

Ensuring the effectiveness of defence policies

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Photos: Sgt Elias Mahuma

The eighth policy writer's course took place at the SA Defence Intelligence College from 27 July to 7 August 2009. Forty-five learners, of which some are new to the policy writing environment, were given an opportunity to learn and fine-tune their policy writing skills, confirmed Mr Nick Sendall, the Chief Director Defence Policy in his opening address. The course addressed the needs of the Department by improving service delivery with the limited resources.

The programme has been very popular in the past and to date 443 officials in the DOD and other state departments have been trained as policy writers. Mr Sendall acclaimed policy writing as a "science and an


art" that has many steps, principles and pitfalls. The course deals mainly with the "science" of policy writing but, "the art" of policy writing is perfected only through extensive practice.

The success of the programme depends on the active participation and interaction of learners expressing their needs and sharing their experiences. Mr Sendall stated that most of the learners on the course were either already working in a policy environment or were earmarked for such involvement. "Policy writing is hard work, policy is politics and, lastly, policy is contentious in nature", said Mr Sendall.

Professor (retired) Deon Fourie, a renowned speaker on military strategy, was the key note speaker at a function held during the course. He addressed the course on values, policy, politics, strategy and doctrine,

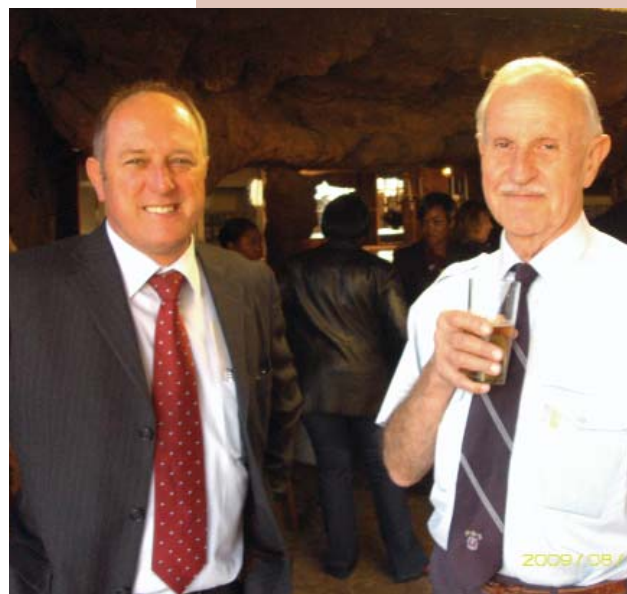
putting these terms in context in the Defence policy writing domain.

The Chief of Corporate Staff, Lt Gen Rinus Jansen van Rensburg, officiated at the graduation ceremony. Affirming the course as a resounding success, he congratulated the learners on their wholehearted participation and the presenters on all their time and effort throughout the course.

Lt Gen Jansen van Rensburg stated that according to the controlling staff reports the group attending the 2009 course was deemed one of the most successful groups yet to have participated. He urged the students to involve themselves actively in the policy environment and so become dependable and reliable policy writers in their respective services and divisions. Three members from the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) also attended the course. 



Lt Gen Rinus Jansen van Rensburg, Chief of Corporate Staff handing over a certificate to Maj K.P. Molapo at the SA Defence Intelligence College during the graduation ceremony.



Fitr: Mr Nick Sendall, Chief Director Defence Policy, and Professor Fourie at the course function.