Presidential Decree No. (12) of 2002, regarding the attachment of the police forces, preventive security forces, and civil defense to the Ministry of Interior.
- Conceptual Framework, Corruption Risk Assessment At Sectoral Level, United Nations Development Program UNDP, United Nations Plaza New York, NY, 10017 USA, 2018. 2020.
- Resolution No. (19) of 2000 granting judicial control status to the Director General of Civil Defense and to categories of employees of the General Directorate of Civil Defense.
- Resolution No. (27) of 2000 AD regarding the adoption of regulations for safety conditions and fire prevention.

- Cabinet Resolution No. (17) of 2008 regarding the licensing system issued by the General Petroleum Authority.
- Minister of Interior Resolution No. (1) of 2011 regarding organizing the work of volunteers in Palestinian Civil Defense work.
- Annual report 2022, issued by the Civil Defense Authority.
- Strategic plan for the security sector 2021-2023.
- The Palestinian Civil Defense Strategic Plan 2017-2022.
- Cabinet Resolution No. (01/113/18/M.W./M.A.) dated 6/14/2021, regarding the adoption of the Palestinian Code for Prevention and Protection from Fire.
- Palestinian Code for Prevention and Protection from Fire, 2021.
- Bureau of Financial and Administrative Control, Annual Report 2022.
- Civil Defense Agency website, departments <https://pcd.ps/departments>

Exclusive interviews for the study:

- A special interview with PROFESSOR Jaffal Jaffal, Director General of the Bureau of Financial and Administrative Control, dated: 10/3/2023.
- Special interview with Lieutenant Colonel Ayman Brouk, Director of the Prevention and Public Safety Department in the Civil Defense Agency, dated: 10/21/2023.

