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FRONT COVER: Special Edition: Empowering Women in Defence.
SA Soldier dedicates this edition to all our women.
(Photo: S Sgt René Nel)

For the latest news on defence matters in South Africa, visit our website at: www.sasoldier.mil.za
From the Editor's desk

A Soldier once again publishes a Special Edition this month to celebrate our Women in Defence during Women’s Day on 9 August.

I should like to thank every contributor who provided us with article(s) and photo(s) for this memorable issue. You made this edition possible!

Your response was overwhelming! I wish I could publish them all, but unfortunately SA Soldier only has 48 pages … Nevertheless, I will endeavour to publish them during the remainder of the year.

Enjoy each and every page packed with stories on remarkable women - Proudly South African!

Have a great Women’s Day!

Nelda Pienaar
Editor

My Daddy in the Sudan

* I am publishing this moving poem, especially in this Special Edition of SA Soldier, to honour all the men in the DOD as well on celebrating Women’s Month, especially Women’s Day - Ed.

Yesterday I made some tea, but it was only for two. While adding the creamer, I noticed a missing cup Yours was standing upside down somewhere. I was setting the table for dinner, Your plate was not on the table. While watching the television, I saw your chair was empty.

I saw a beret hanging, but it was an old one. Oh, before I forget about the movie, it was about war No fighting … No I think it was … anyway.

A soldier with a rifle, wearing full fighting dress: Jacket, helmet, Radios and other stuff I never saw in my life. This soldier was working very hard and he was very exhausted.

He saw things that I didn’t wish to see one day. I was wondering: “How are you anyway?”

In the same circumstances? Do you cope, DADDY? Don’t you miss us? But I am not going to stress; otherwise my stress is going to change into tears.

Remember you used to call me “You little Tiger” And you always said, “Tigers don’t cry” DADDY… DADDY I keep talking to my best friend, his name is JESUS, And He promised to guide you and he said you would be home soon safe and sound.

REMEMBER DADDY: I will always love you and DADDY may GOD BLESS YOU till we meet again.

S Sgt J.B. Paaiejties, 2 SAI Bn in the Sudan

Van die Redaktrise se lessenaar

A Soldier publiseer hierdie maand weer ’n Spesiale Uitgawe om ons Vroue in Verdediging gedurende Vrouemaand te vier, veral met die oog op Nasionale Vrouedag op 9 Augustus.

Ek wil graag dankie sê vir elke medewerker wat artikel(s) en foto(s) vir hierdie gedenkuitgawe aan ons voorsien het. Julie het die die uitgawe moontlik gemaak!

Julie reaksie was oorweldigend! Ek wens ek kon almal publiseer, maar ongelukkig bestaan SA Soldier net uit 48 bladsye … Nogtans gaan ek probeer om die oorblywende bydraes gedurende die res van die jaar te publiseer.

Geniet elke bladsy propvol stories oor merkwaardige vroue - Trots Suid-Afrikaans!

Vier ’n wonderlike Vrouedag!

Nelda Pienaar
Redaktrise
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MELODRAMATIC SAVE

Please allow me to relate a story that I heard recently on the BBC that is similar to my desperate action to save a person who was commuting in a wheelchair.

A disabled person in a wheelchair was pushed by a truck for more than 3 km through the streets of Durban this week. A truck had stopped at an intersection and the man was crossing, but when it pulled off, the driver hauled the man down the street unaware that he was pushing an extra load in front of him. The incident was witnessed by a bystander on the side of the road who contacted the emergency number 9111 to report the incident.

While the Ops Room was still making arrangements to locate the scene and deal with the reported situation, the driver of the truck had stopped to make a delivery - only to find that he had someone in front of his vehicle. The young person lived to tell of his ordeal to the radio presenter. He was not hurt, but the tyres of his wheelchair had been torn to shreds.

While I was in uniform and waiting for the robot to give way the other day, I reacted to a similar incident in Pretoria. A wheelchair-bound pedestrian was nearly run over by a four-by-four truck while crossing the road at the corner of Paul Kruger and Church Streets. As the huge truck pulled off the intersection to turn, I noticed that the driver could not see the pedestrian on the wheelchair below. Immediately and instinctively I jumped in front of it and began to bang my hands on the bonnet, signalling him to stop. With the wheelchair passing slowly behind me and the shouts of the people who were about to witness the accident, the driver screamed to a halt. Because of his posture the guy in the wheelchair did not even notice what had just happened. The annoyed driver, his hands signalling impatience over the bonnet of his aggressive-looking truck sped off after this.

Having saved a life, I felt honoured to be in uniform as the crowd commended me for my heroic deed. (A near miss is perhaps not like the protracted torment of the guy on the radio.) Maj J.G. Khoza, AMHU Limpopo

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

“The fact that not all of you are going to set foot in university or become doctors does not in itself define who you are. You are better than what you think. Your teachers believe in you and I also believe in you”, said Capt Sesotlo. The matric learners and teachers of Phephetso Secondary School defied the chilly weather in Kroonstad, Free State, to attend the matric camp. Phephetso is a Sotho name meaning a “challenge”.

The camp was held over the weekend of 27 April 2007 at Juventas Resort, approximately seven kilometres outside Kroonstad. One noted with great pride that all the teachers responsible for the matriculants were there, despite the fact that the camp coincided with the long weekend and Freedom Day celebrations. When asked how he managed to get everybody on board the principal, Mr Rantie, said: “Our secret is teamwork. Every teacher is a valuable member of a winning team. Teachers need to know that their work is appreciated and valued”.

The aim of the camp was to motivate the learners to work hard and stay away from activities that could derail them from seeking their goals and also to provide them with career guidance to enable them to make choices early and apply for funds and placement at tertiary institutions. The occasion was graced by various stakeholders within the province, including a delegation from the University of the Free State, Flavius Mareka FET, the South African Police Service and the provincial chairperson from the Pan South African Language Board, Mr Ntlakane. The local delegation included the local pastors and Ms Tumahole Khasiane, the HIV and AIDS Co-ordinator in Fezile Dabi District. The School of Engineers was represented by Capt M. Sesotlo, Lt L. Ncubukezi and its communication officer, Lt S. Madiba.

In his speech Capt Sesotlo encouraged the learners to have self-confidence because when one has it, self-esteem follows. Self-esteem is the “measure of how you feel about yourself, i.e. faith in oneself, pride, self-assurance, confidence. It is the currency of your well-being. It is the skeleton that supports your personality”, he said. He added that it was important for the learners to accept the economic situation of their families and appreciate the sacrifices of their parents and not let peer pressure ruin their lives. Capt Sesotlo also encouraged other stakeholders to build a permanent relationship with the schools and general public, because “our existence depends on our responsiveness to the environment, and the most important element of our environment is the youth that is in need of role models and mentors”. Most of the speakers highlighted the importance of working hard and making use of the time available. The last speaker was Lt L. Ncubukezi who gave a presentation on careers in the South African National Defence Force, with particular emphasis on the Engineer Corps. Lt S. Madiba, School of Engineers

R200-00 prize for the best letter

SA SOLDIER welcomes letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters may be edited for reasons of style, accuracy or space limitations. Letters should preferably be typewritten and double-spaced. All letters must include the writer’s full name, address and home telephone number. The volume of letters we receive makes individual acknowledgement impossible. Please send your letters to: The Editor, SA SOLDIER Letters, Private Bag X158, Pretoria, 0001. Letters may also be faxed to (012) 355-6399 or sent via email to sasoldier@mil.za. We would like to hear your comments or ideas, particularly about matters affecting members of the Department of Defence. Regrettably, anonymous letters cannot be answered officially or published - Editor.
THE CORPORAL WHO MADE ME A SOLDIER

He is a Non-commissioned Officer (NCO), but I salute him, not because of him, but because of his work. I am young and new in the DOD, but I have experienced more than my age would lead you to expect. I was only a few months in the DOD when I went to Personnel Service School for a course. My Platoon Sergeant was Corporal Sejoe. He can make you sweat early in the morning, at tea-time, lunch-time and even after hours if he wants.

Staying in the bungalow was irritating me and it made me behave somewhat strangely, because of the constant noise and fighting. After two months I was taking no nonsense from anyone; that is when I was being pushed around almost every day. Therefore I became worse each and every day. Corporal Sejoe noticed that.

One day he called me and told me that he saw that I had potential and a bright future ahead of me and he could see me as an officer in the future. But he also saw that I had a bad attitude and exhibited bad behaviour. He encouraged me to try and fix these things as they could affect the potential he saw in me. He reprimanded me until I felt guilty and cried a lot.

I am now a soldier not because I am wearing a camouflage uniform, but because I am now brave, patient and even stronger than before. His words will keep me awake, having woken up a long time ago. Well done, Corporal Sejoe, keep it up! Pte D. Pretty Bhila, 2 Field Engineer Regiment

DEFENCE ADVISER PLAYS GOLD IN ZIMBABWE

Col King Marshall Nonco was posted to Zimbabwe on 9 January 2006 as a Defence Adviser at the South African Embassy in Zimbabwe. Col Nonco was actively involved in the tennis development of soldiers and their children in Thaba Tshwane for many years before being posted abroad. On his arrival in Zimbabwe he unsuccessfully tried to locate the tennis fraternity in Harare.

He told Mr Sadik Dudhia about it. The latter requested him to try golf. Against his wishes Mr Dudhia lent him his old set of golf clubs, and that was the beginning of Col Nonco’s golf interest at the Royal Harare Golf Club on 17 February 2006. Golf was at first not a very good idea to Col Nonco, who was used to chasing a moving object like a tennis ball, but after a few lessons from a professional golf coach he soon adapted to the new sport. He began to realise that golf was a good sport for relaxing after a hectic day at the office and had the advantage that one could network with others. History was made on 21 May 2006 when Col Nonco got a hole-in-one on the 15th hole par 3 stroke 13-159 metres at the Royal Harare Golf Club.

As if this was not enough he got a second hole-in-one on 27 January 2007 on the 5th hole par 3 stroke 16. When Col Nonco was asked how he felt after playing his first hole-in-one and what his handicap was at the time, he replied: “I felt fabulous and my handicap was 24”. When he got his second hole-in-one his handicap was 17. “I felt like I was on top of the world and it was unbelievable that I did it for the second time, when many people have not achieved it in over 45 years of playing golf. I realised that God was with me, and without the support of my family these things would not have happened,” Col Nonco said. Asked what club and what type of golf ball he had used for these holes-in-one, he said that on both occasions he used “a 7 iron and titleist PROV1”. Asked what had made him successful in sport all these years, Col Nonco replied: “Three D’s - Discipline, Determination and Dedication. Talent alone is not enough. One needs to practise one’s sport with purpose and commitment. Time management is the key to including sport in the diplomatic work,” Col Nonco advised. His philosophy is: “You never stop exercising because you grow old, but you grow old because you stop exercising.” Did he stop playing tennis? “I certainly did not stop playing tennis, but I am playing social tennis with other diplomats in Harare. This is to maintain my fitness level and to stay healthy and strong as always.” What advice would he give to aspiring attachés in the SANDF? “Well sport will keep them fit and golf is very good for networking, but to exercise is essential. It keeps one’s mind and body sharp and that can help prolong one’s life. Sport is an integral part of training, therefore it has to be a way of life in the military, in particular, and for all human beings in general.” Ian Mathieson, General Manager Royal Harare Golf Club

POTJIEKOS COMPETITION

The Military Police School held a “Potjiekos” competition on 20 April 2007 at the MP School premises. Sixteen teams took part in this competition. The attendees competed in various games, including Mr and Mrs Potjiekos. The aim of the competition was to raise funds for the Military Police School and, in the case of the sponsors, to promote and market themselves, but at the end of the day it was all about having fun and enjoying the outing. Teams that entered were from Sanlam, Avbob Life, the SA Army Foundation, CMG Corporate, Buro Sentrum, Sami, Spar, Military Police (MP) Division HQ, Thaba Tshwane MP, NMFR HQ, Waterkloof MP, Dequan MP, the National Ceremonial Guard, FCA and 13 Provost Company. The Buro Sentrum team, led by Mr Deon de Klerk, won the competition. The Potjiekos competition was a success. The Military Police School would like to thank all the sponsors and the teams that entered the competition. S Sgt Reginald Nkopane, Military Police School
INFANTRY SCHOOL BOASTS NEW SIMULATORS

The learners will be able to perform real world tasks in conditions as realistic as possible. Traditionally cost and safety have been associated with such things as ammunition, equipment and transport and environmental impact. This training system will successfully address the training effectiveness goals in a cost-effective and safe manner relative to the established performance standards.

This system will mean the following estimated cost savings for Infantry School:
- Time saved: Specialised mortar instructors LP - six days.
- Battle Handling Learning Programme (LP) - two days.
- Savings (50 learners per LP).
- Specialised mortar instructors LP - R204 200 for ammunition.
- Battle Handling LP - R71 448 for ammunition.

The IFC Simulators were installed by Armscor, Denel Land Systems, IST Dynamics and FATS Inc. The MD IST, Mr Roelof van Rooyen, handed over commemorative tokens of IFCS to the Officer Commanding Infantry School, Col X. Mankayi, Denel Land Systems Infantry Business Manager, Mr R. Teubus, Armscor Senior Manager Weapons and Ammunition Systems, Mr W. Wolmarans (in his absence Mr OJ van der Merwe collected on his behalf) and Director Army Acquisition, Col A. Joubert.

After Mr Teubus delivered a short speech he handed over the IFC Product System to Col Joubert. Col Joubert said a few words and then handed over the IFC Product System to Infantry School.

Thereafter Col Mankayi officially opened the centre. This was followed by a demonstration on the use of the weapons and the execution of a fire plan by Capt Sithole and the Mortar Branch staff. Capt F.N. Maganwe, Infantry School.

MILITARY SKILLS TESTED ON FUTURE WOs

What are the basic skills of a basic soldier asked Col P.J. van Dyk, Officer Commanding SA Army Support Base Potchefstroom, at the closing of the regional Warrant Officer/Non-commissioned Officer Competition. “A basic soldier should be able to shoot and drill” the answer came from the floor.

The WO/NCO Competition is a true test of these basic skills of soldiering. The participants are tested in two different categories of competence, viz (a) individual competition during which fitness, shooting, individual drill and military theory are evaluated and (b) pacestick competition.

Participants vary in rank groups from Lance Corporal to WO2, as well as in age from the mid 20s to over 50s. The emphasis in evaluating these skills is based on discipline, which is the cornerstone of the military culture, the essence of a soldier. Although it is possible in the SANDF for a progress from the NCO ranks to the officer ranks at any stage of a soldier’s career, it is also true that from an NCO one can progress to be a Warrant Officer.

Warrant Officers are seen as the custodians of discipline in the military. They are masters of their own trade. They are the people that the officers look up to when things have to be done and subordinates look up to them for inspiration, motivation and guidance. To ensure that discipline is maintained at all levels it is essential to ensure that the NCOs’ understanding of discipline is developed and nurtured at an early stage of their careers. Constant evaluation is critical.

The regional championships held at Military Base Potchefstroom from 10 to 13 July 2007 were held as a build-up to the national event to be held at SA Army Gymnasium in September 2007. The following units participated in the event: ASB Potchefstroom, ASB Johannesburg and ASB Dequar Road. ASB Potchefstroom and ASB Johannesburg won the individual competition jointly per rank group. WO2 Amanda Hager from ASB Johannesburg was the best Warrant Officer. The other members of ASB Johannesburg also took some notable positions in the individual category.

The main rivalry in the entire event then began: the pacestick competition. The two times national champions, ASB Johannesburg senior pacestick team (2005 and 2006), won the event. WO2 AndileMpesheni won the best driver award and Sgt Daddy Felezweni won the best pacesticker award. Both of them are team members of ASB Johannesburg senior pacestick team.

What was worth noting was the injection of some young blood into the competition as more young NCOs were taking part in the event. Women were also heavily represented in the competition. It is the dream of every young NCO to become a Warrant Officer of note, and hopefully by taking part in events such as these they can learn at an early stage the important role they play in the SANDF. Lt Lulamile Ntola, ASB Johannesburg.
OPERATION STIPPER II

The SAPS, in conjunction with the Joint Tactical HQ Northern Cape and the SA Air Force, conducted a two-day cluster operation, namely Operation STIPPER II, that commenced on 29 June 2007 in the upper Karoo area. The following SAPS stations where included in the operations: Noupooport, Colesberg, Hanover, Richmond, Victoria West, De Aar and Sunrise.

The objective of the operation was to clamp down on drug trafficking in the province and the actions included raiding of shebeens and taverns and tracing wanted suspects.

Two Oryx helicopters from Ysterplaat AFB and Waterkloof AFB were used to airlift members to the various areas where operations took place to assist the police. The SAPS Porter (air wing) also provided air support to the members on the ground.

The following were the successes of the operation: In the Noupooport district three persons were arrested for riotous behaviour and two for illegal dealing in liquor, large quantities of liquor having been confiscated on the premises. In Colesberg a suspect was arrested in Kuyasa and two persons for illegal dealing in liquor. In Hanover police arrested two persons for possession of dagga and confiscated 171 grams of dagga. Eleven persons were also arrested in connection with dagga, stolen goods and riotous behaviour. All the arrested persons will appear in court. A murder suspect wanted by the SAPS for a year was also arrested.

During a certificate ceremony at the end of the operation, the Deputy Provincial Commissioner in the Northern Cape, Mr John Sithole, said that the different security agencies followed an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to ensure the safety and security of the inhabitants of the Northern Cape Province. Col Leon Venter, Officer Commanding Joint Tactical HQ Northern Cape, thanked all members who participated in the operation at various stations and areas for their professional conduct during the execution of their actions, especially members of his unit and the SA Air Force. Capt D.K. Lithakanyane, Joint Tactical HQ Northern Cape.

SA POET IN SUDAN

The poem recited by Capt T. Ngwane at the South African June 16 celebrations of the contingent held in the Sudan. He is the PTSR Officer of the RSA National Contingent commanded by Lt Col C.B.P. Molobi in the Sudan.

Sudan! Sudan! South Africans have landed

Sudan is not a prison. Sudan is not a grave. Sudan is not a ghost. Sudan is not a “moshkila.” But Sudan is a *sadiki.

Sudan! Sudan! South Africans have landed

No one can turn back the wheel of time.
No one can stop the winds of change.
Days are no longer 180 days in Sudan.
But days are now 116 days in Sudan.
Days are no longer counted forward.
But are now counted backwards, backwards forever!
Sudan! Sudan! South Africans have landed

We are not the heroes of confusion.
But the heroes of development and cooperation.
Under the commander whose vocabulary

Commander morning!
Sudan! Sudan! South Africans have landed

We are not the Sudan material.
Therefore Sudan cannot keep us forever.
Even the birds of the sky
do not have a choice.
But to sing our song very soon
“That we are going home”
Sudan! Sudan! South Africans have landed

*Moshkila - an Arabic word used in the Sudan meaning ‘problem’
Sadiki - an Arabic word used in the Sudan meaning ‘friend’

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

It is crucial that all soldiers in the SANDF understand what a lawful command is, especially on the battlefield or in any other war situation.

The most important rule in the rule of engagement is to avoid targeting civilian institutions, churches, hospitals, clinics, day care centres, old-age homes or any area where there may be civilians who could be injured “en masse”. This is crucial. Take, for example, the wars now raging in Iraq, Israel and Palestine. Most of the casualties are innocent civilians, women, children and the aged. This surely is a war of injustice where unarmed populations are getting injured and killed. It is cowardice in war to hit civilian targets. It is a hideous crime against humanity.

What all the above means is that civilians need to be protected during war, not attacked. Sometimes own defence forces go on the rampage and rape and violate women and children to satisfy their sexual lust, making women and children their prey in some parts of the continent where wars are raging. A girl child is often raped to death by more than one man. Mothers and daughters are kept as sex slaves and raped repeatedly. This is unforgivable and is a punishable crime.

We witness in wars around the globe how children are hit while having breakfast, how women are killed and gunned down while in church praying for peace, how patients are mercilessly shot in their hospital beds. These are the result of unlawful commands and no soldier of integrity should ever engage in such activities with the excuse that he is obeying a command.

Soldiers of the SANDF should and must stand proud among the defence forces of the globe. Their integrity must not only be seen in how neat they are or in the way they march. It should be seen in the way they respect life in time of war. Be a soldier and attack an attacking soldier or hit an installation that threatens the integrity or the safety and security of your own people in war, not innocent civilians. Do not rape and do not plunder mineral resources during war. It is wrong. Forward with the dignity and integrity of our soldiers in the SANDF.

B.V. Martin, Pretoria
TALENT MANAGEMENT

I stepped into an office recently and had to wait five minutes before I could be helped. I decided to be patient and picked up the June 2007 issue of SA SOLDIER lying on a nearby desk to page through while I waited. Great was my disbelief when I saw the letter: Talent Management. I would like to congratulate the writer on her synthesis of personnel management in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

I recently successfully completed the Personnel Management Module of my Master’s Studies at the University of Pretoria. The first outcome of the module was that personnel management was all about having “the right people in the right job at the right time and keeping them right”. Through another outcome of this module and the study of the other modules of this course, it became apparent that most of today’s successful modern organisations realise that people are their most valuable asset and manage them accordingly: an aspect, I believe, that does not necessarily enjoy the same importance in the SANDF most of the time. Millions of rands are spent on the acquisition of weapon systems and a portion of these millions are rightfully spent on training personnel, i.e. operators, instructors and maintenance personnel. In spite of the technological superiority of modern weapon systems, the requirement for skilled personnel to operate and maintain them is still as cogent as ever. The issue at hand and the question to ask is: What is the Department of Defence (DOD) doing to retain these skilled and talented members? Recruitment and in-house talent identification serve the part of getting “the right people”. Talent management programmes, job design and placement boards aim at putting people “in the right job”, whether successful or not. Succession planning on the other hand should attempt providing them “at the right time”. The part that is neglected, however, is “keeping them right”.

This is where Ms Molebogeng More’s letter is correct. Talent management is the comprehensive term for attracting, developing, promoting, managing and rewarding all employees. Too many skilled and talented military personnel are lost to the civilian sector. There are a myriad of reasons for this. Policy constraints, hidebound Human Resources (HR) procedures, lack of motivation or the simple act of not recognising talented personnel may be just some of these reasons. The DOD is not keeping up with the evolution of the modern workplace and the requirement from personnel for an improved quality of work. Employees will stay in a work environment they like and in which they want to work in. The young upcoming workforce places very little emphasis on loyalty. They will not stay with their job because of loyalty towards the organisation. The modern workforce places an elevated value on social responsibility, development and personal growth.

Numerous talented and skilled personnel are frustrated by the lack of relevant and challenging work in the DOD. Too many of these skilled personnel are underutilised, even overqualified for their current posts and have no opportunities for career growth in the future. Some of these skilled personnel are constrained by their military ranks, for example in many cases junior military ranks prohibit them from taking on more responsibility and accountability in the workplace. The DOD must recognise that part of retaining skilled and talented personnel, “keeping them right”, is through having a focused career plan for these people and fast-tracking should also be considered to ensure these people stay focused, motivated and challenged. This requires a paradigm shift and breaking the constraints placed by outdated policies.

In conclusion, I concur with the succession strategy mentioned in the letter by Ms More referred to above. Furthermore, the DOD must adopt the philosophy that people are the Department’s most valuable asset. Adopting this viewpoint will ease and aid any effort to retain personnel. More effort should be invested in career path development and management. Other mechanisms for retaining talent are appropriate training, proper job design, performance appraisals, pay/reward programmes and goal setting. Base pay and reward programmes seem to be the preferred means for determining the attractiveness of jobs and whether to stay on or not. The DOD, like other organisations, must face the reality that skills are becoming a scarce commodity. For this reason the DOD must make a conscious effort to retain its skilled and talented personnel.

Lt Jaco Jacobs, Defence Matériel Division

SANDF FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIP

The SA National Defence Force Football Association (SANDFFA) would like to inform all football supporters that the annual SANDFFA Football Championship will take place in Potchefstroom from 3 to 8 September 2007.

Ten regions will participate in the SANDFFA tournament, namely Western Cape, West Coast, South Eastern Cape, Free State, Northern Cape, North West, Gauteng, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga.

Each region will have two teams: men and women.

Last year the tournament was held in Durban. The current SANDF champions are Western Cape, in both the men and women’s categories. The Western Cape men’s team played in the final against Free State and won the game. The Western Cape women’s team played in the final against West Coast, the game being decided on a penalty shoot-out after the two teams played to a draw.

The development of women’s football in the SANDF has made very good progress. In 2003 when women’s football was first introduced there were only four teams that participated. The number has grown dramatically over the years. Today each region has a women’s team that will participate in the SANDFFA Football Championship.

All members in the Potchefstroom area are welcome to support the tournament and help to build friendship through sport.

Maj V. Petrus, SANDFFA Secretary

SA SOLDIER • AUGUST 2007
In loving memory of a young lion

By Amn Arnaus Rakoma
Photos: F Sgt David Nomtshongwana

2 June 2007 was a sad day when S Sgt Oduetse Johannes Gaseratwe (28) lost his life, following an explosion during Operation BAPISA in Mozambique.

S Sgt Gaseratwe, known as "OJ", was a member of the SANDF contingent of 56 members deployed on 26 March 2007 to provide assistance to the Mozambican Government, following an explosion at an ammunition dump in Mozambique on 22 March 2007.

It was a quiet hour, a time of agony and pain and a moment of silence when family members and friends of the deceased, members of the SANDF, representatives from the local municipality of Emthanjeni, and members of the community gathered together to mourn their loss and watched in deep sorrow, their hearts touched with grief when the body of the late S Sgt OJ Gaseratwe arrived at the De Aar City Hall in the Northern Cape on 7 July 2007.

Chaplain Natasha Hugo from the DOD Ammunition Depot and Chaplain (Dr) Richman Ngwanya from the DOD Logistic Support Formation conducted the funeral service. They supported the sad gathering with spiritual and moral food. A passage from Scripture was read and prayers said.

Col Kholisile Majola, Officer Commanding of DOD Ammunition Depot and School of Ammunition, took up the lament and paid tribute to this fallen young lion and said: "What a lioness was your mum among the lions. She lay down among the young lions and roared for her cubs. She brought up one of her cubs, and he became a strong lion. He learned to tear the prey and devoured men. The nations heard about him. The land and all who were in it were terrified by his roaring. Now gone is that lion, never to return. Now it is up to other lions to take up the battle cry," said Col Majola.

Brig Gen Justice Nkonyane, General Officer Commanding Logistic Support Formation, was the chief functionary. He expressed sincere heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family on behalf of the Department of Defence. "The world is round and the place which may seem like the end may also be the beginning," said Brig Gen Nkonyane.

The funeral was well attended by senior officers, warrant officers and non-commissioned officers. SANDF members gave their full participation and some served as bearers. They were divided into groups and executed immaculate drills during the procession to the cemetery. The SA Army Band from ASB Kroonstad did what they are famous for and provided stirring sounds. The SAMHS provided medical support.

S Sgt Gaseratwe was a member of the DOD Ammunition Depot in De Aar. He leaves behind his mother, Oshebeng Maria Gaseratwe, his caring wife, Mrs Annalise Jesmine Gaseratwe, three brothers, five sisters and three wonderful young daughters. He received a full military funeral and was laid to rest at the Hero Status Graveyard in De Aar. May his soul rest in peace.
Foreword

By Maj Gen Ntsiki Motumi, Chief Director Transformation Management

Gender equity is one of the key elements of South Africa’s Transformation Agenda. As a result it came as no surprise when this issue was rated among the country’s best practices in the Peer Review.

President Thabo Mbeki has called for the acceleration of Government’s efforts regarding gender mainstreaming, the empowerment of women, gender equality and the achievement of a non-sexist society. The women of this country earned their right to participate in all spheres of life during the liberation struggle, hence DOD policy also stipulates that they have the right to serve in all mustering, including combat roles.

The key issue to be addressed at this juncture is the levels of their participation. Women in civil society are demanding 50% representation in all decision-making structures of Government. As this discourse unfolds, women in Defence have also deemed it appropriate to investigate this issue further during the National Conference on Women in Defence to be held at the St Georges Hotel in Pretoria from 14 to 17 August 2007.

The objective of the conference is to facilitate dialogue and build consensus on the maximisation of women’s roles in peacekeeping missions and set realistic targets to strive for, taking into consideration the DOD’s peculiar environment. The need to develop programmes, which will ensure women’s readiness to occupy strategic positions at all levels within the organisation, will also be discussed.

The DOD leadership has embraced the importance of ensuring women’s representation in the decision-making structures of the organisation. This was demonstrated at the 2007 Succession Planning for senior officers. Of the eleven vacant posts, eight were filled by women. This historic gesture conveys commitment to the advancement of women. There is no doubt in anyone’s mind that this issue is on the organisation’s agenda. What is needed is the creation of an enabling environment that will ensure that women succeed in the tasks assigned to them. As we applaud the shifts in the numbers or percentages of women Generals and Admirals we must adopt a mind shift that from entry level into the SANDF, to senior levels, we recognise that it is incumbent upon all of us to ensure that members do not feel that their gender stands in the way of their career aspirations.

Defence and Security were traditionally defined and viewed as predominantly male areas, because of the levels of danger, physical strength required, types of equipment, etc. It must thus be noted that technology has advanced and, as a result, the press of a button can produce the desired results. Furthermore, many societies over the past two decades have also witnessed an increase in the number of women joining the security sector, for various reasons. These changes and developments call for an agenda that is sensitive to the emerging gender configurations.

Women in Defence should thus be actively involved in determining the type of transformation that they would like to see in the DOD. This can be achieved through active participation in the Services and Divisions’ Equity Committees, because their purpose is to address pertinent issues that impinge on the advancement of women within the DOD. The ball is in the women’s court, so they have to ensure that they are empowered and ready to occupy their rightful place within our organisation. The attainment of equity for women is a matter of right and justice rather than privilege and favour, and it is also a precondition for sustainable people centred development. It is thus inspiring to note that in the South African context there is expanding consensus about the significance of women’s participation in all spheres of life. Malibongwe! (God bless!)
The acceleration of women's participation in peacekeeping missions

By Maj Gen Ntsiki Motumi, Chief Director Transformation Management

Gender equity is today relatively better in the development arena, and the political and professional spheres of life, as compared to the security sector in general and defence in particular. The reason for this stems from the fact that this sector has been traditionally defined as a male preserve.

A century ago 90% of war casualties were male soldiers. There have been 250 major conflicts since World War II with 23 million acknowledged casualties. Today an estimated 90% of casualties are civilians, and 75% of these are estimated to be women and children. Research also shows that women are more likely to be displaced as a result of war. In wars where rape and mutilation of women have been epidemic, as in the case of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Rwanda, the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, countless women live with physical and emotional war wounds. So widespread is this violence against women that such abuses have been classified as war crimes. More devastating is that even the protectors and peacekeepers called to safeguard the civilian population often prey on the dependence and vulnerability of women and children through sexual exploitation.

The nature of war and its consequences have pushed women into the arena of seeking peace and providing security. The complex and dynamic nature of conflicts in recent decades have also contributed to the evolution of peacekeeping practices. Furthermore, there has been a transition from the "traditional" models of military peacekeeping to multidimensional peacekeeping missions that include a broad range of components and functions to facilitate the restoration of security, protection for civilians and a peaceful transition to stability and reconstruction. At the same time it has also been recognised that men, women, boys and girls do not experience conflict in the same way. As a result different approaches should inform the nature of post-conflict peace building processes. The prevailing circumstances have thus created some space for women to become actively involved in peacekeeping missions in order to ensure sustainable peace.

Various international instruments that promote women's participation in peace processes have been adopted at national and multilateral levels.

The "United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325" deals with mainstreaming gender in situations of armed conflict and peacekeeping. Some of the key issues cover the integration of a gender perspective in all peacekeeping and peace building measures, including peace agreements and decision-making processes.
Upping the stakes on the gender agenda

By Nomonde Vuthela
Photos: Cpl Elias Mahuma

The Management and Leadership Development Conference for women managers in Government and State owned enterprises in Southern Africa provides participants with an excellent opportunity to share, off-load and place vast and varying work experiences into one big basket. Women managers attending the conference in Johannesburg from 28 May to 1 June 2007 were further afforded the opportunity to dig deep into this basket of information and retrieve data they needed most.

Hosted by the International Quality and Productivity Centre (IQPC) the five-day conference was geared to inspire women, develop individual leader characteristics, traits and tactics. Stressing the slogan “Getting to know oneself better as a woman, manager and leader”, the event presented the participants with the opportunity to translate knowledge into practice.

It may be argued that such a conference is a “talk shop” ... where mandates and concrete resolutions are never reached, but it is important to keep in mind that those involved benefit in a quite different manner. Participants get to take back into their respective work environments renewed zeal and material necessary for better service delivery. The conference also places great emphasis on the concept of women developing fellow women as they climb the corporate ladder.

The conference fundamentally teaches that a better world can be built only after improving the individual, even through conversations. It also stresses that as much as it is the responsibility of the State to empower women, women themselves must take ownership of their own development.

Another theme was: “Upping the Stakes on the Gender Agenda”. Guests at the conference also came from other African countries, including Swaziland, Botswana, Kenya and Namibia. Spicing
future. She also highlighted the importance of structuring young people within society so that they too should become full benefactors and positive productive contributors to the economy of the new South Africa. "Make use of young people in your space," she said.

Some other dazzling speakers who showcased local talent were the likes of Prof Nthabiseng Ogude, who became the first black woman to obtain a PhD degree in Chemistry at Wits University. She advised the attendees to appraise people according to their ideas and not by their physical and/or racial appearances. Prof Ogude’s role model was Marie Curie, a scientist from a different race and another time who won the Nobel Peace Prize twice and made history with her discoveries.

Making a grand entrance celebrity style was Ms Noeleen Maholwana-Sangqu, presenter of the very popular “3 Talk” television programme, which is watched by many South Africans on a daily basis. She asked the question: "Who have you surrounded yourself with?" According to Ms Maholwana-Sangqu “birds of a feather flock together” and that those who want to succeed mix with successful people.

Using the phrase “Growing your own management style with confidence”, R Adm (JG) Khanyisile Litchfield-Tshabalala, Director Naval Transformation, focused on never giving up when faced with trials. She defined management as a continuous process to do with governance. “Draw strength from other people,” she advised.

Ms Constance Simelane, the Deputy Prime Minister of Swaziland, stressed: “You cannot manage other people if you are a colloquial mess”, and added that charity began at home. She also shared the view that women who were able to manage family units were: “politically volatile structures”, who could easily manage boardrooms.

So many experts and so much said! Words of wisdom and handy guidelines for in and outside the boardroom were offered. Topics ranged from challenges to service delivery, making use of one’s unique qualities, economic liberation, eradicating women and children abuse and climbing the corporate ladder. The women were also treated to a day-long golf clinic, but most of all, the five days saluted and encouraged all that was beautiful in a woman.

Ice-breaker: R Adm (JG) Khanyisile Litchfield-Tshabalala, Director Naval Transformation, leads a sing-along.
Trio making a difference

By Col Mariette Hartley, SSO ETD

The expertise of three remarkable women making a difference at the SA National Defence College. They are: Lt Col Elize Lochenberg, Directing Staff Support, Ms Daleen van Sittert, Assistant Director Training Support, and Ms Carol Ferreira, Secretary of the Centre for Military Studies at the University of Stellenbosch and Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) Facilitator.

Adds meaning to the lifelong learning concept

Lt Col Elize Lochenberg did her voluntarily training at the SA Army Women’s College in 1986, whereafter she joined the SANDF Permanent Force on 2 January 1987.

She served in several posts as an Intelligence Officer and was appointed at the SA National Defence College (SANDC) in the Directing Staff Support post in September 2002.

This year she distinguished herself so well in her support role of assisting the Directing Staff members at the College, that for the first time in the history of the SANDC, a Lieutenant Colonel was entrusted with the responsibility to plan, organise and conduct all official internal and regional visits of the Executive National Security Programme (ENSP), which serves as experimental learning of the outcomes to be achieved.

This fine officer truly succeeded in empowering herself with the required knowledge and skills to be able to accomplish new things, adding meaning to the "lifelong learning" concept. Lt Col Lochenberg played a significant supporting role in the successful presentation of ten ENSPs since 2002 and therefore contributed to the preparation of our future leaders in the DOD. There was not even one programme that did not make special mention of the manner in which this professional officer conducted herself and excelled in her work.

Accepting a challenge

Another remarkable asset of the
SANDC is Ms Daleen van Sittert, Assistant Director Training Support.

After starting out in the College as a typist, she was appointed in March 1996 as SO2 Plan in the Training Wing of the SANDC, a position she held until May 2003 when the post was equated as an Assistant Director’s post.

Recently Ms Van Sittert also made history as the first PSAP employee to accept the challenge and responsibility of organising the foreign study tour for 41 members and the administration pertaining to the tour for 41 members and the administration pertaining to the Commandant’s Research Paper. This responsibility was previously the responsibility of a member of the Senior Directing Staff.

Ms Van Sittert is also responsible for the Information Technology (IT) Briefing to the ENSP, liaison between the programme members and the College IT personnel, as well as for attending the weekly IT meetings held by the ENSP IT Committee.

Regarding involvement in ABET as a privilege

Ms Carol Ferreira, Secretary of the Centre for Military Studies (CEMIS) at the University of Stellenbosch and Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) Facilitator, started her career as a switchboard operator at the SANDC in 1993.

Her dedication, commitment and potential for development led to her transfer to the Registry in 1994 where she managed the office on her own. The expansion of the CEMIS led to her once again being singled out and transferred to CEMIS in 1996 as Centre Secretary, where she helped build the Centre from scratch. Ms Ferreira manages the administration of the centre and the whole budget planning and expenditure process independently and in a very diligent way. She is also responsible for assisting the researchers with research material and IT related queries.

In 2006 she volunteered for involvement in the ABET initiative. She has been trained to facilitate in literacy and numeracy and aspires to expand this programme to accommodate more learners. She regards her involvement in ABET as a privilege. It specifically allows her to work with adults, to continue helping them to explore their potential, to expand their minds and to be able to read and write – skills that we often tend to take for granted.

The acceleration of women’s participation in peacekeeping missions

The “Namibian Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations” adopted in Windhoek Namibia in 2000, focuses on peacekeeping and armed conflict challenges. Its provisions include policy pronouncements on mainstreaming gender and involving women at all levels, and in all peacekeeping processes and decision-making.

The African Union (AU) “Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa”, adopted by the African Heads of State in Addis Ababa in 2004, provides for the pursuit of gender parity, referred to as 50-50 representation of women and men in all AU operations and decision-making structures. It also deals with measures to end the recruitment of child soldiers and abuse of girls as wives and sex slaves.

The “Southern African Development Community (SADC) Declaration on Gender and Development” and the addendum on the “Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Children”, specifically stipulates a 30% target for women’s involvement in all levels of decision-making and also includes their representation in armed forces and peacekeeping operations.

The DOD on the other hand has made significant strides to align itself with these national and international policies. The number of women serving within our ranks demonstrates the military leadership’s commitment. Currently this number stands at 19.3% and represents women’s participation at all levels. This is the highest number of women serving in any armed force. On examining women’s participation in peacekeeping missions, it becomes apparent that we are one of the troop contributing countries with the largest number of women deployed. South Africa’s involvement and response in this regard is thus applauded.

The DOD’s only shortcoming is the number of women participating in UN, AU and SADC structures. This issue must be addressed urgently so that women’s participation in all areas of peacekeeping missions can be accelerated. Research has also been conducted within the department on the utilisation of women in combat, so that our organisation can scientifically meet challenges experienced and highlight some of the best practices.

In comparison with other countries, South Africa is leading, but this does not necessarily mean that we should be complacent. We need to create support mechanisms so that every woman serving within our ranks can be afforded an opportunity to deploy at one point or another. The benefits of women’s involvement are being appreciated, especially with regard to the responsiveness of the missions in terms of access and support to local women, particularly regarding gender based violence. Furthermore, women’s increased participation in peacekeeping missions and decision-making structures also sends a message in favour of equality and non-discrimination against women.

As South Africa celebrates Women’s Month, we need to reflect on all these matters and remind ourselves of South African women’s bravery and active participation during the liberation struggle and in the consolidation of our country’s democracy. This best practice should and must be shared with other women emerging from conflict.

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When Brig Gen Petro Mari was promoted to the post of Director Military Health Human Resources in November 2000 she immediately set herself the task of rectifying the disparities in the rank structure as it affected women, and more especially Black women who were nowhere near the ranks of Brigadier General or Colonel.

Brig Gen Mari is one daunting woman who does not let anything stand in the way of achieving her objectives; and always remember that her position means nothing if she does not uplift the status of women as per government imperative. This she did in the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS), where she previously found herself. In fact, she makes a difference wherever she goes. Despite the challenges that all of us women face, she makes life a lot easier because she is well versed in policy issues. These policies were disadvantageous to women, and to Black women in particular, who were poorly represented at all levels. She challenged policies so that they could be rectified in favour of the advancement of women.

As a woman, she knew that the majority of women were a force to be reckoned with because of their abilities, potential, hard work, and initiative. She pulled them up, even the most senior of men, who came to understand that gender equality was not a favour, but the right of all women. Like her these women were not promoted just to fill gaps or in terms of their gender. When they were integrated these women were not properly ranked and therefore Brig Gen Mari had to rectify this imbalance. "The pace of gender equality in the DOD must be accelerated to uplift women from the lowest rank level to be geared for leadership, and they must be provided with the necessary training to take their rightful place in the DOD, as leadership training was also denied women," she emphasised.

Brig Gen Mari is satisfied that in her time as Director Military Health Human Resources her objective to have women placed in middle management and senior management positions has been achieved. Of the 14 women that were promoted to Colonel, four are now Brigadier Generals. "Though there are still startling disparities, the process of transformation has begun, and even if just one woman has been promoted to Chief Director" she is hopeful "that the leadership of the DOD would seriously consider speeding up the process of gender mainstreaming, as the time is long overdue," she said.

The Minister of Defence, Mr Mosiuoa Lekota, shared the sentiments of Brig Gen Mari when he said that the time for changing the poor status women in the DOD was now, not later, but now. Those of us who were promoted during Brig Gen Mari’s time in the SAMHS ought to congratulate her on all her efforts to put women in the front line, having been at the bottom of the rung in the rank structure of the DOD. Though it was not easy she won the battle. Many women in middle and senior management positions have learned from her bravery and from how she overcame the patriarchal behaviour of men who still believed that women did not belong in the hierarchy in the DOD. Let us thank her and encourage her to pursue her ambition to become a Lieutenant General, because she has the intellectual ability, the tenacity, the courage and the correct attitude for that position. She is there to uplift other women into positions of leadership.

To the benefit of women Brig Gen Mari currently occupies the very strategic post as Director Human Resources Divisional Staffs. This enables her to foster the gender agenda.

Brig Gen Petro Mari, Director Human Resources Divisional Staffs.

50% of women were not in middle or top management and this was of grave concern to her. She immediately campaigned at the highest level for 14 women to undergo training for promotional purposes. These women were all capable in their own right. Like her these women were not promoted just to fill gaps or in terms of their gender. When they were integrated these women were not properly ranked and therefore Brig Gen Mari had to rectify this imbalance. "The pace of gender equality in the DOD must be accelerated to uplift women from the lowest rank level to be geared for leadership, and they must be provided with the necessary training to take their rightful place in the DOD, as leadership training was also denied women," she emphasised.

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To the benefit of women Brig Gen Mari currently occupies the very strategic post as Director Human Resources Divisional Staffs. This enables her to foster the gender agenda.

Thanks Brig Gen Mari, on National Women’s Day. Your name is counted among the many who have worked in the interests of the upliftment of women in the DOD.
All South Africans have a responsibility to help Government fight crime. One way to do this is to report crime to the police. Rape is a very serious crime and should be reported immediately. A number of rape cases are not investigated properly because victims fail to report it or do not give all the necessary information to the police.

**EVIDENCE**

Senior Superintendent Hantie Gouws of the South African Police Service’s Forensic Science Laboratory says it is very important that a person who was raped should not wash, take a bath or shower after the incident. Washing can remove important evidence like the bodily fluids found on the victim’s body or clothing. Such evidence is critical in linking the rapist to the crime.

When a rape is reported, the victim is taken to a doctor. The doctor looks for bodily fluids left behind during the rape and examines them. DNA tests are then done. This is a scientific way of finding out if the bodily fluids belong to the person who is accused of the rape. It makes it much easier for the court to find the rapist guilty.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

Senior Superintendent Gouws says the responsibilities of the victim reporting a rape does not end with laying a charge. It is also very important for a complainant to keep in touch with the police during the investigation.

If a complainant moves to another area, it is important to give the investigating officer the new address. It is the duty of the investigating officer to inform the rape victim of progress in the case.

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**Important advice regarding rape**

- **Report the rape to the police immediately.** If you are too shocked or afraid, you can take a friend or family member with you to the police station to make a statement, as long as he or she is not a witness in your case.

- **Don’t wash or take a shower or a bath** after the rape incident because it will wash away important evidence.

- **You can make a statement in your own language.** If you feel your statement is incorrect or incomplete, you can make another statement.

- **You have the right to copy your statement.**

- **Remember to ask for a case number.** You must use this number as a reference to help you follow up on how your case is progressing.

- **Ask the police or a doctor to refer you to a counsellor** who can help you deal with the emotional suffering of being raped.

If you have been raped, you may call the SAPS emergency number: 10111 or the Stop Gender Violence helpline: 0800150150.
The SA Air Force decided to outsource basic helicopter flying training after an impact assessment was conducted upon the phasing out of the Alouette III helicopter. It was surmised that the replacement new light utility helicopter, the Augusta A109, was too sophisticated for its role as basic trainer.

Although the Augusta A109 is suited to its operational requirements, it is easier to fly, more complex in its avionics and more expensive to operate than the Alouette III. This left the SA Air Force with two choices: either acquire another type of helicopter or outsource the training, of which the latter was the most cost-effective option.

Following a tender process Starlite Aviation at Virginia Airport near Durban was contracted to train future helicopter pilots for the SA Air Force. Prospective helicopter pilots first have to qualify as fixed wing pilots on the Pilatus PC7 Mk2 at AFB Langebaanweg before they can learn the foundations of helicopter flying and basic helicopter skills. After initial orientation at 87 Helicopter Flying School at AFB Bloemspruit the first group commenced their eleven-week training at Starlite Aviation in July 2006. The results exceeded all expectations.

The SA Air Force has acquired professional basic helicopter flying training for its pilots at much less than it would have cost if the training had been conducted in-house. Starlight Aviation uses the Robinson R22 as a training helicopter. The Robinson R22 is sensitive and requires full-time hands-on flying, which makes it a comparatively difficult helicopter to fly - ideal to prepare a pilot to fly other helicopters afterwards.

In January this year the second group of SA Air Force pilots started their helicopter flying training at Starlite Aviation. The course was developed specifically for the SA Air Force and adheres to strict military aviation standards. Two weeks of ground school is followed by 50 hours of Private Pilot’s License training on the Robinson R22 and then ten more hours of turbine training on the B206 Jet Ranger. After completion of basic helicopter flying training the SA Air Force pilots will return to 87 Helicopter Flying School for conversion training on the Oryx helicopter in preparation for military helicopter flying.

In celebration of the solo flights of the second group to be trained by Starlite Aviation a ceremony was held at the company’s premises. Mr Barry Duff, Chief Executive Officer of Starlite Aviation, expressed his pride in being a service provider for the SA Air Force: “I trust that our association will be a long one. From our side, we as a team will put in every effort to be successful so that the Air Force can achieve its goals. With the quality of students that we get that is quite attainable”.

Lt Phetogo Molawa is a member of the second group to be trained by Starlite Aviation and she has very high ambitions. She was born in Bloemfontein, raised in Thaba Nchu and joined the SA Air Force after matriculating. In the short term she wants to complete her rotary conversion course and would like to do very well. She plans to have a career in the SA Air Force, and said: “I want to become an instructor in the future and share my skills that I have learned with up-and-coming pilots. I want to see myself as a successful pilot, respected for the work that I do professionally. I hope to become the first black female Chief of the SA Air Force”.

Lt Phetogo Molawa has the honour of being the first black female helicopter pilot. (She flew solo after only 16 hours.)
On 9 August we salute all South African women in our National Women’s Day celebrations. Women excel on a daily basis in performing their professional career tasks. But, apart from being career orientated, all women are today mothers, wives, grandmothers, aunts, girlfriends and sisters. We praise you and, as your sisters, embrace you for your contribution to nation building.

A formidable achiever who has kicked dust into the eyes of her male colleagues is WO1 Lynette Geldenhuys of Witwatersrand Rifles. On 14 April 2007 WO1 Geldenhuys was the receiver of the “Brigadier Jack Bester Shield” of the Witwatersrand Rifles for the “Man/Woman of the Year” Award held in Germiston. She received the award for exceptional service rendered to the Witwatersrand Rifles during the past year.

WO1 Geldenhuys started her military career in 1976 at the Bothaville Commando. She always aspired to be a soldier, “to contribute something sustainable towards my country and to help those who are in need”. She enlisted as a Permanent Force member in 1979 and did her Basic Military Training at the Personnel Service School in Thaba Tshwane.

It is encouraging to note that the new helicopter pilots have long-term career visions in the SA Air Force. Brig Gen Msimang said: “I want to encourage them to live to their full potential, because this SA Air Force is theirs.”

WO1 Lynette Geldenhuys.

This ambitious woman is looking forward to being deployed in the service of her country and says that she knows that there are very exciting things waiting for her in the helicopter environment.

Brig Gen Zakes Msimang, recently appointed as Director Helicopter Systems, is satisfied with the results of the training and says that the second group of students is the most representative thus far, which brings the Air Force closer to the ideal profile for helicopter pilots. He appreciates the good foundation that his predecessor has laid: “I am where I am at the right time, certainly because conditions have been set to move forward and that makes my task so much easier”.

It is encouraging to note that the new helicopter pilots have long-term career visions in the SA Air Force. Brig Gen Msimang said: “I want to encourage them to live to their full potential, because this SA Air Force is theirs.”

Typical career path: SA Air Force helicopter pilot

- Pilot License training on fixed wing aircraft: Central Flying School at AFB Langebaanweg
- Helicopter orientation: 87 Helicopter Flying School at AFB Bloemspruit
- Basic Helicopter Flying training: Starlite Aviation in Durban
- Oryx helicopter conversion: 87 Helicopter Flying School at AFB Bloemspruit
- ± Two years as Oryx co-pilot at a squadron
- Agusta A109 conversion: 87 Helicopter Flying School at AFB Bloemspruit
- ± Two years as Augusta pilot/Oryx pilot at a squadron
- Rooivalk Tactical Support helicopter training: 16 Squadron, AFB Bloemspruit
- ± Two years at a squadron
- Flying Instructor training: Central Flying School at AFB Langebaanweg
- ± Three years as fixed wing flying instructor: Central Flying School at AFB Langebaanweg
- ± Three years as helicopter flying instructor: 87 Helicopter Flying School at AFB Bloemspruit
- Return to squadron flying
focus on women

Bravo to women on deployment

By Nomonde Vuthela
Photos: Courtesy Office of Chief Joint Operations

I would like SA Soldier readers to see what women soldiers are doing out there in the deployment areas, because normally when people think of deployments they think of men, especially in countries such as the Sudan with more difficult circumstances,” said the Divisional Warrant Officer of Joint Operations Division, WO1 Sheron Scheepers, speaking to SA Soldier.

WO1 Scheepers has been the Divisional Warrant Officer of Joint Operations Division for the past year and part of her job description includes extensive travel into areas where SANDF members are deployed. She has visited the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Addis-Ababa and the Ivory Coast. She said: “My travels have really been an eye-opener.”

The Joint Operations Division deals with all the deployments in Africa and within South Africa. “When one goes to such countries as the DRC and Burundi, one is confronted with a totally different picture,” WO1 Scheepers revealed, emphasising, however, that this was not to say that internal deployments were any easier. “Each country has its own problems and situation, through which one can learn to think much wider,” she added.

More recently WO1 Scheepers travelled to the Sudan with the Acting Chief of Joint Operations, Maj Gen Dlambulo Tshiki. Although the visit was primarily to visit all the deployed soldiers far away from home, she saw fit to highlight, in particular, the good work done by the women soldiers deployed in the Sudan. “Seeing as we were approaching August - Women’s Month - I saw a need to uplift the spirits of the deployed women, because I found the Sudan to be one of the most challenging deployment areas,” she said.

“When we landed the first thing that caught my attention was a desperate child surrounded by a vast
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Fltr: WO1 Sheron Scheepers, the Divisional Warrant Officer of Joint Operations Division, and Maj Gen Barney Hlatshwayo, GOC Joint Operational HQ, meet Pte Sotyeklwa on their visit to the Sudan.

desert. I saw the difficulties and then thought of the women.” According to WO1 Scheepers the visit to the Sudan made her appreciate South Africa all over again. “I was scared,” she admitted candidly, adding: “You hear about the rebels and you wonder.”

Having decided that she would use what little time she had for the visit to get to know her fellow women soldiers deployed in the Sudan, she met Lt Rossouw, a female platoon commander with about 32 SANDF members under her command. “She was from the Infantry, doing very well and was happy to be deployed there.”

“There are women deployed as soldiers on the ground and really doing their part. To me this was an eye-opener.”

Held deprived by politics
Souls broken by ignorance
They ordered the extermination
Of all minds they couldn’t control
They caged you like a brutal animal
And watched you slowly die for freedom.

A day will come, just one day
As you breathe your first air of freedom
On the day you became free country
Many people lost their lives for a breath of freedom
The greatest pain has rested in my heart.

Those are things that make my heart broken
Lonely children, unanswered crises and souls who have given up hope.
As we sympathise with the families of the fallen heroes your sorrow and tears are shared by all those who cared.

We silently grieve and have heard the silent voice that said life must goes on for us people left on earth below, but remember the pleasures, treasure and the memories of those you loved and lost.
Better by far you should forget and smile than to remember and be sad again: you shall overcome, we shall overcome.

Cpl P.S. Jantjies, 2 SAI Bn in the Sudan

Just a breath of freedom: Sudan
Everybody should understand that pregnancy is an informed choice through the knowledge of alternatives. It is the start of parenthood and is the wonderful result of successful procreation.

Pregnancy is not a coincidence, but a natural physiological response (in the female body) to an intentional sexual engagement between two people of the opposite sex. It is a wonderful period in the lives of both the mother and father. Pregnancy does not just happen—people make it happen!

In humans the duration of a normal pregnancy is nine months (or 40 weeks). The culmination of the nine month long period of pregnancy is childbirth, which is one most precious and memorable day in the lifetime of responsible parents, especially for the mother.

A planned pregnancy is a time of joy and excitement, leading to cooperative preparation for stimulating discussion between the couple (parents to be). It is a time of preparation and planning, finding solutions to problem areas in order to make this lifelong journey of parenting the exciting yet responsible path in life that it should be.

UNPLANNED PREGNANCY
Casual/unprotected sexual intercourse can lead to an unplanned pregnancy or undesired sexually transmitted disease. This may lead to long-term dissatisfaction, feelings of guilt or despair and other problems. Therefore sexual activity should always be a responsible interaction between two lifelong partners only, and even then it should be a mutually planned protected activity. Still the best method of protection is the use of condoms.

DIAGNOSIS OF PREGNANCY
Pregnancy is usually suspected and diagnosed on the basis of the history of sexual activity and findings following physical examination. For example, a woman with previous cyclic, predictable menstruation patterns develops amenorrhoea (her monthly menstruation period is "late" or "skipped"). This absence of menstruation is accompanied by breast tenderness, a feeling of being ill (malaise), lassitude, nausea, and morning vomiting may occur specifically in the early stages of pregnancy. Swelling of the belly (abdomen) and darkening of the areola (nipples) and lower abdomen midline (linea nigra) are other signs that may hint at pregnancy. A woman can confirm her pregnancy by a urine test available from a chemist or local sickbay. This checks for beta human chorionic gonadotropin (Hcg), a
A hormone which is present in the blood and urine of a pregnant woman. Pregnancy can also be confirmed with a blood test.

**RISKS DURING PREGNANCY**

The developing baby (called a foetus while in the womb) is subject to everything the mother is exposed to, eats, drinks and what she does (habits).

**Habits.** Alcohol, drugs, medications, smoking (tobacco or other) can all harm the unborn baby temporarily, but usually permanently! It should be avoided at all times during pregnancy. Smoking, drugs and alcohol are detrimental to one’s health anyway and should be avoided permanently and not only during pregnancy by females and males alike.

**Medication.** Medication is best avoided during pregnancy. A pregnant woman must remind the doctor, nurse and/or health care practitioner of her status before accepting any treatment. Immunisation may be harmful and is also not permissible during pregnancy.

**Eating habits.** A healthy balanced diet should be followed. Food cravings and salt intake should be checked in order to control weight gain. Too much weight gain during pregnancy is dangerous. Among many other conditions, it can lead to high blood pressure (preeclampsia), or cause diabetes in the mother as well as in the unborn child. Colourants, preservatives and stimulants such as caffeine (coffee, Coke, Red Bull) should be minimised, if not avoided totally. Excessive amounts of carbohydrates, eg sugar, starch and confectionary should be avoided.

**Exercise.** Regular aerobic exercise (walking, cycling, swimming, jogging) on a daily base is an absolute necessity. Not only will this facilitate the management of weight-gain, but also improve the mother’s cardiovascular system. Sufficient oxygenation of the maternal circulation is important to provide enough oxygen to the womb for the development of the foetus.

**Travelling.** Both immunisation and prophylactic medication is contra-indicated during pregnancy. Unless a person resides there she should not travel/relocate/or deploy to an endemic area (ie malaria or yellow-fever area) while pregnant.

**First and subsequent medical check-ups.** A woman who suspects or knows that she is pregnant should report to a sickbay/antenatal clinic for a first medical check-up within the first two weeks of missing her menstrual cycle (period). The health care providers in attendance will provide more detail on the frequency of medical check-ups as this is dependent on the health status of the pregnant mother. In general a healthy pregnant woman should get a medical check-up every eight weeks.
ABET empowering women

By Maj Merle Meyer,
SO1 Com SA Army Inf Fmn

Ms Lydia Mdlane grew up in Atteridgeville, near Pretoria, and started to work in the SANDF in 1994 at the SA Air Force College as a cleaner. In 2002 she started with Adult Basic Educational Training (ABET), completed Grade 11 and passed four subjects in Grade 12. From then on her career opportunities multiplied.

In 2003 Ms Mdlane started with empowerment training and served at the SA Army Infantry Formation personnel registry, MOD Transformation Management and later at the SA Air Force College where she worked as an accommodation clerk. In August 2006 she was staffed as a personnel registry clerk on Level 5 at the SA Army Infantry Formation.

The empowerment training enabled her to learn a variety of skills, such as filing, accommodation management and general office work. This prepared her for her present task.

Ms Mdlane, a 40-year-old mother of two, challenges all women to empower themselves and to improve their education as this opens a new world for them.

Another successful ABET story

This is echoed by Ms Julia Masuku, also a woman from Atteridgeville. She joined the SADF at the Personnel Services School in Thaba Tshwane in 1984 where she worked in the Suikerbos Mess canteen. Later she was appointed as a cleaner at the offices. In 1993 Ms Masuku started with ABET and in 1998 she completed Grade 11, including two subjects for Grade 12.

In 2003 Ms Masuku started with empowerment training and worked at the reproduction section at Personnel Services School, the registration at Directorate PSAP, and at the personnel registry at the SA Army Infantry Formation. In 2006 Ms Masuku was staffed as a Level 6 registry clerk at the SA Army Infantry Formation.

The promotion from a cleaner was an achievement and also a joy for Ms Masuku, who is a mother of six children and grandmother of five. She has taken up the challenge of this new working environment and is finding it very stimulating and interesting.

Both women emphasised that the opportunity to study with ABET had opened new opportunities for them, and both make special mention of Mrs Mashabela and Mr Billy Maesela who manage the empowerment programme. This programme is very successful and both women can now ensure a better future for themselves and their children.

These success stories are definitely a motivation for those members who have not completed their high school qualifications.

It can be done despite a full-time job and a family to care for.
A woman of great calibre

Article and photo by Seaman Adelice Tshabalala, PRO Naval Station Simon’s Town

Lt Nicolette le Roux is a woman of great calibre. She was born and raised in Kimberley. Joining the SA Navy in January 1998 matured her. She was able to share her thoughts, beliefs and opinions while also learning a lot, as she was surrounded by the people who were the decision-makers of our country.

She has an aura about her which makes her stand out as a professional. She is a hard working, committed and talented woman. Always punctual, single-minded and ambitious Lt Le Roux completed her Military Training for Ratings Part I (MTR-I) and Military Training for Officers Part I (MTO-I) at Gordon’s Bay Naval College. In 1999 she studied at the Military Academy for her B.Mil degree in Human Science. She was transferred to Naval Base Simon’s Town, was classified as a Combat Officer, and qualified as part one Officer under training on the SAS OUTENIQUA, where she did her harbour and bridge watchkeeping training.

Thereafter Lt Le Roux was transferred to the SAS KAPA, where she was appointed first as the gunnery officer and then as the navigator on board the SAS KAPA. She joined the SAS PROTEA in August 2004 and was appointed as the gunnery officer, then the communications officer and is currently its navigator. In 2005 she completed a basic hydrographic course and in 2006 completed the Junior Staff Course.

Aiming high and dreaming big, Lt Le Roux continued with her future plans and on 7 April 2007 she was the first woman and the first member of the SA Navy to complete the Category B Hydrographic Survey Course in the UK at HMS Drake, Plymouth.

Lt Le Roux says what she enjoys about being at sea, while surveying with SAS PROTEA, is the satisfaction of contributing towards a tangible product, which is the hydrographic chart. She also says she is happy and honoured to be celebrated as an inspiration to other women. She has had her hardships, but she has striven to do her best over time, and in her chosen career.

Having to face the fact that her work is mainly in a man’s world, she acknowledges that one cannot allow anything to hold one back and that every woman should remember that a sense of humour goes a long way towards making anything and everything bearable.

Interviewing Lt Le Roux I realised that she was a fascinating woman that you wanted to listen to. She is highly motivated, excited about her future and her career and happy to pass this on to anyone willing to listen.

Lt Nicolette le Roux was the first woman and the first member of the SA Navy to complete the Category B Hydrographic Survey Course in the UK.
First solo flight for young pilots

By CO M.K.L. Ilunga,
Pilot’s Wings Course 109/07,
AFB Langebaanweg
Photos: CO M.P. Ramoipone

Every pilot remembers the magic of his or her first solo flight; the silence from the back seat and how accurately he or she flew his or her first circuit. It is an unforgettable experience. It is a major milestone in your flying career, especially as you will fly your first solo in the Astra, one of the finest training aircraft in the world.” These are words printed in the Pilatus Astra Student Pilot Training Manual (SPTM), also known as the pupe’s bible, and it is these words that prepare the student military aviators at Central Flying School (CFS) of Air Force Base Langebaanweg for their first solos.

Several improvements have been implemented at CFS, for example the “solo pit” was revamped and, instead of the usual mud and many other unknowns that filled it over many years, it was repainted in the Astra’s red and white colours and clean and clear water scented with lavender flowed. Most old school aviators would grunt and protest at this major change, but for the women of Pilot’s Wings Course 109/07, who played a major role in the transformation of the pit, it looked “fantabulously” pretty. All that remained was to wait for that special solo day.

There are two phases to the solo day. Firstly, a solo check with an A-Cat instructor who deems you either competent or not and, if the latter does
Capt Imelda du Toit congratulates CO Laura Ilunga after she was carried by her course mates to the solo pit where her face was dunked into a mud puddle and she was tossed into the water to seal the deal.

not apply, you are set free on your first solo flight. I can still remember the brief moment during which my heart jumped in my chest and the Airman’s Prayer rushed through my head for a safe return as I flew “through lonely ways across the sky”.

Once the gruelling 0.3 hours are done and a safe landing is assured, the rituals begin. Your face is covered in exhaust fume soot, your socks are tied together and, without touching the ground, you are carried by your course mates to the solo pit, along the way enduring some “pains”. At the pit, where everyone awaits you, your face is dunked into a mud puddle and you are then tossed into the water to seal the deal.

Pilot’s Wings Course 109/07 was another step along the path of military aviation, thanks to the many flying instructors at CFS. They worked hard to get us to where we are and they continue with the training until the day that we are students no more, but proudly wear the pilot’s wings of the SA Air Force.
Making their mark in the SAMHS

By Lt John Sverdloff, Editor Milmed
Photo: F Sgt David Nomtshongwana

Meet the four newly appointed generals in the SAMHS:
Brig Gen Evelyn Langa, Director Military Health Human Resources,
Brig Gen Eugenia “Snowy” Moremi, the General Officer Commanding of the Area Military Health Formation,
Brig Gen Nompumelelo Madlala-Msimango, Director Military Health Nursing,
Brig Gen Thandiwe Nodola, Director Defence Foreign Relations.

Director Military Health Human Resources
Brig Gen Evelyn Langa, Director Military Health Human Resources (DMHHR), was born in Johannesburg where she attended the Holy Cross Convent High School. She has two sisters and a brother and is the only one in her family who is a member of the SANDF in a health profession.

Brig Gen Langa underwent general nurse training at Sekhukuneland and midwifery at Baragwanath Hospital in Johannesburg, after which she left the country to join the African National Congress (ANC) in 1976. She served in the women’s section of the ANC and its health structures as a nurse - the ANC Holland Solidarity Hospital.

Reminiscing, Brig Gen Langa said: “I was also the Senior Staff Officer (SSO) Gender, which encompassed all the facets pertaining to gender transformation in the Department of Defence (DOD). Constitutional imperatives had to be upheld which included the whole legal framework with regard to gender transformation.

“In 2005 as SSO Gender I introduced the gender mainstreaming strategy to the DOD, which was approved by the Plenary Defence Staff Council (PDSC) as a guiding tool for gender transformation.

“The work I do now as DMHHR is very different in that the scope of management is very broad, covering a number of aspects. These are: the general management of human resources and transformation, policy issues and the assistance to the SAMHS with regard to the alignment of its organisational goals with the entire DOD Programme of Action. Most importantly, I have to ensure that the human capital within the SAMHS is well managed and that the emotional well-being of all SAMHS members is taken care of.

“I will make it a priority to have a SAMHS component that puts people first, ensuring that members of the SAMHS have a high moral. This will require dedication and hard work from my team.”

Brig Gen Langa said that she is an optimist, who is self-motivated and very persistent and emphasised that being a woman means the sky is the limit. “You must venture out and make a success of whatever you put your mind to.”

GOC Area Military Health Formation
Brig Gen Eugenia “Snowy” Moremi, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Area Military Health Formation, is a qualified Social Worker. She completed her university studies at the University of Limpopo (known then as the University of the North - Turfloop) in 1982 and was awarded a post-graduate diploma in business studies in 2000.

She wanted to study science as she was very good at science and mathematics at school. It was suggested that she try social work. The suggestion rang true as she had always enjoyed working with people, such as when called upon to teach mathematics to lower grades at school.

Brig Gen Moremi worked at the National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO). Here, she rubbed shoulders with Judge Richard Goldstone and Judge Edwin Cameron at the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at Wits University.

She facilitated the Street Law Project which advised ex-detainees and other youngsters what their rights were according to the law, covering the ages of 13 to 18 years. At this time Judge Goldstone was Judge President and a board member of NICRO. He used to visit detainees in Johannesburg and write up a list of ex-detainees which would be handed to NICRO for
The four newly appointed generals in the SAMHS, fltr: Brig Gen "Snowy" Moremi, GOC Area Military Health Formation, Brig Gen Evelyn Langa, Director Military Health Human Resources, Brig Gen Nompumelelo Madlala-Msimango, Director Military Health Nursing, and Brig Gen Thandiwe Nodola, Director Defence Foreign Relations.
"I have always seen myself assisting with community health matters within the military, but I must say that my appointment was a surprise! I want to continue to develop military nursing, which I see as the last duty which God wants me to do. Nursing is one of the pillars of medicine and that means that the SAMHS must have a strong core of military nurses to achieve a world-class military health service. "

"Military nursing must be of such a calibre that it is able to support the Surgeon General in his mandate and the greater part of the DOD," said Brig Gen Madlala-Msimango. 

Director Defence Foreign Relations

Brig Gen Thandiwe Nodola, Director Defence Foreign Relations, explained that during her high school years she was a member of the South African Students’ Organisation where she got involved in politics and assisted with the distribution of publications. 

In 1997 she left for Tanzania, Morogoro, where she received training at the Southern African Liberation Movement (UN/OAU) as a medical orderly and completed the auxiliary medical laboratory course for first line treatment in the military camps in Angola.

After completing her Basic Training, Brig Gen Nodola was transferred to work in Luanda, Angola, in a transit military camp. There, she liaised with the Minister of Health in Angola and the military hospital where she was responsible for the Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) medical stores. She was also the secretary for the health committee in Angola, where coordination of all military camps was done. She was also responsible for the health treatment of underground structures and new recruits.

She then worked at the Emasdel Clinic in Lusaka in 1985 and was responsible for the purchasing of medical supplies. During 1987 she left for Moshi in Tanzania to do a three-year diploma in physiotherapy after which she practiced at the Morogoro District Hospital as a clinical therapist.

During 1990 she returned to South Africa and worked as a community physiotherapist where she was a supervisor to physiotherapy students and community health workers.

Brig Gen Nodola integrated into the SANDF in 1995 as a Major and then re-mustered to Counter Intelligence at Natal Command. She was then transferred to SAMHS HQ in 2000 as SO1 Counter Intelligence and promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 2001. She completed all her intelligence courses and the Joint Senior Staff Course, after which she was transferred to General Support Base Thaba Tshwane as the Service Agreement Wing Commander.

In 2006 she joined Defence Intelligence as the Senior Staff Officer Protocol/Intelligence Liaison and completed the Executive National Staff Programme and was then appointed Director Defence Foreign Relations.

Brig Gen Nodola said: “My current post differs a little in that I now have to promulgate directives and guidelines for new policies. An example is the integration of Defence Foreign Relations into intelligence structures. “

“Although my post requires a lot of dedication and hard work, I see it as a challenge and a great achievement. The military environment has helped mould me into the person I am today. “

“My long term goals are to nurture the Military Skills Development System (MSDS), which produces young aspirant soldiers who are the future the SANDF.”
Iron woman applies law in the military world

By Lt Col Reggie P. Leburu,
Ad Astra

Speaking from her office at the SA Air Force Headquarters in Pretoria on 6 July 2007, Lt Col Tshepo Motati said there was nothing as profound as the lifelong yearning that compelled her to join the military world. This came in response to a question as to what could have made her join the military. She works at the Defence Legal Service Division (Directorate Operational Legal Support) as SO1 Legal Advice SA Air Force.

Her responsibilities include providing legal services, especially to the SA Air Force (levels 2, 3, 4). This entails, among other responsibilities, ensuring liaison for all law support requirements, the rendering of specialised and unique legal services relating to the SA Air Force, reviewing and commenting on boards of inquiry grievances, ministerial enquiries and policies. It also involves the drafting of concept agreements and/or contracts pertaining to the SA Air Force and providing expert inputs to the Chief of the SA Air Force on international agreements and associations.

On whether there are challenges with regard to her work, Lt Col Motati says the law as a field of study is challenging because of its diversity and fluidity. "The challenge of my current job is that no two days are the same. One day I would be advising a client on the Water Act. The next day would be on Occupational Health and Safety, and the day thereafter it may be Aviation Law. However, she adds that the diversity is a welcome challenge because one is bound to conduct research and stay abreast of developments in the law, which is fun.

Considering her level of education, perhaps this proves individuals wrong in society who have illusions that soldiers do not require much education to perform their duties. Lt Col Motati holds the opposing view: "I think it is important to understand that with education comes confidence in executing their tasks. I have had the privilege of attending courses overseas and interacting with soldiers from across the world who are highly educated. I can tell you now, if we are to be taken seriously on the international playing field, with the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) being a key role player in the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) deployments in Africa, we need soldiers who know their business and have the confidence to execute that which they know."

Explaining what conditions are like in her work environment with respect to gender relations, she says that she works in a place where one is judged mainly on professional output, and adds that she has never experienced any gender based discrimination from her colleagues.

Based on the fact that she is strong willed and intrepid, her family had no doubt she would make it in the military world. She says her family had confidence in her, even though the military has been predominantly male.

Asked where she sees herself in the next five years, Lt Col Motati says she will hopefully be a director in the Defence Legal Service Division. She also advises the women of South Africa, some of whom it is believed may know nothing about the SA Air Force: “Join the SANDF, especially the SA Air Force, see the world and find yourselves.”

Lt Col Motati believes that the opportunities for travel and study afforded to her by the SA Air Force are important in the journey to self-discovery. She points out that not only has she grown professionally and academically, her outlook and attitude have been greatly influenced by the diversity of the SA Air Force which, she says, is like a melting pot for all who are South African.

Lt Col Motati completed her high school studies at Holy Trinity in Attridgeville, near Pretoria. She then obtained a B Proc degree from the former Vista University in 1995. She went on to obtain an LLM degree from the University of Pretoria in 2004.

Lt Col Tshepo Motati.
Stepping in her father's footsteps

By Lebohang Letaoana
Photo: Cpl Elias Mahuma

She's tough, intelligent, outspoken, a disciplinarian and she's the first coloured female to be promoted to Warrant Officer Class One (WO1) in the SA Navy. SA Soldier caught up with WO1 Lucricia Nicoene Koesyn at 2 Signal Regiment to find out what makes her tick.

Growing up in Cape Town, WO1 Koesyn has always been fascinated by the sea, which prompted her to join the SA Navy in 1989 as a 17-year-old. "My father was in the Navy and my brothers, who are much older than me, applied quite a few times to the Navy and they were always turned down. When I was in matric I didn't know what I was going to do and I just tried my luck and filled in the forms and a few weeks later I got the call that I had to come for the tests," says WO1 Koesyn. She did her Basic Training at SAS Simonsberg (Signal School).

Asked if she still remembered her first day, she said: "Yes, (smiling) they were strict. It's totally different to what it is now. Back then you came to attention for anything, any rank that was higher than you. I mean we even made the mistake of complimenting civilians, that's how disciplined we were." She added: "I think we were more disciplined and respectful in those years; today they are too lenient in Basic Training. That's why today when I see a member doing something wrong I correct him or her on the spot, because nowadays they are buddy/buddy and they don't call each other by rank anymore, which is wrong. In the military environment we need to respect our seniors," says WO1 Koesyn. For the past 18 years she has been in the signals environment. "I have love and passion for communication," says WO1 Koesyn. She has worked at Naval Base Simon’s Town, SAS IMMORTELLE, SAS WINGFIELD, as Regional Joint Task Force West Static Manager, CMI Service Centre Youngsfield and 2 Signal Regiment. Currently she is the Human Resource Warrant Officer at 2 Signal Regiment where she is responsible for the daily running of the unit's Human Resources (HR). "It's a big challenge for me because everyday I'm learning something new, as I'm not used to HR. I just take one day at a time and I try my best to do what I can in this department," she says.

 Asked how she felt about being the first coloured female WO1 in the SA Navy, she said: "I feel it's an achievement. I did not expect it to be me, because I was in the third coloured intake in the SA Navy and there were a few girls before me. I'm just lucky that I'm at Command and Management Information Systems Division (CMIS). They have looked after me and got me into my post and I was promoted in time."

She attributes her success to the CMIS and says one of her highlights was when she took part in Exercise COMBINED ENDEAVOUR in Germany. "Last year we had about 42 countries taking part in this exercise. I've been privileged to be selected twice to attend the Exercise COMBINED ENDEAVOUR in Germany," says WO1 Koesyn.

She says she gets her inspiration from herself and the former President of South Africa, Mr Nelson Mandela. "I take off my hat to that man and I look up to him, because of the changes he has introduced to the country. He is such an inspirational person," she says.

Another person she looks up to is her fiancé, WO2 Conway Lindebwom, who works in the Naval Mess. "We are both from Cape Town and our families are both down there. So most of the time we just relax by having friends over for a braai or we visit entertainment areas - just enjoying ourselves here in Pretoria."

"My future aspiration in the SANDF is to see myself being the master of the unit or a master of the SA Navy, why not?!" concluded WO1 Koesyn.
Could this be a dream come true?

By D.P. Smit,
Principal Language Practitioner
Photo: Cpl Elias Mahuma

When one phones the office of Brig Christo Gen Coetzee, Director Corruption and Fraud Prevention at DOD Inspector General, the telephone is answered these days by the warm and friendly voice of the general’s new secretary. The unsuspecting client’s call is then dealt with very efficiently and professionally. However, when meeting the person to whom the voice belongs face-to-face, one might be astonished to discover that the new secretary is in fact visually impaired.

An opportunity of a lifetime presented itself to Mrs Rozelle Smit, a telecom operator in Command and Management Information Systems (CMIS), when Directorate Career Management (DCM) approached her with the possibility of acting as secretary to the Director Corruption and Fraud Prevention as part of a career management programme that she had embarked on in 2005.

It all began when she decided to approach DCM for guidance with regard to furthering her career in the DOD. Rozelle, who matriculated at Pioneer School in Worcester in 1985, became the first blind person ever to complete an N4/N5 Secretarial course successfully at the Technical College in Worcester in 1987. This was, however, not to be the end of her academic pursuits. Today she holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Languages obtained from the University of Potchefstroom in 1992. In view of her academic success Mrs Smit has always aspired to realise her full potential regarding her career since her appointment in 1993. In collaboration with Mrs Karin Swart, a career guidance counsellor at DCM, Mrs Smit identified a number of career goals. The first of these was skills development in the form of a course in MS Office at the Optima College (National Council for the Blind) at the beginning of 2005.

A further aim of the career management programme is to expose candidates to the various fields of employment that they have identified during consultation. Mrs Smit made good use of two opportunities that came her way to gain experience in the secretarial and administrative fields respectively at DCM. The first was that of secretary in the office of Dr Herman Kasselman, Director Career Management, during August/September the same year, and the second was in an administrative capacity in the Career Centre, located at DCM, from 2 March to 6 April 2006. This paved the way for the developments which were to follow.

During a brief interview during which Brig Gen Coetzee met Mrs Smit for the first time, he decided without hesitation that he was going to grant her the opportunity to act as his secretary. Next it was agreed that Mrs Smit would be detached from her current unit for a period of three months in order to fill this post. Thanks to the fervent support from her immediate supervisor, WO1 Dian Gründlingh and Officer Commanding, CMIS MOD, Col Anschen de Jager, approval for Mrs Smit’s detached duty was obtained expeditiously. Since the beginning of March 2007 she has excelled in performing the duties of a fully functional secretary - living up to and even exceeding the expectations of all parties involved.

One could quite easily ask how she goes about her daily tasks in view of the limitations that her impairment might present. The answer is simple: When people decide to work together as a team, many supposed obstacles are overcome without much difficulty. Between the two of them, the General and Mrs Smit, they have worked out a method of going about the business of the day. The various documents he wants typed are recorded on a digital voice recorder. Mrs Smit then types the documents on an ordinary PC equipped with adaptive screen-reading software (JAWS), which allows her almost complete access to the different Microsoft applications. She makes use of a Perkins Brailler to take down the minutes at meetings. She is capable of faxing and photocopying documents.
While women are aptly demonstrating that they are capable of serving their country, and daring to do so, they are still battling to win over male chauvinism. WO1 Ntombizandile Jojwana believes that women are a few steps closer to reaching their goal of gender equality.

She started serving her country with pride and dignity when she joined the SA Air Force in 1998. In 2000 and 2001 she completed the Personnel Clerk and Senior Personnel Clerk courses at Personnel Service School in Thaba Tshwane.

WO1 Jojwana worked at Directorate Combat System in 2000 as a Senior Personnel Clerk and her duties were to manage the directorate’s internal services, administration, to inform personnel about orders and signals and to supervise the personnel clerks. In 2003 she became a Chief Personnel Clerk for the Defence Reserve Force to manage the registry of the Reserve Force.

She is currently working at the SA Air Force’s Directorate Human Resources Services, and her job entails screening letters of application of pilots and navigators. She also writes letters of acknowledgement, does bus ticket bookings for the applicants who live outside Gauteng and arranges accommodation and catering for them, and ensures that they arrive in time for the interviews.

When asked about the problems she encounters in her field of work she says some of the applicants send results with which she and her crew are not familiar. Then they have to send them to the Military Academy for re-evaluation.

WO1 Jojwana said the most anxious moment in her career was the outcome of the results for pilots and navigators’ selection. Their main is to nurture young pilots for the SA Air Force. She also told Ad Astra that she would like to see herself as the first female Warrant Officer of the SANDF.

She resides in Thaba Tshwane in Pretoria and is married to Lungisa. They have three children: a daughter, Lorna (24), and twin boys, Unathi and Sibabalwe (13). She has seven siblings and is the first child of Mr Walton Nontshulwana and Mrs Gladnett Thame.
Four Reserve Force gems working at DHQ

By Col Lynn Nilsen, SSO Project Engineering

Our youngsters joined the Reserve Force in 2002, having heard about the Reserves through family members or friends who were in service. They have all received in-post training to do different types of work as they often have to fill in for Permanent Force members who are on course or on leave. In the six years that they have worked between 90 and 180 days a year they have accumulated experience and skills, especially in the registry.

The four Reserve Force members (6 Signal Regiment) are on detached duty at Defence Headquarters (DHQ) in Pretoria, namely Lance Corporal (L Cpl) Lizah Hobyane, Signalman (Smn) Volene Daniels and Smn Lorraine Motileng. They work in the registry at the Directorate Chief Human Resources, while Smn Rachel Matlala works in the registry at Chief of Corporate Staff.

Four young Reserve Force members working at DHQ, fltr: L Cpl Lizah Hobyane, Smn Rachel Matlala, Smn Lorraine Motileng and Smn Volene Daniels.

They are hoping to continue their service in the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and to do further courses. In the meantime they are a valuable asset to the SANDF.

We thank them for their dedication and willingness to offer their services and for playing an important role by filling some of the critical posts within the SANDF.

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Her love for the blue uniform inspires her

By Nwabisa Dlevu, Ad Astra
Photo: WO2 Christo Crous

Respect and discipline run through the veins of this woman. Her drive to be the best at what she does is enough inspiration to reach her goals. With a dream of seeing herself in the blue uniform one day, she set out to achieve just that.

This phenomenal young woman did not see herself working for any department other than the Department of Defence. She literally saw herself in the SA Air Force uniform.

L Cpl Raynee Smit (21) works as an Operational Clerk at the SA Air Force Headquarters in Pretoria. Her duties include answering telephone calls and helping people at the reception desk. “I am a hard worker, dedicated to the SANDF, especially the SA Air Force,” she said with pride.

Her ultimate dream is to become an officer. Her strength comes from her enthusiasm for her working environment.

She was born in Caledon in the Western Cape. At 10 years she relocated to Porterville (also in the Western Cape). Both her parents work at the National Correctional Services. She has two sisters: Elouise (19) and Lucrécia (13). Elouise is currently doing the Basic Military Training Course at the Air Force Gymnasium.

In her matric year she was a prefect, and played in the first netball team. She completed her matric in 2003 at Porterville High School. In 2004 she was employed by another private company as a merchandiser, doing stock control.

She was brought up in a strict family and keeping time was very important. Thus she went through the Basic Military Training Course extremely well. “The one thing that drove me to become a soldier was particularly the discipline I found within the SA Air Force,” she said.

L Cpl Smit joined the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in May 2005 and did her Basic Military Training Course at the Air Force Gymnasium. After completing that course, she did an entrance control course for two months.

L Cpl Raynee Smit said she joined the SANDF because of the discipline she found within the SA Air Force.
First female drum major for the SANDF

By Capt Benedict Sibande, Director of Music SA Army Band Limpopo
Photo: WO2 Nathan Titus

Cpl Arlene Titus was born in Eerste River, Cape Town, on 2 June 1981. Coming from a religious background she joined the Youth Brigade of the Dutch Reformed Church at a very young age. This was where the love and enjoyment of music was to begin. Here she was given the opportunity to travel throughout the country to participate in brigade music and marching competitions.

She matriculated at Kleinvlei Secondary in 1999 and joined the SANDF in January 2004 as a Military Skills Development Student. After completing her six month Basic Training at 3 SA Infantry Battalion in Kimberley, she joined the SA Army Band Cape Town where she was trained and utilised as a percussionist for concerts and parades. While in Cape Town she studied oboe with Johanna Matei at the University of Stellenbosch and music theory with Ms Cheryl George. Cpl Titus qualified herself as a Senior Musician on percussion and oboe in October 2005.

As the SA Army Band Cape Town was overstaffed she was transferred to the SA Army Band Limpopo in January 2006 as a Lance Corporal and appointed as the first ever female drum major for the SANDF. Not only is she a multi-instrumentalist, but also a profound vocalist who pleases any crowd while performing at concerts. Cpl Titus is responsible for most of the band’s administrative duties and was promoted to the rank of Corporal in January this year.

About being the only woman in the band, she says: “I enjoy working with my husband, WO2 Nathan Titus, a Group Leader (Trumpet Section) of the band, who always inspires me to seize every opportunity and to achieve greater heights. Besides my challenging job I enjoy relaxing at home with him and our two beautiful children, Naylene (7) and Nathan Jnr (6 months).

“I did not know that one day I would be the first woman in the history of the SANDF to be appointed as a drum major, and therefore would like to motivate all women in the SA Core of Bandsmen to develop themselves and to believe in their abilities, to make use of opportunities that may come their way and never to stand back through lack of faith,” said Cpl Titus.

If music be the food of life: play on, play on, play on!

Left: Arlene Titus enjoying herself on the drums as a percussionist for the SA Army Band Limpopo.
hat started as a military career at the SA Army Women’s College in George in 1996 turned out to be an adventure making living worthwhile. These are the words of Maj Lucille Gallant who is a company commander at the Military Skills Development (MSD) Wing of the Infantry School.

Maj Gallant is trained as an Infanteer and has more experience in a variety of military skills in the short time that she has been in the SANDF. She has presented Hearth and Home Training in the Northern Cape, evaluated the combat readiness of the commandos and the Army Conventional Reserve (ACR) during Exercise DIAMOND conducted by the former Northern Cape Command. This included Counter-insurgency (Coin) Urban and Coin Rural operations and she was also involved with operations conducted jointly with the SA Police Service (SAPS). She was also responsible for the SANDF support in disaster management, specifically at the Kimberley International Airport.

Her career underwent a major change when she was transferred to the Army Support Base Pietersburg in 2002 where she was appointed as the SO3 Occupational and Health Safety (OHS). This did not put this small bottle of dynamite off, as she used this opportunity to study OHS and labour laws. This ensured that she received the award for the Best Service Centre Manager for two consecutive years.

In 2005 Maj Gallant was transferred to Infantry School as the company commander at the MSD Wing. Here she used the opportunity to train the young soldiers to become the best Infanteers in the SA Army and this led to her company (Alpha Company) being awarded a medal as the best company.

“It is not easy to be a commander, because you must have an honest understanding of who you are, what you know, and what you can do,” says Maj Gallant. She then took a bold step and deployed with 5 SA Infantry Battalion as a company commander to Burundi. Her company was responsible for the protection of United Nations (UN) personnel and equipment in the Cititoke Province, approximately 60 km from the RSA Battalion HQ. This company made history in the re-hatting parade where the UN handed the Burundi operation over to the African Union (AU).

Maj Gallant says that the women in the SANDF are fortunate in having the opportunities, as most other countries that they deployed with in Burundi only had women serving in the medical services.

This young mother of Jordyn, a one-year-old girl, and wife of Maj Wayne Gallant, has shown that it can be done. She has indeed shown that female Infanteers can succeed without losing their femininity. Her success can be attributed to her philosophy of life: “To be successful you have to convince your followers, not yourself or your superiors, that you are worthy of being followed”. With women such as Maj Lucille Gallant, the role of women can only increase in the Infantry.

Could this be a dream come true? >> from page 35

and knows the building well enough to dispatch documents and to escort visitors. Brig Gen Coetzee becomes quite animated when he enthusiastically describes the virtues of his newly-found secretary, and his obvious satisfaction with the quality of her work is supported by his request for a three months’ extension of her detached duty. She is truly grateful for the opportunity that has come her way, but treasures the hope that she will eventually be able to secure a permanent appointment in the directorate. This is a truly remarkable story told about truly remarkable people, which needed to be told to the outside world so that they can see the remarkable things that happen in the lives of remarkable yet sometimes unrecognised people in the community. And as stories go, the ending is a happy one at times, but more than often the ending is a sad one. May the ending of this remarkable tale be a happy one ...
Not every sailor becomes a coxswain

Being a coxswain is one of the greatest ambitions of many sailors in any navy. It means even more for women in the armed forces due to their previous disadvantages. For many years the status of coxswain was thought to be unattainable by women. Even now, not every sailor can be given this opportunity and only a few are chosen.

In July 2006 Chief Petty Officer (CPO) Naeema Sonday assumed this position on board the inshore patrol vessel, SAS TERN. She is only the second woman to have held this position on board a naval vessel. Her appointment confirms the SA Navy’s commitment to transformation through the empowerment of young men and women.

CPO Sonday is happily married and has two children. Her husband is also a Chief Petty Officer, but at SANAD in Simon’s Town. She enjoys walking and has been practising aerobics for most of the past fifteen years. She holds many certificates, including that of Advanced Military Law in which she came first in her class.

CPO Sonday gets to travel often, because as a coxswain she is obliged to attend meetings at which other coxswains and masters discuss issues that occur in their daily work. They come up with solutions due to their combined experiences and exchange tips. She says going to sea is not a problem for her family because her ship only goes out for a maximum of two weeks at a time.

The amazing thing about this woman is that she never intended to join the SA Navy, but would rather have preferred a career in the SA Police Service (SAPS). After her friends all signed up at a military recruitment centre she followed suit. Unfortunately none of her friends were accepted, but she has worked here ever since. She firmly believes that good things come to all those who wait and that things always happen for a reason.

Before becoming a crew member of SAS TERN, CPO Sonday worked as an electronic warfare (EW) facilitator at SAS SIMONSBERG. She has completed her NQF Level 4 Facilitators, Assessors and Moderators Course in Education and Training Development. She is also planning to study law next year if her work obligations permit her to do so.

Astonishingly, CPO Sonday never applied to be a coxswain. She received a phone call from the Training Commander of her unit and incredibly saw the signal the next day. When asked about how she felt about this appointment she said: “It is an honour and a privilege to be chosen from among so many excellent Non-commissioned Officers in the SA Navy. It still feels a bit weird, but I really love it!”

This appointment is a symbol of the trust and recognition given to her by her superiors. We hope to see her succeed in all her future endeavours, while she diligently strives to reach her dream position of future Fleet Master.
Flight Sergeant who leads by example

By Free State Falcons
Photo: Warrant Officer Alex Henning

Flight Sergeant Ethel Lemmetjies of Air Force Base Bloemspruit is the bright shining star for the youth in the Free State, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape. Her passion for children, and making a difference in their lives, is really outstanding. She has dedicated her life and time to make life better for the youth.

F Sgt Lemmetjies took the leading role in three provinces to bring the SA Air Force to the youngsters and communities with the Siyandiza Young Falcons Programme of the SA Air Force, a role that she plays with great ease and success. Through this programme and her dedication and motivation the children are more willing to choose maths and science as subjects.

One of her Falcons was awarded as the top matriculant of the year in the Free State. One of the first Falcons on the programme of the Free State, 2LT Phetogo Molawa, received her pilot wings in 2006. Amn Jaco Kok, one of her Falcons of 2006, finished “Basics” on 20 July 2007, and will start with his flying training in 2007 after completing his officers formative course.

This well-known programme grows in size in the three provinces, and its success is due to F Sgt Lemmetjies’ hard work and her determination to make a difference in the lives of the youth. She had many successes with the programme. She started with 10 children. There are now 120. This is in addition to the thousands of youngsters who visit the science fairs and career exhibitions every year.

F Sgt Lemmetjies received a Golden Award during the Free State Province Premier’s Excellence Award ceremony for her involvement with the youth through the Siyandiza Young Falcons Programme. She taught us that in these difficult times where one is not sure even of tomorrow, it is important to hold on to one’s dreams, faith and religion, and the support that one receives from family and friends and to keep on doing good and being the best one can ever be. She always reminds us that we must follow our dreams and must never be afraid to do so, that each one of us is unique in our own special way, and that we must rise from our background, but never forget were we come from.

Through the Siyandiza Programme she gives us the freedom to be who we are. As a single mother of three daughters, and a grandmother of a boy and a girl, she has done a sterling job of playing mom and dad, but not only for her children but for all of us who form part of the programme. She is strong, courageous and giving, a pillar in life for all our youngsters who come into contact with her. She is a mother, a friend and most of all a woman.
Jennifer Ann Esterhuysen joined the SA Navy at the age of 32 as a non-uniformed member on 6 June 1974. Mrs Esterhuysen came from the then Transvaal where she grew up. In 1963 she decided to relocate to Cape Town. She got married to a wonderful husband, Warrant Officer M. Esterhuysen, who she met in the SA Navy and who was pensioned in 1990.

She said her upbringing was very humble and on this account she developed into a well-groomed, spiritual woman. One factor that stands out is her strong sense of spirituality, for example she says that God has always been her anchor. She also mentioned that as she understood it a woman was never meant to be a fearful, hopeless person, but a strong human character in charge of two worlds: that of her family, including herself, and the world as a whole.

She is currently employed at Naval Base Simon's Town where she works in the Naval Base Ship Fund and Trust Account Section. Mrs Esterhuysen says she loves and enjoys her work. She has achieved a Bravo Zulu Good Service Award and a 20 Year Good Service Certificate.

She said that what inspired her was that the SA Navy kept her active. This is a remarkable woman and, even though now in her 60s, she is up to any challenge and nothing gets in her way. She is a person who knows what to do and when to do it because of her vast experience and good working background.

In speaking of life and her experiences her vision soon becomes clear. She is a woman of honour who has had over 32 years’ successful service in the SA Navy. Mrs Esterhuysen says that at present there are many opportunities for women and things are very different in the working environment than they were in the past when women had no say concerning work related issues.

Mrs Esterhuysen had this to say to all women, both young and old: they must love their work. They must always put their minds and souls into everything they do and eventually they will reap the benefits of their labours.

She said the SA Navy had granted her opportunities that she used for her own good and that of the SA Navy. This shows her to be a woman of integrity.
Reserve member excels on computers

By Solomon Kotane, Ad Astra
Photo: WO2 Christo Crous

A young computer whiz kid, who has in the past three years been trotting from one work section to the other, has ultimately found a niche on the computers of the SA Air Force.

Lt Mabatho Bapela (22) had for two years been honing her skills on the computers at Tshwane North College, then she obtained more than 90% in Information Processing in her final examinations. She was doing a National N6 Certificate in Management Assistance. Her other subjects included communications, computer operations and office practice.

"The discipline and physical appearance of the SA Air Force members appealed to me when I was still young," Lt Bapela said excitedly. She added: "I still excel in the Air Force drill." She said that her superiors were very helpful in whatever she tried to do. At the Air Force Gymnasium she excelled with 92% in the overall practical result, and at the Air Force College she obtained an 87% pass mark.

Lt Bapela is a job analyst at Directorate Management and Renewal Services. Currently her section is evaluating the existing posts in the SA Air Force.

Candidate Officer making her mark

By Nwabisa Dlevu, Ad Astra
Photo: WO2 Christo Crous

Working hard and putting your education above everything are Candidate Officer (CO) Gama’s words of advice to those who dream of becoming soldiers one day. She was born and raised at Driekoppies, Nelspruit, in Mpumalanga Province.

Nonhlanhla Gama started school in 1988 at Tifu Primary School, where she completed Grades 1 to 7. Next she completed Grades 8 to 10 at Shongwe High School, and matriculated at Suikerland High School.

In 2001 she studied at the Vaal University of Technology and obtained the National Diploma in Human Resource Management. Currently she is studying for a Bachelor of Technology in Human Resources with the University of South Africa (Unisa).

She joined the SA Air Force in May 2005 as a Reserve Force member. She was appointed as a Sergeant, and did clerical work.

In July 2006 she completed the Officer Orientation Course and became a Candidate Officer (CO). She now works as a job analyst and conducts job evaluations and interviews. The challenge she faces is doing interviews with busy senior officers.

"I consider myself lucky that I am one of the five people who do this kind of job. I have learnt a lot about the work I do," she said. She dreams of one day being promoted to a Senior Staff Officer. CO Gama is the second child of seven children, two sisters and four brothers.
Environmental support to military mission

By Lt Col Elsa Daniels,
SO1 Facilities Communication

"Owing to pressures on the utilisation of land and encroachment on military areas, the chances of acquiring alternative land for military training are non-existent. Therefore, the impact of military activities on the environment is one of the major challenges to the future of realistic military training," according to Commander Adri Liebenberg, the current acting SSO Environmental Services at the Directorate Facilities, Logistics Division.

With eighteen years of service and as the only one of four full-time environmental officers left that was recruited in 1989 with the establishment of a permanent structure for environmental management in the department, Cdr Liebenberg, appointed as the SO1 Environmental Policy, is currently the longest serving member in Environmental Services in the department.

She was born in Gauteng and grew up in Wynberg in the Western Cape Province as the elder of two children. After completing her school career at the Voortrekker High School in Kenilworth in 1983, she attended the University of Stellenbosch, obtaining a Bachelor in Science (BSc) degree in Natural Sciences followed by a BSc Hons degree in Zoology in 1987. In 1988 she started working as an administrative clerk at the Directorate Radiation Control of the Department of National Health, where she was responsible for the registration of non-ionising equipment containing lasers and for the reporting of cases of over-exposure of health workers to x-rays and other types of radiation pollution.

She joined the SA Navy in 1989 and completed naval induction training and the officers course in 1991. Her first appointment was as Staff Officer Environmental Services at the Navy Office, a position she occupied until 1998. In 1993 she was awarded the Conservamus Floating Trophy for Environmental Services in the DOD for developing the first naval policy on the conservation of the marine environment. Following the transformation process in 1998 Cdr Liebenberg was transferred to the Logistics Division and appointed as SO1 Environmental Policy. In 2000 she was involved in the drafting and promulgation of the Corporate Environmental Policy Statement for Defence and was instrumental in the compilation of the First Edition Environmental Implementation Plan (EIP) for Defence as required by the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), 1998 (Act No 107 of 1998).

Cdr Liebenberg completed the Junior Staff Course at the SA Air Force College in 2002 and the Joint Senior Command and Staff Programme at the SA National War College in 2005. She was the leader of the Environmental Team responsible for initiating a programme on integrating Environmental Considerations during Military Operations in 2003 during Exercise SEBOKA at the SA Army Combat Training Centre near Lohatlha. She was also responsible for the development of a comprehensive Guide to Environmental Compliance for Officers Commanding to empower such personnel and their staff to ensure adherence to national and international environmental legislative provisions. For this achievement she was awarded the Conservamus Trophy for the second time in 2003.

She represents the DOD on the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism ad hoc sub-committee on Environmental Law Reform and is responsible for the development and implementation of an Environmental Management System for Defence. During 2006 she was appointed as the SA project leader for the development of a joint guidebook on Integrated Waste Management in conjunction with the United States DOD under the auspices of the Environmental Security Working Group of the US-SA Defence Committee.

Cdr Liebenberg says: "Environmental personnel are first and foremost soldiers and this contributes substantially to delivering effective environmental support to the military mission. The number of female members currently involved in managing the environment makes a definite difference in ensuring the sustainable utilisation of military training areas. A positive "never say die" attitude combined with a pro-active approach to achieving goals will provide the platform for a successful career in Military Integrated Environmental Management." The rest is up to ourselves ...

Commander Adi Liebenberg,
Acting SSO Environmental Services.
Focus on women

Meet the first female chaplain in our Navy

Chaplain (Cpln) Dudu Mpisana is not just another woman from KwaZulu-Natal. She is one of only two female chaplains in the SA Navy out of nine. Currently she is working at Naval Base Simon’s Town, but may be temporarily attached to any naval ship if the need arises.

Her role when detached to a ship is to offer spiritual guidance, support and counselling to the ship’s company. In addition to this she hosts voluntary church parades in the morning and a chaplain’s period once a week. During the chaplain’s period members may discuss any topic that is troubling their souls. She is also on standby for counseling during her free time. While out at sea she holds morning devotions on a daily basis after wakey-wakey has been piped over the main broadcast. On board she leads normal services on Sundays and often organises various prayer meetings.

When SAS ISANDLWANA sailed for South America on 28 October 2006 to participate in Exercise ATLASUR VI, with the navies of Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina she went along. During her deployment she visited Buenos Aires, Chile and Monte Video. While in Chile the ship visited the Port of Valparaiso where it participated in EXPO NAVAL. (The Chaplain returned 72 days later on 20 December 2006.)

She has a Bachelor Degree in Theology (BTH) from the University of Natal and also a university diploma in Information Studies. Chaplain Mpisana was appointed a chaplain in 2002. She was called on by God to serve and become the first female Chaplain in the SA Navy. You have to be an ordained civilian minister before you can become a chaplain. She was ordained in the Christian Fellowship Church in Pine Town near Durban. She was chosen to be a chaplain because of the leadership role she plays within her community.

Chaplains are religious and spiritual leaders, teachers and interpreters of their traditions and faith. When not conducting worship services, they organise, supervise, and lead religious education programmes for their units. Her family lives with her in Cape Town but it is not easy because she is on call 24 hours a day. She has three brothers and two sisters and is the eldest among them. Her parents are very proud of her achievements. She loves to work with people and usually tries to give divine guidance. She looks after the spiritual needs and well-being of the members in the SA Navy.

“Do to others as you would have them do to you. Put God forth in everything you do,” she recited. She is excited to come to work because she loves to save peoples’ souls. It can be stressful, but she says that she will never go AWOL.

The padre will be sailing with the SAS PROTEA to Saldanha and might go with SAS ISANDLWANA to Egypt in August. “If people feel they have the calling they should apply at the Chaplains Service, especially if they are female. “ Plant your name in church and the rest will be between you and God,” were the words that concluded her interview.
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