

The Military Academy appointed its 18th Commandant

Article and photo by Capt Engela Meintjes, Military Academy

Brig Gen Lindile Yam, has been appointed eighteenth Commandant of the Military Academy, taking over from R Adm (JG) Derek Christian who commanded the unit.

Brig Gen Yam was born in East London on 8 August 1960. He studied there but completed his Matric privately. He joined the underground structures of the ANC during his high school career and ultimately found himself detained and afterwards went into exile. He joined Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC, in 1981 and did his training in Angola where he experienced combat action as a Platoon Commander on the eastern front.

He was a Platoon Commander on the eastern front in 1982 before being wounded and spending time recuperating in Yugoslavia in 1984. He did his urban and rural warfare company commander's course in East Germany in 1987. He came back to become a Company Commander, Battalion and Base Commander, as well as a Company Commander on the northern front before going back to the main MK Training Centre "Richard Barney Molokoana" in Caculama as an instructor and Company Commander. In Caculama three companies were merged into one battalion under his command. At this time he was also serving as an instructor in tactics (battle handling). He opened a new



The newly appointed Commandant of the Military Academy, Brig Gen Lindile Yam.

base in Tanzania before he was sent to infiltrate South Africa where he ultimately became an MK Regional Commander for the Border Region. He did his Junior Command and Staff Course in Ghana in 1993 and 1994.

He led the integration of his MK region into the SANDF, which started in April 1994 and became the first member from the Non-statutory Forces to take over a standing unit, after which he was Officer Commanding of 13 SA Infantry Battalion from November 1994 to November 1997. He was then appointed as SO1 Operations at Group 8. He completed the South African Senior Command and Staff Course in 1998 and the Executive National Security Programme (ENSP) in 2000. He also did a course in Defence Management at the Witwatersrand University.

He was appointed as Officer Commanding of Group 6

Headquarters in Port Elizabeth after which he was appointed as the SANDF's Director Physical Training Sports and Recreation in November 2001, in which capacity he later became South Africa's representative to the "Conference for International Military Sport" (CISM represented in 130 countries). Then he became the Chief Eastern and Southern African Liaison Officer (ESALO) and an additional member of the CISM Board of Directors as part of the International Strategy and

Planning Committee. He was also co-opted as South Africa's Mega Games Security Committee member before being sent to the Royal College of Defence Studies in Britain in 1995 for a Global Security Strategy Course.

He remained there to become the Non-resident Defence, Army and Naval Adviser of South Africa to the UK and Sweden between 10 February 2006 and 10 February 2009. He also has a Damelin Diploma in Personnel and Training Management, a US certificate in Policy Writing and some other qualifications, as well as a degree in international relations (University of London - Kings College).

He is a former professional boxer and keeps himself fit by exercising in the gym and jogging - a hobby also shared by his wife.

The unit is privileged to have a person of this stature in command at this time. 