FREE ... But pass it on when you are done

SOUTH AFRICAN

SOLDIER

67 Minutes for Madiba
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CONTRIBUTIONS:
Although all possible care is taken with articles, the editorial staff cannot take any responsibility for lost articles and photographs.

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KZN Military Tattoo celebrates military culture and music

AmHu KZN spreading the Madiba Magic

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Engineering students doing their practical phase

Focus on transformation management

SAMHS members put their sporting skills to the test

STREET ADDRESS
Defence Headquarters
cor Nossob & Boeing St
Erasmuskloof
PRETORIA

POSTAL ADDRESS
SA SOLDIER
Private Bag X158
PRETORIA, 0001

TELEPHONE
Tel: (012) 355 6341
Fax: (012) 355 6399
e-mail:sasoldier@mil.za
website: www.dod.mil.za

2005 - Winner of the Government Communicator of the Year Award (GCIS).
2005 - Winner of the National Ubungcweti Award (GCIS).

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor: Ms Nelda Pienaar
Deputy Editor: Mr Lufuno Netshirembe
Editorial Staff: Mr Kgabo Mashamaite
S Sgt Lebogang Thhaole
Sgt Elias Mahuma
Cpl Ally Rakoma
Cpl Itumeleng Makhubela

Text Editor: Mr Eugene Muller
Translation Consultant: Directorate Language Services
Distribution: Mr jim Tshabalala
Tel: (012) 355 6341

Layout & Design: Mr Werner van der Westhuizen

REPRODUCTION, PRINTING & DISTRIBUTION:
Shereno Printers
10 Atlas Road
Dunswart, Boksburg
Tel: (011) 894 4150
Fax: (011) 894 4153
email:nirans@shereno.co.za

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FRONT COVER: L Cpl Zodwa Makweya, a member of Defence Corporate Communication, makes sure that the donated road safety vest fits Boikhutso Molekoa (6) a Grade 1 learner of Mahobotte Primary School in Lefatheng Village, north of Hammanskraal. Read on page 23 how Defence Corporate Communication members honoured Madiba during their 67 Minutes of community service. (Photo: S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole)

For the latest news on defence matters in South Africa, visit our website at: www.dod.mil.za
Most of this edition is dedicated to Mr Nelson Mandela – our much loved Madiba – who turned 94 this year on 18 July.

Our icon’s birthday has been declared International Mandela Day. Every year on Madiba’s birthday the whole world honours him through 67 minutes of selfless community service on behalf of the less fortunate.

This edition is a real page-turner. It is packed with inspirational articles about our members spreading and sharing the spirit of UBUNGU while doing their 67 Minutes of community service in honour of Madiba.

Let us persevere with these endeavours. Do all you can to love your neighbour. Go all out to lend a hand to your fellow man.

For at least the next week or two try to be a sincere neighbour to two neighbours you like and a neighbour you do not like.

Think of the example of the Good Samaritan in the Bible who helped a Jew in need. In that era they definitely were not friends. Therefore his good deed was out of the ordinary.

We should put aside our differences, jealousy, bitterness and self-importance and rather focus on being a sincere neighbour.

Let us focus on the contagious power of kindness. Always remember the strength of a gentle heart.

Make every day a Mandela Day.

*Nelda Pienaar
Editor SA Soldier

* Translation to Sepedi by Mr Kgabo Mashamaite.
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IT IS EASY TO BE A GOOD SOLDIER

Soldiering is a way of life and not just another job. Fortunately it is voluntary in this country and could be a lifetime career for those who so choose.

One is most of the time worried about those individuals who have chosen to be in the military, but who find it stupid (according to them) to be loyal, disciplined, principled and observe good values.

It does not matter what you as an individual are saying to defend yourself and/or justify your obese, clumsy and lazy appearance in your military uniform; it remains shabby and unacceptable.

We all want to be seen to be smart and appearing acceptable in accordance with the standards as set by the society that we are part of. We spend money on those things that we believe enhance our acceptability to the society. We even go a step further and compare and compete with others in this respect. If all of the above are true, then I am convinced that we all want to be seen as smart, whether in uniform or civilian clothes.

It is expected of all military members to be physically and mentally fit at all times. One might say that it is only fair to expect a leader to set an example in this regard. A leader that is setting a good example in terms of appearance and behaviour is easily followed and does not need to demand respect as he or she is by mere appearance and good behaviour admired and finds it easier to influence those under him or her. A shabby leader finds it difficult to perform some of the physical activities, such as drill, which is required of us as soldiers.

Other people might argue that leaders need to have brains and brains only to enable them to lead. Fact is: not military leaders.

A good soldier does not only take responsibility for his or her own competency, but also for his or her own health and fitness. Be worried when you gain weight.

Cleanliness and hygienic conditions of own surroundings whether base, unit, squadron, training area, office, tent, vehicle, equipment or uniform are personal responsibilities of individual soldiers. Each soldier is responsible for ensuring that his or her uniform fits well, in other words not too small and tight or too big and shabby.

It is one’s personal responsibility to shine everything that shines, including shoes, every day. Soldiers iron better than civilians, therefore do it personally and look smarter.

Wear your headress, make-up, nails and jewellery in accordance with the regulations and look smart. Wear your medals and awards with pride. Keep them clean and neatly arranged.

Good soldiers are those who are well trained, competent, disciplined, loyal, patriotic, physically fit, neat and proud of their uniform. Because they are soldiers, they make sure that their behaviour is at all times beyond reproach. They behave in the manner that they do because they respect and love themselves, their organisation, nation and the country that they serve and represent.

A good soldier is a good citizen.

SCWÓ L.D. Tshabalala, Warrant Officer of the SA Air Force

THE HEART OF A SOLDIER

He knelt and kissed his brown eyed girl
He hugged her close there by the plane.
A war raged on a distant soil;
Who knew when he would be home again?

Duty comes first in time of war
Families must wait for it to end
When a nation calls its sons to fight,
How soon young boys turn into men.

He waved goodbye to wife and child,
That brown eyed girl and his delight
To another world he now was bound
With others who would wage the first

Dudan Darfur — what matter the place?
Geography cares not what the stakes;
He touched the cross there on his chest
And prayed for peace for all their sakes

Fierce raged the fight and months dragged on
Until one day he heard the call
There was a need for volunteers
To free trapped friends within the walls.

“I’ll go, he said, and never thought
Of his home on a distant shore;
He had duties pledged to keep them safe
Like so many had done before.

The air was thick with acrid smoke
Scattered rubble lay all about
The fight was fierce; death stalked the street;
Then there arose a frightened shout.

“Hold your fire!” clearly came the call
A small child walked into the street.
Brown eyes wide as a scarlet doe’s
Debris, like rain, fell at her feet.

Her dark eyes spoke of war’s sharp pain,
Eyes of a daughter he once held tight.
“Don’t shoot!” he yelled and ran to her,
But what stops bullets once in flight?

They pierced his heart but not his soul
He took her safe away from harm
The firming ceased from friend and foe
As they met by his fallen form.

The child came forth and knelt by him
The soldiers circled them around.
Her brown eyes wept she took his hand
Only silence reigned throughout the town.

No more fighting was done that day,
For both sides saw what faith had done
Love so strong in a father’s heart
Fear for life could not overcome.

Those brown eyes wait for him at home
Mother and child both watch the road.
A man’s love stretched beyond their arms.

Seragi Mothapo, Oudtshoorn

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. 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.
A FALLEN HERO

The late Lt Col Nhlanhla James Dlamini. (When the photo was taken he was still a Major.) (Photo: Lt Vusi Masilela)

Lt Col Nhlanhla James Dlamini, who was recently transferred to Pretoria to work as SO1 Combat-readiness Force Training, passed away on 14 July 2012 after he had been hospitalised for a couple of days. He worked at 5 SA Infantry Battalion from 17 February 2003 to 4 June 2012. 5 SA Infantry Battalion Officers and unit members went down to Kwa-Mashu on 21 July 2012 to pay their last respects to this hero and father figure. May his soul rest in peace.

Lt Vusi Masilela, email

MY EXPERIENCE IN THE SA NAVY

My experience in the SA Navy is an ongoing process that has been building me up to be a better person, a person who will stand for what is right and do my best for my beloved country, South Africa. In all the journeys I have been through this one stands out the most. I have given up my civilian life and have given myself to my country.

On my arrival at the SA Navy it felt as if I was a child taking my first steps again, everything was new. I met cruel people at first, or that is what I thought, but who I now see as father and mother figures in my life. These were the instructors. This learning opportunity that I am currently undergoing is useful not only in the military, but also outside the military.

I have thus come to realise that my purpose is to be a solution, not a problem in the SA Navy. I am from a town where there are swimming pools, but without knowledge of how to swim it is clear to me that as youth we do not make use of what is present. My first day in the SA Navy’s swimming pool was a nightmare, I could not even walk in the pool from fear, but now I am water friendly and even enjoy the “practicals” at the jetty, such as “man overboard”.

WRITE TO SA SOLDIER

I want to salute you for your good work. We enjoy knowing what is happening around the RSA and outside our borders. Your team is making sure that we are updated. I invite soldiers to use their talent positively by writing to our magazine and keeping the fire burning.

Cpl M. Guduza, Potchefstroom

A SOLDIER’S PHONE

I doubt if there is a single military unit within the entire DOD that has not shown signs of “poor disciplinary behaviour” as a result of soldiers being preoccupied with their mobile phones. Examples of this include soldiers in uniform walking and talking or texting, using their phones during conferences, lectures, church parades and at other military functions, such as formal dinners.

I place all the culprits in one group, as this phenomenon includes soldiers of all ranks - officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and privates. I ask myself: Is it truly a case of poor discipline or is it merely a case of “client reaction” for those that have fallen for the contemporary marketing trap of purchasing a specific phone that offers “free” Internet and text messaging services? After all, a free service should be exploited to the full.

Unfortunately, the aforementioned behaviour contradicts military discipline, pride and dress regulations directly. Therefore one has to ask how this can be addressed in the DOD today. As I see it, the answer is very simple. It has been addressed already within military policy (see dress regulations). More important should be how does one, as a soldier, adapt to this situation of enjoying the benefits offered by mobile phones without contradicting military policy and discipline? My answer: self-control.

Self-control in this sense is much the same as the well-known military term, radio silence. If radio silence is ordered during an operation, it must be adhered to. If it has been broken prematurely, for whatever reason, security might be compromised. In other words, the radio should not simply be used for a specific time during the operation. The same applies to the use of mobile phones. As soon as one’s mobile phone is not appropriate for the military occasion, it should not be used. Therefore military professionalism should not be compromised. No professional soldier should be told not to use his or her mobile phone; he or she should know when and where to use his or her mobile phone, and apply self-control.

Capt J.C. Pieterse, SA Army Gymnasium, Heidelberg

T R I B U T E T O A F A L L E N H E R O

Lt Vusi Masilela, email

May his soul rest in peace.

2003 to 4 June 2012. 5 SA Infantry Battalion Officers and unit members went down to Kwa-Mashu on 21 July 2012 to pay their last respects to this hero and father figure. May his soul rest in peace.

Terminology: The high standard of discipline is also another plus factor. I did not learn that easily though because I had to remove from my mind all the bad things I used to do and engage myself with what the SA Navy required of me. This took me longer to accept then the rest of the lessons I had been taught because I had a hard time being receptive to someone always telling me what to do and when to do it. As time passed it become a way of life.

Being in the SA Navy at SAS SALDANHA is not just a journey it is my new way of life in which I am able to appreciate all the people regardless of race, gender or age. We are all the same and the most important thing that brings us together is working towards the same goal which is to fight at sea to win at sea and to be unchallenged at sea.

Seaman D.J. Thateng, Saldanha

We enjoy knowing what is happening around the RSA and outside our borders. Your team is making sure that we are updated. I invite soldiers to use their talent positively by writing to our magazine and keeping the fire burning.

Cpl M. Guduza, Potchefstroom

Thateng, Saldanha

7 A U G U S T  2 0 1 2

letters to the editor

S A S O L D I E R
SANDF SOLDIERS

You are the bright shining light on top of Mount Kilimanjaro
You are the Messiah to the African continent
You lead in front like King Shaka
You are the peacemaker in Africa
You unite the Africans
SANDF soldiers Viva!

Discipline is your daily bread
Discipline paves the way for you to lead
Discipline is in your veins
Discipline is your commander
Discipline makes you to be respected
SANDF soldiers Viva!

Your enemies tremble when they see your presence
Your presence in any country is noticed
Your fellow soldiers from other countries respect you
Your sweet smell makes enemies to forgive each other
Your passion for peace is recognised
SANDF soldiers Viva!

Spread the gospel of peace around the world
Spread your arms to help those who are in need of peace
Spread your arms to welcome those who join together for peace
Spread your arms to help fight tribalism among Africans
Spread your arms to stop tribal wars in Africa
SANDF soldiers Viva!

WO1 G. Joni, SANDF COLET

ROAD TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

The road to righteousness is characterised by uprightness or morality. Many people have asked themselves why they have to make a difference in other people’s lives! As individuals we sometimes tend to be immoral. We only consider our own lives. As 10 SA Infantry Battalion is about to go on deployment in the Sudan, I have interviewed some of the Military Skills Development System (MSDS) members who will be leaving their loved ones behind to go on a peacekeeping mission to the Sudan. So you can imagine the state of mind they are in. These members seemed to be enchanted by the thought of exploring another African country as this will be their first experience outside the borders of South Africa, but as for the idea of being away for approximately six months, it gave rise to mixed emotions.

10 SA Infantry Battalion members thanked the Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, for uplifting their spirits during his visit by indicating to them the bravery that comes with dedication to serve as soldiers. We salute you! CO E.M Marema, Mahikeng

43 SA BRIGADE HONOURS MADIBA

On 18 July 2012 members of 43 SA Brigade Headquarters visited Kodumela Primary School in Pyramid to honour the legacy of Mr Nelson Mandela on his birthday.

We were warmly received by the Principal, Ms Mapula Rammuki, and her eight teaching staff members.

The 234 learners were all gathered together when Chaplain Lentikile Phokontsi opened with Scripture reading and prayer. He also delivered a motivational speech and gave an explanation of the meaning and intention of International Mandela Day. It was heart-warming to witness their knowledge of Mr Mandela and it gave me a better appreciation of the job teachers are doing on a daily basis.

Our General Officer Commanding, Brig Gen Lawrence Smith, visited the school while the brigade members were busy doing their good deeds. Members were painting classrooms, cutting grass and doing general cleaning tasks. The Brigade donated the paint and used its own lawnmowers and other appliances to perform all these activities. Members were periodically entertained by the learners as they sang and danced.

One could see the joy and appreciation on their faces.

Money was collected from the Brigade members and fruit, sweets and snacks were bought and shared among all the learners.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Brig Gen Smith, all role-players, organisers and members of 43 SA Brigade Headquarters who contributed wholeheartedly to the success of this day. Maj Andru Bok, email

OPENING OF THE ANDREW MASONDO HALL

The Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, officially opened the Andrew Masondo Hall at Infantry School in Oudtshoorn on 3 July 2012. It is named after his father, the late Lt Gen Andrew Masondo. Lt Gen Vusi Masondo said that it was an emotional moment. In the past the hall was mostly used for bridging training of former Non-statutory Force members, including Lt Gen Masondo. The building was declared unsafe for failing to meet occupational, health and safety regulations four years ago. The then Officer Commanding of Infantry School, Brig Gen Xolani Mankayi, started a project to renovate the hall. The current Officer Commanding of Infantry School, Col Siseko Nombewu, said the hall was named after Lt Gen Andrew Masondo to honour him for his contribution to the liberation of South Africa. Col Nombewu said that the project started long ago and at the time nobody knew Lt Gen Vusi Masondo would become the Chief of the SA Army.

Lt Col M. Mgobozi, email
67 MINUTES ON MANDELA DAY

Charlie Company of 1 SA Infantry Battalion (Mech) deployed as part of Operation CORONA is proud to say we took part in helping the community for 67 Minutes on Mandela Day. Charlie Company visited the Gert Sibande Further Education and Training (FET) College at Glenmore where the proceedings started with a prayer. Thereafter followed a briefing about the purpose of Mandela Day as well as a short overview of the SANDF. Afterwards condoms were distributed by the members and the students. Then we cleaned around the school and in the community, including the Glenmore clinic. At the same time the other groups were handing out food parcels to the Thembisa Centre for persons with disabilities and pre-schools around Glenmore.

The day ended with soccer matches and the winners received prizes. Indeed it was a beautiful Mandela Day for the deployed Charlie Company. L Cpl Nitfokoto Mkhathwsha, email

CHIEF ARMY VISITS THE CAMOUFLAGED UNIFORMS FACTORY

The Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, paid a visit to the Kingsgate Factory in Hammarsdale in KwaZulu-Natal on 13 July 2012. The factory manufactures the camouflaged uniforms of the SA National Defence Force.

The Director of the factory, Mr Ayub Desai, welcomed the Chief of the SA Army and took him to the factory floor to see the production process. He showed Lt Gen Masondo the whole process from when they received the material until the camouflaged uniforms were ready for distribution to the SA Army Depot.

When Lt Gen Masondo entered the factory, the workers welcomed him with great enthusiasm: “Here comes our father”. One worker said that they were happy to see him because without him it was going to be difficult for them to feed their families as the factory was going to close down.

The factory visit was a learning curve for Lt Gen Masondo and his entourage as they had never been there before. Earlier in the week Lt Gen Masondo visited SA Army units in KwaZulu-Natal, where he was briefed on the status of the units. Lt Col M. Mgobozi, email

HONOURING MADIBA

In commemoration of former President Nelson Mandela’s birthday, 67 minutes of community work was done by the Junior Forum of the Southern Military Police Region Headquarters. They visited Zandtvliet Care Facility in Macassar, Somerset West, which cares for the elderly and persons with mental disabilities.

At first the members performed some military drill, whereafter they cleaned and reorganised the store-room and the surrounding area, and they repaired the broken washing lines, while the residents participated in recreational sports.

A small donation of shoe polish, shoe brushes, hand and body lotions were handed over to the care centre. This small gesture of goodwill was appreciated by the residents of the care facility. S Sgt Karel Pietersen/Martinus, email

LET US LOOK AT OUR PEOPLE (CHILDREN)

It is true to say that the SA Army is well respected in the whole of Africa as it has well trained soldiers who are disciplined and who are specialists in their fields.

If a member takes a severance package, he or she gets the money and uses it. No one forces you to take a severance package, no one! So do not expect to come back and work as a Reserve; give others a chance.

Do not come back and cause corruption and disorder here please!

Enjoy your severance package; you have left nothing here, nothing! The money is in your bank account or in your pocket; just check in your bank account or in your pocket, check! Check, please!

If one goes on pension, i.e. retires, at the age of 60 or 65 that means he or she has left the SA Army and must rest. Such a person’s duty is to look after the grandchildren. If not, enjoy the remaining years with your money or budget for the Reserve Force.

Why can’t we call up the Military Skills Development System (MSDS) members whose contract has expired? I understand that some MSDS members went to study further.

Let us call up these Reserves rather than to call up retired people for the SA Army. That is where corruption and dishonesty start. Ladies and gentlemen, let us look at this otherwise we are letting ourselves down.

Sgt T.E. Mundalamo, Vuwanin Military Police

RAISING WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Joint Support Base (JSB) Garrison Unit celebrated World Environmental Day at the Thaba Tshwane City Hall on 14 June 2012. This is an initiative to raise awareness about climate change and how it affects all of us. The theme for this year was “Green Economy: Does it include you?”

During her presentation Prof Cheryl le Roux from Unisa explained the importance of this year’s celebration that came after South Africa’s successful hosting of the COP 17 and Cabinet’s approval of the Climate Change Policy. Prof Le Roux elaborated on the importance of people having to be knowledgeable about this topic.

In closing, she emphasised: “Through engaging governments in action and your spreading the word on the importance of a ‘Green Economy’, this collective effort will preserve nature while achieving growth, and encourage sustainable development. By celebrating World Environmental Day we remind ourselves and others of the importance of caring for our environment. Remember that every action counts; so join us: every year, everywhere, everyone.”

Other guests were from the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs who also gave presentations on the use of water. Different topics such as water, transport, energy and waste were covered. Bibi Sibanyoni, Pretoria

AUGUST 2012
A DROP IN THE OCEAN MAKES AN OCEAN

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations (UN) and the Government of South Africa, RSA Battalion 9, under the leadership of the Officer Commanding, Lt Col Martin Feni, was deployed to Darfur in the Sudan from 28 November 2011 to 13 June 2012 under the auspices of the African Union United Nations Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and is currently executing the UNAMID mandate as agreed upon in the Status of Force Agreement.

In order to create the ideal environment for the peace process as laid out in the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, RSA Battalion 9, except for the UNAMID mandate, embarked on a campaign to improve the living conditions of the people of Darfur. The objective was to stabilise the situation in Sector North and implement Quick Impact Projects to contribute meaningfully to an improvement in the living conditions of the people of Darfur. It was foreseen that this in return would create a positive atmosphere in which to foster the unfolding peace process in Doha. In December 2011 Lt Col Feni was briefed about the UNAMID project to build schools and a clinic in Insurru. The then Sector North Commander, Brig Gen Sithabiso Mahlobo, gave clear instructions for the completion of the project. The RSA Battalion 9 Commander, Lt Col Feni, appointed Maj Zibonele Qampa as the project manager. Without delay, RSA Battalion 9 decided on 11 February 2012 to visit the village. All previous attempts to establish communication with community leaders had been unsuccessful, and with no clearance approval the battalion proceeded to Insurru.

The community leaders stopped the convoy at the entrance to Insurru, and the RSA Battalion 9 Commander engaged the leaders in a friendly manner. After tense negotiations contact details were exchanged and the convoy returned to Kutum Military Base. Thereafter, the RSA Battalion 9 Commander and Maj Qampa engaged the community leaders on a continuous basis and established trusting relations to the extent that an agreement was reached and the project started in all earnest. RSA Battalion 9 managed the monetary side of the project and supervised water, while the community provided the labour and secured all the building material. The process was not easy, but the never say die attitude of the RSA Battalion 9 Commander, who refused to accept failure, as he wanted to execute the UNAMID mandate, ensured that the project was successfully executed in extremely difficult circumstances. The challenges faced were numerous, from language barriers to impassable roads and harsh climatic conditions which made this task very demanding. Against all odds the project was accomplished. Three classrooms were built in the villages of Deleba and Insurru Mixteria, and a clinic with four rooms was completed in a village called Forok. On 30 May 2012 the project was officially commissioned by the Deputy Joint Special Representative of the United Nations, Ms Aishatou Souleymane, while the Head of Office (Sector North), Mr Hassan Gibril, and the RSA Battalion 9 Commander were invited guests. It was a beautiful day as the community of Insurru expressed their gratitude to UNAMID and South Africa for completing the outstanding project. The unquestionable commitment of RSA Battalion 9 to UNAMID has been confirmed by the completion of the Insurru project. Lt Col Feni has at all times directed and focused the activities of the Battalion towards complying with the instructions received from Sector North, and it will continue to support UNAMID and raise the RSA flag in the process. With the completion of the Insurru project, RSA Battalion 9 has proved its total commitment as a Troop Contributing Country to the UNAMID mandate. In the process a window of opportunity was opened for UNAMID to enhance its influence further in ensuring a lasting peace in Darfur. In conclusion, with the Insurru project RSA Battalion 9 has shown its total commitment to UNAMID and the people of Darfur and has helped to create a permanent beacon of hope in the village of Insurru and permanently entrenched the image of UNAMID in the minds and hearts of the people of Insurru. Lt Lesego Sebe, Kutum Military Base, Sudan

DEPLOYMENT IN LADYBRAND

It has been more than four months since Alpha Company of 5 SA Infantry Battalion left the unit for a deployment scheduled for six months. The Company, led by Maj Nelisiwe Bhengu, is currently deployed along the RSA/Lesotho border in the Ladybrand area. They are under the operational command of Joint Tactical Headquarters Free State.

The Officer Commanding, Lt Col Sehaka Hloka, and the RSM of the Unit, MWO Theunis Louis Visser, recently visited the members in the deployment area. They felt it an honour to be visited by the unit.

These dedicated men and women left their loved ones to serve their country despite the harsh weather conditions in the vicinity of the snow covered mountains of Lesotho, but nevertheless they have stood the test of time by showing character, zeal and enthusiasm. The overall discipline of these members indicates that they are ideal for the task.

The dedication and hard work of these members have resulted in operational successes ranging from the apprehension of illegal immigrants at the border, tons of dagga confiscated, stolen copper confiscated, four stolen vehicles recovered and fines issued in response to traffic violations.

The Company is working very hard, and they play hard too. Leisure time utilisation (LTU) on a monthly basis is important for the Company to boost the morale of the members. This often means going to different places to enjoy their leisure time. When members’ birthdays fall within the deployment period they are catered for in a special manner to make them feel as if they are at home. Sport is also enjoyed. Soccer matches are played, either with community teams or those of other state departments; however the winning record is not so impressive as yet.

As the deployment is nearing its end some athletes fall and stumble, while others suffer muscle cramps, but these motivated soldiers are still geared up and determined to put in a last effort and finish with a bang.

History has been written in bold letters along the RSA/Lesotho border (Ladybrand Operational Base) as 5 SA Infantry Battalion was there, and our presence was felt. The unit is extremely proud of Alpha Company for the excellent work that these committed members are currently doing and we wish them all the best in everything they are doing. The unit’s flag must be kept flying high despite any challenges. Lt Vusi Masilela, email r
I quote from the Code of Conduct for uniformed members of the SANDF: “I serve in the SANDF with loyalty and pride, as a citizen and a volunteer”. This line also applies to 10 SA Infantry Battalion (South African contingent currently serving in Darfur).

They have shown patriotism, pride, loyalty and love of their country as well as Africa in general. You will see local people waving to SANDF convoys, which show the trust and belief they have in our men and women in Darfur.

Life is not easy in the Sudan, but commitment and dedication make things possible for our ambassadors to take each day as it comes. Good leadership by Lt Col Mashalaba, the Officer Commanding RSA Contingent, has kept the contingent going. Everybody is committed to doing his or her job professionally. I am so proud to be a South African soldier, as diligence is the order of the day.

Cpl R.N. Cele, Malha Base, Darfur (Sudan)
On 20 July 2012 members of Joint Operations Division in Thaba Tshwane descended on the Lebuwe Centre for People with Disabilities in Atteridgeville as part of their 67 Minutes for community service in honour of the first democratically elected President of South Africa, Mr Nelson Mandela.

Brig Gen Phillip Mavhungu, Director Doctrine Development, planted a shade tree in the garden of the Centre as a sign of a healthy relationship between the Centre and the Division. He said: “The shade of this tree will remind future generations about the friendship between members of Joint Operations Division and the community here at Lebuwe Centre.”

In addition to tree planting, members of Joint Operations Division also donated groceries and toys to the more than 100 members enrolled at Lebuwe Centre. The toys were donated by the son of one of the Division’s staff members, Capt (SAN) Neil Kevin Watts. Brig Gen Mavhungu said: “It is gratifying to note that members of Joint Operations Division have each contributed financially and voluntarily to buy these items.”

Menial duties performed by Joint Operations Division members at Lebuwe Centre included tree pruning, gardening and floor sweeping.

Speaking on behalf of Lebuwe Centre, the Projects Co-ordinator and Treasurer, Ms Emly Molefe, thanked the SA National Defence Force for the role they play in alleviating the plight of people with disabilities in South Africa.

Members from Joint Operational Division ready to do their 67 Minutes for Madiba at the Lebuwe Centre.
SA Army Corporate Services doing their bit

By Maj Merle Meyer, SA Army Communication Support Officer
Photo: S Sgt Chenè Kruger

Painting, raking and washing by colonels, captains, corporals and “civvies” were some of the unexpected tasks done by members of the SA Army Headquarters Corporate Services in aid of International Mandela Day on 18 July 2012.

These tasks were done at the Dominican School for the Deaf in Hammanskraal near Pretoria. The school has over 400 learners who make use of the hostel facilities.

The members collected funds which were used to buy some packets of sweets for the learners and some clothes were donated for those in need.

The day started with Scripture reading and prayer and the singing of “Happy Birthday” to Mr Nelson Mandela. Here the learners taught the hardened soldiers to sing the song in sign language and it was interesting that the soldiers who can normally drill with ease struggle to move their hands with the right signs, but everyone had great fun.

This was also a great day for team building as the SA Army Chief Directorate Corporate Services consists of many sections, such as Communication, Military Security, Human Resources, Ceremonial. These sections normally do not work together every day, but on Madiba’s birthday the troops were washing and scrubbing side by side with lieutenant colonels.

Doing their bit in honour of Madiba

Article and photo by CO Sibusiso Vilakazi, Acting Communication Officer 121 SAI Bn

The whole world celebrates Madiba’s birthday every year on 18 July. Contributing 67 Minutes for Mandela Day is about doing a little bit in service of others. On 17 July 2012 members of 121 SA Infantry Battalion and delegates from Umhlathuze Local Municipality visited a home for people with disabilities, namely the Nkosi-Sihawukele Centre in Ngwelezane. The members spent time with the children of the centre giving them gifts, and cleaning and painting the centre. The next day members of 121 SA Infantry Battalion joined hands with the Mtubatuba Local Municipality, the SA Police Service and other stakeholders to dedicate the day to community service at Ophondweni Crèche at Ophondweni Village. The crèche was cleaned and painted and the community provided with water.

Members of 121 SA Infantry Battalion and other stakeholders light up the day for the children of Ophondweni Crèche at Ophondweni Village.
Artillerists reaching out to the deaf

Article and photos by Capt Marelda Coetzer, SO2 Corporate Communication, SA Army Artillery Formation

The quote of Mr. Nelson Mandela “There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children” had a great impact on members from the SA Army Artillery Formation Headquarters on Mandela Day.

On 18 July 2012, members from SA Army Artillery Formation Headquarters received a warm reception at the Transoranje School for the Deaf in Pretoria West where soup and “vetkoek” were enjoyed with the learners and teachers. Brig Gen Deon Holtzhausen, General Officer Commanding SA Army Artillery Formation, addressed those present with the aid of a sign language interpreter and acknowledged the excellent work done by the school in nurturing and educating the children and in forming a long and prosperous relationship important to the future sustainment of the school.

After they were divided into groups, members had the opportunity to learn more about sign language and develop an understanding of how to interact with the children. The realisation dawned on us that each and every teacher was overwhelmingly passionate about their work and the learners they worked with: a true vocation.

The interaction did not stop there as work had to be done. Children and teachers alike joined the members in weeding, arranging flower beds, planting flowers and painting. As no formal means of communication existed, children constantly watched your every move to understand what you were doing, why you were doing something the way you did, so that they could do the same. Although living with a disability, the children radiated such energy and passion during all the activities throughout the day that it was quite humbling.

The 67 Minutes in support of Mandela Day turned into 2 hours and 30 minutes of bliss. The feeling was overwhelming as the day came to an end and we could look at all that had been achieved by both adults and children. Being involved with children with special needs was a heart-warming and exceptionally rewarding experience. This Mandela Day, and in particular every child we interacted with, will be remembered for quite some time to come.

The Transoranje School for the Deaf in Pretoria West receives a small subsidy from the Department of Basic Education, but it is not nearly sufficient and therefore the school is reliant on donations and fund-raisers to sustain the day-to-day education, well-being and nurturing of the learners. Transoranje School for the Deaf is “home” to approximately 200 deaf children aged from 3 to 18 years and, besides educating the children in sign language, the curriculum of the Department of Basic Education is also followed.

LEFT: Brig Gen Deon Holtzhausen, the General Officer Commanding SA Army Artillery Formation, working in the garden.

BELOW: Members of the SA Army Artillery Formation and children of Transoranje School for the Deaf.
2 Field Engineer Regiment honouring our global icon

By Capt Mhloti Khosa, Communication Officer 2 Field Engineer Regiment
Photos: CO Princess Zwane

2 Field Engineer Regiment honoured International Mandela Day by dedicating their time and effort to four crèches, including the Regiment’s adopted school, Glen Ash Combined School. On 18 July 2012 2 Field Engineer Regiment members in Bethlehem were geared up to engage with the little ones, assist the community in need and serve their country with loyalty and pride.

The members of the Regiment donated R5 227.00 to purchase school uniforms for the disadvantaged learners of its adopted school, Glen Ash Combined School. The Acting Officer Commanding of 2 Field Engineer Regiment, Maj Delnot Njoko, presented the school uniforms to the Principal of Glen Ash Combined School, Mr Tsietsi Kolokoto, in the presence of all Glen Ash learners and representatives from 2 Field Engineer Regiment.

Members of 21 Field Squadron decorating the children’s playground at Zenzeleni Crèche.

2 Field Engineer Regiment further assisted four local crèches, namely Karabelo Day and After Care, Zenzeleni Crèche, Nkgopoleng Crèche and Maranatha Crèche by renovating their classrooms, decorating the children’s playground, constructing extra classrooms and fences as well as general cleaning of the premises.

All Squadrons eagerly arrived at their respective crèches to give back to the community in the spirit of ubuntu. The various Squadrons worked simultaneously at the crèches they were responsible for. Each child received an orange and a packet of chips from the Regiment. The glow on their faces was so warm and welcoming.

The mission for the day was well executed and accomplished. There is nothing more exciting than giving back to the community. Let us make everyday a Mandela Day.
As the whole nation participated in different activities throughout the country for the needy on Mandela Day on 18 July 2012, members of the SA Army Infantry Formation Headquarters headed to Legora Primary School in Mamelodi.

The programme kicked off with a welcoming address by the General Officer Commanding, Maj Gen Lindile Yam. He reminded the audience about where they came from as a nation and emphasised the principles and philosophy of Madiba. Maj Gen Yam said: “Mr Nelson Mandela and other freedom fighters went into exile to join the struggle with the hope that one day we would get freedom. It is an honour for me as the General Officer Commanding of the SA Army Infantry Formation to stand in front of you, our future leaders, to celebrate this memorable day that is celebrated the world over.

“As the SA National Defence Force it is our responsibility to look after you as our own. Gone are the days when there was a line between us and you. We are now a family and you do not have to be scared of us. We are here to protect you as citizens of the Republic of South Africa and this was the vision of Mr Mandela.”

Maj Gen Yam expressed his humility when he said: “We come here to share with you the little we have and we commit ourselves to continuing to have this social engagement with the school for future endeavours.” He concluded by wishing Mr Mandela a happy birthday.

After his address, a platoon from 21 SA Infantry Battalion displayed sophisticated drill movements to the applause of the learners. Some learners even suggested that they wanted to become soldiers immediately. Next came the three-member pace stick team from the SA Army Gymnasium under the leadership of S Sgt Johannes Shapo. The learners and teachers alike were thrilled by the movements performed by the team.

The highlight of the day was the handing over of the gifts by Col Siseko Nombewu on behalf of the SA Army Infantry Formation. Books, pencils, crayons, school packs, party packs, cup cakes and other cakes and second-hand clothing were donated to the school.

The learners lined up to receive their party packs and cup cakes from the Infantry Formation members. Thereafter the learners were shown ratsels, mambas and a tent with a bed made up ready for inspection.

In his closing address Mr Papile Mathebe, the Principal, expressed his gratitude to the soldiers. He said: “Soldiers did not come to fight, but to celebrate this memorable birthday of the first democratically elected President of South Africa with us.”

The Principal added: “This is important for these young learners’ minds. What you have done today will always be remembered by these learners every time they see a soldier and particularly during future Mandela birthday celebrations. They will remember that soldiers came into their backyard and offered them party packs and cup cakes on Mandela’s 94th birthday.”

In wrapping up, Maj Faith Mokou, the Programme Director, said: “We do not give because we have a lot, we give because we know how it feels not to have … Happy Mandela Day!”

The sponsors were thanked for their humble contributions that made this historic event possible for Legora Primary School. They were Staedler (donated colouring packs), Pyrotech (donated stationery sets for the best achievers), Mr Crook (donated party packs, cup cakes and cakes) and Esanlu Bookshop (donated library research books).

Lovelife was part of the commemoration and their role was to interact with the Grade 4 to 7 learners on issues that the learners could not discuss with their teachers or parents.
Members of 5 SA Infantry Battalion joined hands with other government organisations to render services to the community of Ladysmith and surrounding areas in honouring 67 Minutes for Mandela Day on 18 July 2012.

Officers of 5 SA Infantry Battalion locked their offices to give a helping hand by cleaning the outer perimeters of the unit and streets around the unit. They collected papers and empty bottles, and in the end the area was spotlessly clean.

The rest of the unit members boarded a military bus to town. They were divided into seven clusters consisting of three unit members and members of other government departments and municipality personnel.

- The first cluster went to Ward 23 in Matiwane to paint a creche.
- The second cluster went to Bluebank to paint a creche and community hall. Small renovations were also done to the two buildings.
- The third cluster went to Limit Hill to renovate a library.
- The fourth cluster went to Colenso to paint a clinic and a town hall.
- The fifth cluster went to a house in Steadville to remove rubble in the yard.
- The sixth cluster went to Ezakheni to clean a clinic, library and in and around the graveyard.
- The last cluster went to Ward 24 in Matiwane to clean a library, community hall and clinic.

Members returned to the unit at 16:45. They really enjoyed being part of lending a helping hand to the community.
The SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) has evolved over the years from an organisation that has mostly focused on the health of our soldiers and their families into an organisation that has been described by the people of South Africa as “the angels in uniform” or “the angels in maroon berets”.

This year the SAMHS celebrated its 33rd year as a Service of the SA National Defence Force. To commemorate this milestone, the SAMHS dedicated 16 to 19 July 2012 to Madiba and provided free health assessments for all residents in the Kimberley area at the Galeshewe Stadium.

These health assessments consisted of basic vital assessments, including scanning for hypertension, dental screening and HIV and AIDS tests, which were not compulsory, and counselling.

The assessments were done in conjunction with the Department of Health to ensure that residents received the necessary referrals if needed.

The SAMHS is also the custodian of animal health in the military. Members of the public were encouraged to bring their pets along for a free health assessment and a rabies inoculation.

To assist all the military veterans in the area, a call was especially made on the heroes of our nation to visit the SAMHS on these days, not only to receive free health assessments but also to register as military veterans.

For the residents interested in attending free health assessments, various pick-up points were identified from where military buses transported them to the stadium.

The celebrations at the Galeshewe Stadium included an exhibition by the SAMHS to showcase some of the unique equipment that was used during the 2010 Soccer World Cup and demonstrations by the Military Health Training Formation.

The dog handlers from the Military Veterinary Institute were training the dogs and they had a total consultation of 174 dogs and three cats.

On 19 July 2012 a medal parade was held at the City Hall to honour SAMHS members for their duties during peacekeeping missions and to commemorate all those members who paid the ultimate price in service of the nation.

Lt Gen Vejaynand Ramlakan, Surgeon General of the SANDF, bestowed the medals on deserving members. After the medal parade a battalion of soldiers and military vehicles of the SAMHS took part in a drive-past through some streets of the city centre to conclude the SAMHS celebrations in Kimberley.

Later that evening a gala dinner was
held to thank all the stakeholders who took part in organising the event. This was also an opportunity to reflect on the successes achieved thus far. The auspicious event took place at the Mita Sperepere Convention Centre in the heart of Kimberley.

During his address to those attending, the Surgeon General alluded to the fact that one of the roles of the SAMHS was to support the SANDF during operations. He said that at an international level the demands to participate in peacekeeping operations to create a safer region and continent would continue.

Lt Gen Ramlakan also appealed to the SAMHS community to “join hands as always and deal decisively with challenges. Nobody will do this for us – it is in our hands, we are all equal to the task”.

ABOVE: Members of the SA Military Health Service parade through the Kimberley CBD.

ABOVE: The SA Military Health Service exhibition at the Galeshewe Stadium.
Members of Area Military Health Unit KwaZulu-Natal (AMHU KZN) delivered their 67 minutes of community service to honour former President Nelson Mandela’s wish for his birthday on 18 July 2012 at Phembisizwe Educare Centre in Folweni in south Durban.

Col Trevor Pillay, Officer Commanding AMHU KZN, wanted the unit members to identify a community that the unit could assist on Mandela Day. A co-ordinating committee was formed that consisted of Lt Col Virginia Vardhan, Lt Col Paveshni Govender, Lt Col Kubesh Moodley and S Sgt Menzi Cele. The committee was responsible for managing funds contributed by the unit members and unit friends.

The committee visited the Centre and met with the Principal, Ms Magarett Vilakazi, who was informed that AMHU KZN wanted to contribute 67 minutes of community service to the Centre. The Principal was very happy about the initiative. The Officer Commanding also visited the Centre to do a final evaluation and identification of requirements and declared the school to be a worthy recipient of assistance.

The unit members and friends contributed from their own pockets to make Mandela Day a success. The members did practical things, such as painting the facility, playing games with the learners, hiring a jumping castle for the learners, cutting the birthday cakes and handing over the items that were bought for the learners.

The Ward 95 Councillor, Mr Senzangakhona Shange, also joined the Officer Commanding and his staff in painting the facility for the children of Phembisizwe Educare Centre. It was a good experience to see community leaders working together with the SA National Defence Force members.

The members of AMHU KZN enjoyed the day with the children as was evident from the smiles on everyone’s faces. The teachers and community members appreciated the effort made by the AMHU KZN on behalf of the children of Folweni.

The Officer Commanding thanked the members who attended the event and for the contribution they made in changing the lives of people by giving the little bit they had to those in need. He also mentioned that this was the beginning of many events of this nature for AMHU KZN in future.
On 18 July 2012 members from Defence Inspectorate Division committed 67 minutes to the Jubilee Centre (Potter’s House) at the Tshwane Leadership Foundation in Pretoria to commemorate and celebrate the 94th birthday of former President, Mr Nelson Mandela.

Upon arrival at the Potter’s House, members started at once with praise and worship, and sang the “Happy Birthday Song” for Madiba.

It was evident that members from Defence Inspectorate Division were reaching out by placing others before themselves by connecting with the underprivileged. They donated non-perishable items, clothing, blankets and groceries.

Brig Gen Willie Letseleba, Acting Inspector General DOD, encouraged everyone not to despair, even though we faced difficulties and challenges at the present time. He reminded us that the Madiba “magic” had united us under difficult circumstances in the past and he gave us hope in times of hardship. Brig Gen Letseleba said: “Madiba is the father of our nation and the most lovable and greatest leader of all time.”

Ms Letty Mayephu, the Programme Manager at Potter’s House, said: “Thank you Defence Inspectorate Division members for your gesture of goodwill. You have shown that the SANDF is a Force that cares. May God richly bless you and may you continue unconditionally and unselfishly to serve those in need.”

Potter’s House caters for abandoned children and live-in abused women and children and provides holistic support for women in crisis. It has become a place where women and children are empowered to discover their full potential and are integrated into society.

The facility achieves this through social programmes run by care givers, social workers, the SA Police Service and non-governmental organisations. The facility has an outreach to the city streets, slum buildings, the prison and a psychiatric hospital.
The SANDF Matériel Governance Directorate answered the call to observe the 67 Minutes for International Mandela Day with the support of Gen Solly Shoke, Chief of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF).

On 20 July 2012 the SANDF team embarked on a cleaning and painting campaign at Patogeng Primary School in Atteridgeville, west of Pretoria.

The 67 Minutes initiative is to honour the legacy of the first democratic Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, Mr Nelson Mandela, who spent 67 years of selfless and uninterrupted service in the course of his extraordinary life to the people of South Africa and the world. The United Nations has since made this a global call, where people are expected to take responsibility for changing the world and making a difference in the lives of those who are less fortunate.

Mr Kopano Lebelo, Chief Director Matériel Governance, led the SANDF team to clean and paint the school premises and leave it in a better condition for the learners. The work done consisted of the removal of a huge tree stump which was in the place where the school wanted to build classes for Grade R learners. Mr Joseph Shibambo, Principal of the school, said: “We have tried without success to remove the stump over the past three years.” The SANDF members worked tirelessly to remove the contractor’s grease containers and rubble from the playground and tennis court, repair the toilets and paint the library and kitchen. After the work was completed, Maj Gen Morris Moadira, Deputy Chief of Logistics, handed over a name board for the school to the Principal on behalf of the Chief of the SANDF.

Mr Lebelo and Maj Gen Moadira planted trees in the school grounds as a symbol of a new beginning and greater things to come. Mr Lebelo urged the learners to look after the property and take ownership of the vegetable garden he had replanted. He also thanked the sponsors who had helped to make the 67 Minutes a memorable experience for the learners. Mr Lebelo said: “We would also want to thank the Department of Defence for supporting this great initiative and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Denel, Mr Riaz Saloojee, for ensuring that the 800 learners received meals through the donation of food hampers, while the kitchen was being painted. He also thanked the CEO of Safety Express Stromberg, Mr Raymond Hoekstra, for designing the name board for the school. Mr Lebelo concluded: “It is such partnerships that make a great difference in the lives of others.”
Defence Corporate Communication cares for learners

Article and photo by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

Mandela Day is an ideal time to express love and good wishes for those less fortunate. The significance of the day is known to all and is celebrated on the birthday of Mr Nelson Mandela. Every year on 18 July, Mr Mandela’s birthday, individuals are called to live his legacy by doing 67 minutes of community work in honour of Madiba’s 67 years of uninterrupted and selfless service to the people of South Africa.

On 26 July 2012 members of Defence Corporate Communication honoured Mr Mandela in the most fitting way by doing good for 67 minutes and took time off to visit less fortunate communities to donate food, computers and road safety vests to the learners and to paint a classroom at the Mahobotle Primary School in Lefatlheng Village, north of Hammanskraal. It was heart-warming to witness our men and women reaching out to the community of Lefatlheng Village.

The SANDF had devoted month-long national programmes and activities to community service in honour of the legacy of Mr Mandela and his values. The global icon turned 94 on 18 July 2012. His life story is filled with an amazing strength and integrity of spirit. There is no one more deserving of this unprecedented international recognition.

On 10 November 2009 the United National General Assembly adopted 18 July, the birthday of Mr Mandela, as International Mandela Day to celebrate the legacy of the Nobel Peace Prize laureate and former President of South Africa.

The adoption of this resolution was truly historic as it was the first time that the United Nations had designated an international day in honour of an individual.

The world recognises Madiba as an international icon and a symbol of hope for oppressed and marginalised people around the world. Moreover it recognises Mr Mandela’s principles, values and dedication to the well-being of mankind and his contribution to the struggle for international democracy and the promotion of a culture of peace.

Defence Corporate Communication did community work to follow Madiba’s example of giving back to the communities and our nation. One of the lessons we learnt is that we must work together to entrench unity and solidarity in the country.

Members of Defence Corporate Communication donate road safety vests to learners at the Mahobotle Primary School.
On 18 July 2012 the staff and students of the Military Academy in Saldanha donated 67 minutes of their time towards making a change in the community.

Members took up spades and forks and cleaned the area around the post office and clinic in central Saldanha. This area is known as an eye-sore on account of its beauty. The place really looked neat and tidy after the Military Academy members spent their 67 minutes working there.

A second group visited Huis Wittekruin in Vredenburg where the members cleaned the gardens, mowed the lawn, assisted with the washing, served tea and in general spent some quality time talking to the residents of Huis Wittekruin.

The efforts of the Military Academy were highly appreciated, especially with the newly appointed Commandant, Brig Gen Lawrence Mbatha, dirtying his hands in the soil alongside the top management of the Military Academy and others. Brig Gen Mbatha also visited some of the workers at Huis Wittekruin.

The Military Academy’s 67 minutes were spent doing things that showed a level of activism worthy of Mr Nelson Mandela and the years he spent fighting for freedom.
DOD Logistic Division offers care to senior citizens

By Maj Busisiwe Nobanda, Acting SO1 Corp Com DOD Logistic Division
Photo: Ms Elizabeth Nicholson

DOD Logistic Support Formation hosted Mandela Day on 18 July 2012 at Winterveld St John the Baptist Old Age Home. The event was opened by Chaplain Kgosi Theko with Scripture reading from Matthew 25:31-45.

The theme of the day was “Service to one’s fellow human” and the objective was “Inspire change, take action and make everyday a Mandela Day”. Matthew 25:40 was aligned with the theme: “… Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me”. Members of DOD Logistic Division visited the old age home that housed 70 people. The members opened their hearts and donated blankets, wheelchairs and groceries.

Established in 1982, this year the centre had the joy of celebrating its 30 years’ anniversary. The home was started by the parishioners of St John the Baptist Parish in Lonato and volunteers from other parts of Italy, as well as the Stigmatine Fathers and brothers, the handmaids of Christ the Priest, the Holy Cross Sisters who served the home, and the Sisters of St Paul who are at present in charge of the home, and all those who have given of their means, their time and their energy to provide loving care for the residents of the home. The home depends on donations only.

Corporals of DOD HQ Unit give their time

By Ms Bibi Sibanyoni
Photo: Sgt Elias Mahuma

People around the globe answered the call of Madiba to serve or make a difference in someone’s life after this initiative was declared by the United Nations Secretary General as International Mandela Day. On 18 July, people were urged to give 67 minutes of their time to do good deeds on behalf of the less fortunate.

On 18 July 2012 Corporals of the DOD HQ Unit traded their office for a day to spend time with the children of the SOS Children’s Village in Mamelodi. SA Soldier spoke to Amn Tebello Mahlati, the Chairperson of the Corporals Forum at DOD HQ Unit. He said: “This project is very close to my heart as it is an initiative that builds our communities. Giving of our time showcases our commitment towards social responsibility in our communities.”

The Forum donated groceries and painted and cleaned the garden of the SOS Children’s Village. Cpl Sello Letshoene praised the Forum members and said: “I am proud of what we have done here; all that we did was out of our own pocket. Each one contributed an amount that went into buying the groceries. It is my wish that people should learn that although we might not please everyone, we should try to make a difference in one person’s life”.

Left: Cpl Mathapelo Sepati doing her share towards the 67 Minutes for Madiba at the SOS Children’s Village.
There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children” - Mr Nelson Mandela.

This quote rang true with the celebration of this global icon’s 94th birthday. As part of celebrating the values and principles that Madiba epitomises, members of the SANDF Spouses Forum, chaired by Ms Charlotte Shoke, together with the spouses of the Military Attachés and Advisory Corps (MAAC), honoured the living legacy of Mr Nelson Mandela by dedicating their time and effort to Kiddy College at Tek Base in Pretoria on 19 July 2012.

Mr Mandela’s selfless request to the world is not only to celebrate his birthday, but to contribute to social upliftment and dedicate at least 67 minutes and more to good deeds on behalf of the underprivileged in our communities.

These women added value to Madiba’s vision and donated groceries, snacks, toys, learning materials and other much needed resources to the children of Kiddy College. After visiting the children, the women paid a visit to the Sterkfontein Caves and the Maropeng Cradle of Humankind National Heritage Site.

Maj Gen Ntsiki Memela-Motumi, the Deputy Chief of Human Resources, encouraged the group of women to strive to be agents of change and work together to create a caring society and help change the world for the better. Talking about the significance of International Mandela Day Maj Gen Memela-Motumi said that former President Nelson Mandela was loved and revered throughout the world and his name resonated with people across the globe. She reminded the women that in 2009 the United Nations declared 18 July as International Mandela Day. She added: “Today we have dedicated Madiba’s birthday towards a good cause.

Children are close to Tata Madiba’s heart. Let us continue to inspire hope and action.”

Ms Eriam Ghias from Pakistan, on behalf of the spouses of the MAAC, said that there could be nothing more fitting than to celebrate a life well lived and ensure that the ethos and legacy of Mr Mandela continued forever. She said: “He is a symbol of peace, hope, unity and prosperity.”
The greatest gift to a child is love

Article and photo by Mr Pilusa Thulare, Audiovisual Production Director SANDF COLET

For Mandela Day members of SANDF COLET reached out to two establishments – the community of Plot 123 in Leeuwenfontein and Olivenhoutbosch Christian School - to provide much needed support with a view to making a difference in the lives of these people in need.

A month before Mandela Day members of SANDF COLET collected toys, books, children’s clothing, sweets and household goods to take to the two venues. Some members donated money. The day before the visit all the contributions were divided according to the groups’ needs. The members of COLET were split up into two groups to visit the two venues.

On 20 July 2012 the members of SANDF COLET visited the community of Plot 123 to do their 67 Minutes for Mandela Day. Three creches were specifically selected for this purpose, namely Ithuteng Day Care, the Stepping Stone Crèche and the Preschool and Ntsako Day Care.

In order for the teachers to be able to run these day care facilities they obtained their qualifications through sponsorships from Government or some “Good Samaritans”. Each crèche has about 15 children, whose ages range from four months to six years. Playing with and hugging the children, one realised that the greatest gift to a child is love.

Plot 123 is home to hundreds of people who do not have proper infrastructure, water and electricity. It is basically an informal settlement. Kamcare Social and Training Services, a non-governmental organisation, has been supporting this disadvantaged community over the years.

The second group from SANDF COLET embarked on a follow-up visit to Olivenhoutbosch Christian School in the Olivenhoutbosch informal settlement. The previous year the COLET team painted the exterior of eight Wendy house classrooms at the school.

When they arrived the learners were in the classrooms busy with their daily task – education. Soon everybody assembled outside where the COLET team introduced themselves to the staff and learners. The learners sang songs that they had recently learned to entertain their visitors.

After the formalities were concluded, the COLET team spent 30 minutes handing out cookies, sweets and chips to the learners.

Later a session with the educators was convened to determine how SANDF COLET (as a leading Education, Training and Development (ETD) College in the Department of Defence) could assist these educators in future and develop their abilities in the field of education. This was much appreciated by the staff of the school. The members who took part in these two projects were touched at the opportunity afforded them by Mandela Day.

After visiting Plot 123, Ms Lizel Rossouw said: “To make a difference in life is to be able to put a smile on a little child’s face, even if it is only for a while.”

Ms Suzette Steyn said: “Olivenhoutbosch Christian School is really an example of making do with what you have, when you can.” The day provided a moment of retrospection as the members realised how privileged they were compared to these communities.

Commodities such as water and sanitation that we take for granted are considered a luxury in these communities. The things that we throw away as rubbish may be valuable to those who have nothing. Sometimes one does not have to give anything but oneself. Let’s make a difference!
Units in Nelspruit support 67 Minutes for Mandela Day

The military units in Nelspruit made a huge effort to support the 67 Minutes initiative for Mandela Day.

The Officers of Army Support Base Mpumalanga (ASB Mpumalanga) visited Dasha School for persons with disabilities in Nelspruit. The school offers education to 47 learners with mental and physical disabilities. During the visit the members spent time with the learners and learnt about the different educational and skills development programmes offered to the learners. The visit was concluded by the handing over of soccer balls and party packs to the learners.

The Warrant Officers of the unit paid a visit to Herfsakker Old Age Home in Nelspruit, which is a member of the South African Women’s Federation, a registered national welfare organisation. The home is registered with the Mpumalanga Department of Health and Social Services as a frail care centre and with the National Department of Social Development as a non-profit organisation. It is a community driven project and is managed by volunteers and a dedicated team of employees. Every resident received a personal gift and was spoilt with an “ASB Mpumalanga Cake” specially baked for the occasion.

In their turn, the Non-commissioned Officers (NCOs) team rendered their services to Mpumalanga Retirement Village. They assisted with general garden maintenance work. According to the management of the village the maintenance team cannot keep up with all the maintenance tasks at hand. Therefore the assistance of the NCOs of ASB Mpumalanga was sincerely appreciated.

Levels 4-7 Public Service Act Personnel (PSAP) visited Laeveldrus Retirement Village to spend quality time with the senior citizens. Each household received a food parcel consisted of meat, fruit and vegetables.

Members of Mpumalanga Signal Unit made their contribution by visiting an orphanage managed by the Mpumalanga Christian Network, where Ms Esther Nkosi is responsible for 84 children of all ages. The members were introduced to some of the staff members and children and also had an opportunity to see the living quarters and other facilities.

WO2 Diana Maartens (left) and WO1 Leonor Allison cutting the cakes at Herfsakker Old Age Home in Nelspruit.
Recognising and profiling acts of courage and passion

By Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photo courtesy of the Centrum Guardian Project

On 4 July 2012 the Centrum Guardian hosted a press launch for the 2012 Centrum Guardian Project at the Lonehill Fire Station in Johannesburg. The Centrum Guardian Project is a social responsibility initiative that has been implemented for five consecutive years by the Centrum Guardian.

It recognises and rewards acts of bravery, courage and self-sacrifice of the people who operate in the emergency services industry and who rescue ordinary citizens in life-threatening situations.

Ms Natasha MacDonald, the Centrum Guardian Brand Manager, said that this year 16 semi-finalists were selected, including the SA Air Force. They will all be profiled on SABC3 in a 13-week documentary drama series called Centrum Guardians 2012.

The SA Air Force (AFB Hoedspruit and AFB Hoedspruit Health Centre) working together with the rescue teams from the SA Police Service, Emergency Medical Services, Department of Health, Provincial Disaster Management and Maruleng Municipality was selected for its immense contribution during the devastating floods that ravaged the Lowveld and surrounding areas of Hoedspruit, when it battled the forces of nature to help flood ravaged communities. Flooding had washed away the bridges and main roads. Many houses and farm lands in outlying areas were flooded and residents who were cut off from dry land were evacuated.

The nominees include disciplines such as the SA Private Ambulance and Emergency Services African Association, National Committee on Emergency Medical Services, Southern African Emergency Services Institute, Fire Protection Association of Southern Africa, Institute of Fire Engineers, National Sea Rescue Institute, SA Red Cross Air Mercy Services, National Disaster Management, South African Petrochemical Fire Chiefs Committee, Pfizer Consumer Healthcare, Netcare 911 and ER24.

The voting will commence on 1 July 2012 and close on 30 September 2012. Voting for the four finalists will open on 4 October 2012 and close on 7 October 2012. The winner will be announced on 9 October 2012 at the final ceremony and on 11 October on television.

Ms Ruda Landman, a television personality and host of the series, proudly said that shooting this series with people in the emergency services had inspired and humbled her. She said: “They are remarkable, passionate, dedicated and exceptionally well trained. This series will make South Africans proud.”

Every person without exception values a word of appreciation for a job well done. Let us remember the thousands of South Africans who depend on the dedicated people who work in the emergency services industry on a daily basis.

The launch was concluded with inter-agency co-ordination and emergency rescue stunts and an evacuation demonstration.
A wise man once said: “Loyalty is something you give regardless of what you get in return, and out of loyalty flow other great and admirable qualities.”

It has always been a tradition in the SANDF to honour and acknowledge deserving members, whether serving in the Reserve Force or Regular Force, for their loyalty, devotion to duty and a job well done.

On 27 July 2012 the Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, hosted a medal parade at the SA Army HQ in Pretoria to honour the men and women who had displayed efficient service for 10 years. Six Good Service Medals (Bronze) were awarded to members who distinguished themselves by long and efficient service for 10 years, namely Lt Col Lecrecia Silwer, S Sgt Johannes Twala, Sgt Rudolf Mthembu, Sgt Peter Mashakwe, Cpl Medupe Phetla and Cpl William Makofane.

The African Union Medal was awarded to Cpl Abram Thola who rendered military service in an African Union state. Three members received the Tshumelo Ikatelaho with Peace Support Clasp who distinguished themselves by rendering military service directly in or in support of a military operation, namely WO2 Solly Ntshekisang, S Sgt Nkululeko Dani and S Sgt Abel Noko.

Lt Col Joseph Mboniswa was awarded the Unitas Medal for being a member who was taken up into the SANDF from 27 April 1994 during the unification of the defence force and armed forces.

The Bar to the Medalje Vir Troe Diens 20 Jaar was awarded to Cpl Chabele Modibedi who has distinguished himself by long and efficient service for 20 years.
Chief SA Army hosts his Formal Guest Evening

On 20 July 2012 the Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, hosted his first formal guest evening at the SA Army College in Thaba Tshwane. This function was held to convey his appreciation to Honorary Colonels who contributed to the success of the SA Army and to welcome newly appointed Generals of the SA Army.

The appointment of Honorary Colonels is an age-old tradition in the military. It maintains regimental traditions, fosters esprit de corps and raises regimental and unit interest.

Honorary Colonels have a positive role to play in the military. They are very much in line with the responsibility of the SANDF/DOD for promoting social development and the upliftment of society in general. Honorary Colonels are the voice and the link between the military and civilian spheres. They are prominent business people, community leaders, academics and senior members of government.

In his opening remarks, Lt Gen Masondo paid tribute to the former Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Lindiwe Sisulu. He urged the Honorary Colonels also to support the new Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula.

In his address, Lt Gen Masondo highlighted the important role played by Honorary Colonels in the SA Army. He said: “I would like to reiterate that you have a significant role to play in advising your unit commanders on certain matters pertaining to your specialisation. It is for this reason that we find it very important to establish and maintain high standards of mutual trust and respect between yourselves and your unit commanders. I would also like to urge you to visit your units regularly.”

In welcoming the newly appointed Generals who were promoted to fulfil their new roles in the SA Army, he urged them to keep on raising the bar as they will be directing and leading the different functional fields in the SA Army. He said: “Remember you are now tasked with more challenging responsibilities, such as to lead, direct, control and orchestrate the SA Army to achieve its goals.”
Aiming to uplift Army Warrant Officers and Non-commissioned Officers

By Lt Col Annelize Rademeyer, SO1 SA Army Corp Com
Photo courtesy Engineer Terrain Intelligence Regiment

Now, after five months in his new post as Warrant Officer of the SA Army, SCWO Charles Alan Laubscher answered these questions concerning his new appointment.

What is your personal goal that you would like to accomplish in this new post?

Over time the SA Army Warrant Officer (WO) and Non-commissioned Officer (NCO) Corps have lost their rightful place in the SA Army with more and more tasks being performed by more senior members and even officers. This situation has been caused by various factors of our own doing and otherwise, but the fact remains it needs to be corrected. By revisiting the training and preparation of the other ranks of the SA Army I intend to assist the WOs and NCOs to become the true backbone of the SA Army again.

What, in your opinion, are the challenges that NCOs currently face?

Not being recognised for what they are, or what they should be as NCOs of the SA Army. As stated above, the loss of ability by the NCO and WO Corps is as much our own fault as it is to that of any other individual or grouping. Trust and respect are earned and not to be demanded. To earn the trust of the senior members of the organisation we must improve our knowledge, ability and capabilities, even if need be by self-study and improvement. We should live up to the Creed of the NCO: “Officers in my unit will not have to carry out my duties. I shall be deserving of their respect and confidence, as well as that of my subordinates”. If we the WOs and NCOs of the SA Army can live up to this, then we shall regain our rightful place in the larger scheme of things.

What are the existing programmes/actions in the SA Army to promote discipline and do you intend to expand on them?

Discipline is a command responsibility. Commanders at each level of the SA Army are accountable for discipline, not only of their own subordinates, but also all other uniformed members. As such the Chief of the SA Army has made the improvement of discipline one of his priority tasks. As WO of the SA Army it is therefore my responsibility to support the Chief of the SA Army in any way I can to achieve this goal.

With the support of the Formation and Brigade Sergeant-Majors and the Regimental Sergeant Majors of the various units we intend to effect changes in the basic approach to soldiering by SA Army members.
and re-instill the pride in soldiering which is to be expected of volunteers who have chosen this noble task of defending their country and its interests.

Individuals often ask: “Where is the policy or handbook on discipline?” Each trained soldier has been trained in line with policy, procedure, etc. Applying what you were taught, i.e. how to wear your uniform, when and how to pay compliments, saluting, or how to perform your task, be it as a Rifleman in an Infantry section or the Chief Clerk or Regiment Sergeant Quartermaster of a unit, doing what you were taught and doing it to the best of your ability, that in my view is discipline. Applying what you were taught and what you duty sheet requires of you, is being disciplined.

How do you view the interaction between Officers, WOs and NCOs? Are there golden rules or guidelines?

There are most definitely “golden rules”. The most important of these is to allow each individual to be “the king of his own castle”.

Each member of the SA Army has a given task with inherent responsibility. We should allow each member to come into his or her own in his or her own area of responsibility. Where necessary members must be corrected, assisted and even retrained if they do not have the desired capabilities, with the last option of divorcing the individual from the organisation if he or she does not show an interest or any improvement after interventions have been made.

In short, allow the “Corporal to Corporal” and do not reduce him or her to a glorified troop. Each commander should assess members fairly, institute the desired interventions where necessary and so develop the subordinates’ abilities needed for the current post and those to follow. Problems are never solved by taking over someone else’s task or redirecting them to another member.

The individual must be brought up to speed or be separated from the organisation to make place for those who can and are willing.

In closing, it is my view that we do not have bad troops, we rather have bad or ill-equipped leaders. Troops that under a specific leader, Officer, WO or NCO, are ill-disciplined easily become well-organised and disciplined soldiers under new command. The SA Army and the SANDF do not have bad or ill-disciplined troops or individuals; we have commanders that allow this misbehaviour to persist. If the command element at all levels “walks the talk” and applies disciplinary measures without fear or favour we will turn this organisation around without much effort.

Warrant Officer of the SA Army

Senior Chief Warrant Officer (SCWO) Charles Alan Laubscher was appointed as the Warrant Officer of the SA Army on 1 February 2012.

He matriculated at the Worcester High School in 1974 and joined the South African Defence Force on 8 January 1975. He started his military career as an Infantryer and did Basic Military Training at 1 SA Infantry Battalion in Bloemfontein, after which he was posted to Infantry School in Oudtshoorn.

Upon completion of his leader group training, he was transferred to 11 Commando in Kimberley as an Infantry instructor. He was a founder member of the SA Army Intelligence Corps and the School of Intelligence, the corps having evolved from the then 11 Commando in 1982. He is fully qualified in both the SA Army Infantry and Intelligence Corps.

Later he was posted to the SA Army College where he was an instructor for the SA Army Sergeant Major and Senior Non-commissioned Officers’ Courses, and at the same time was utilised as the Unit Security Officer for an extended period, which earned him the Chief of the SA Defence Force Commendation.

He was then appointed as the Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) of Northern Transvaal Command Headquarters Unit, and later as the RSM of the SA Military Intelligence College. For his services to the SA Military Intelligence College he was awarded the Military Merit Medal.

At the time of integration into the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) in 1994, he was posted to the SA Army Headquarters Communication Section and tasked with the establishment and running of a communication team whose task it was to keep the other ranks informed of the integration process and the resulting changes in the SANDF at the time. He earned the Pro Merito Medal for this task.

This was followed by his appointment as Group Sergeant Major of Group 9 Headquarters in Pietermaritzburg. Then he was transferred back to Pretoria as the SA Army Intelligence Formation Warrant Officer. During this time he also completed part-time studies at Unisa, and passed the Total Quality Management Programme with distinction.

SCWO Laubscher was appointed as the SA Army Warrant Officer Dress, a post he held until his appointment as Warrant Officer of the SA Army on 1 February 2012.

During his career SCWO Laubscher was awarded the Chief of the SADF Commendation Certificate, three Chief of the SA Army Commendation Certificates and various formation and unit commendations. He is the proud holder of two merit medals, four operational medals and three service medals.

He is married to Emily and is the proud father of Meleshé and Saskia.
SA Air Force prepares for war in peacetime in Mahikeng

By Maj Ntsikelelo Mantshongo, SO2 SAAF Media Liaison
Photos: WO2 David Nomtshongwana

Residents of Mahikeng and surrounding areas could not believe it when they witnessed the extraordinary sight of a Hawk lead-in trainer aircraft piercing through the skies to mark the end of what could be described as a successful and action-packed exercise by the SA Air Force.

This happened during the final manoeuvre of an exercise dubbed Exercise WINTER SOLSTICE, which was organised to test and evaluate doctrine as well as gauge the operational readiness of various systems in the SA Air Force.

Solstice is a word derived from Latin, sol (sun) and sistere (to stand still) which refers to the longest day of the year in summer or the shortest day of the year in winter.

The exercise began on 20 July 2012 with the mobilisation of all participants at Air Force Base Swartkop in Pretoria and ended in Mahikeng in the North West on 5 August 2012 where the exercise was conducted. The scenario created involved the North West and Free State Provinces divided by the Vaal River and encompassed the peace enforcement concept.

The SA Air Force did not have its work cut out as most military pundits and academics would say that the best time to prepare for war is in peacetime.

The exercise afforded 584 SA Air Force members (both civilian and uniformed), drawn from almost all bases and units, an opportunity to practise tactics, battle planning and handling, logistic support and other elements required by a modern air force to be victorious in battle.

Participants were divided into two components, one of which occupied the area covering the eastern half of the North West Province while the other was situated to the south and covering parts of the Northern Cape and the Free State Provinces. Aircraft utilised included all airborne elements and other support services ranging from fighters, transport planes and helicopters to command and control systems, intelligence, supply and support, including human resource elements.

The SA Army also provided assistance for the exercise by contributing elements of the SA Special Forces Brigade and 44 Parachute Brigade. SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) members were also roped in to provide much needed health assistance without which the exercise would not have been a success.

The Exercise Director, Col
Enjoying the world of air traffic control

During Exercise WINTER SOLSTICE I spoke to a female airman who attended this exercise for the first time, and this is her story:

2Lt Palesa Tlokotsi did not mince her words when she recalled her first experience of military life at Air Force Gymnasium where she had to carry all her belongings in one hand. She thought that this was cruel and inconsiderate. She could not have known that it was the beginning of an interesting journey into the world of air traffic control that she would later enjoy so much.

Born and bred in Bloemfontein, 2Lt Tlokotsi was one of a few members involved in this military exercise that joined the SA Air Force in 2009. She was introduced to the world of aviation by her teacher who recommended she become a pilot, but this she could not do as she did not have physical science, which was a requirement. She had to be content with air traffic control, something she would later benefit from.

Since it was her first experience of an exercise, she was overwhelmed by the idea of controlling fighter aircraft such as the Hawk. She was stationed at Air Force Base Waterkloof where fighters were a rare sight. Another observation she made was that things were very different in an exercise as one had to ensure that pilots and passengers’ lives were taken care of at all costs and there was no room for error.

2Lt Tlokotsi emphasised: “One can decide the direction the war takes by either making a costly error or the correct decision.”

She had a word of encouragement for aspiring air traffic controllers, saying that they should try to obtain more information by visiting air control towers and talking to instructors as often as they could.
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Command Post and Air Force Base Swartkop personnel during the planning and mobilisation phases of the exercise. Col Petso said: “It is imperative that all members of the SA Air Force ensure that all systems are interwoven to demonstrate an integrated approach inclusive of other elements from the SA Army and the SAMHS, as was the case in this exercise.”

According to Col Petso the exercise had its fair share of challenges, such as logistical issues and the skills factor which, if it had not given adequate attention, would have hampered productivity in the SA Air Force. He further recommended that the SA Air Force obtain a full complement of skilled personnel to pass on the know-how and that newly trained personnel be given a platform during exercises such as these.

The Air Component Commander, Col Innocent Buthelezi, who was responsible for the implementation of all plans, highlighted staff shortages and general attendance at meetings as some challenges experienced, specifically during the planning phase of the exercise. However, he commended the men and women who made their services available to this “noble cause”. Nonetheless he recommended that the SA Air Force should put the serviceability of equipment and the quality of personnel high on its list of priorities in order to avoid mishaps. He also lavished praise on the manner in which SA members, the SAMHS and the Special Forces Regiment conducted themselves in support of the exercise.

Col Buthelezi was also particularly concerned with the rate of transfer of theory acquired in courses into practice during exercises and real-time operations. He also cautioned participants to take part in next year’s version that they should take the planning phase very seriously in order to produce an incident-free exercise. Col Buthelezi concluded: “Combining students from both junior and senior air power courses could help solve the skills and knowledge gap that is troubling the Air Force.”

Exercise WINTER SOLSTICE was held at Mahikeng Airport from 23 July to 5 August 2012 to create an opportunity for the SA Air Force to determine and evaluate its deployment and combat readiness in terms of skills training versus practical experience.

Among the members participating for the first time in the exercise was Amn Nelisa Mpokela, a Telecommunications Operator from Mobile Deployment Wing. Before the exercise, Amn Mpokela recalled that all she could do was type memorandums, receive calls and once in a while work in the signals office, so the exercise exposed her to the core function of telecommunications and it made her feel like a real operator responsible for ensuring continuous and uninterrupted radio communication between different stations.

Under the guidance of Lt Dzokai Shaba, also a Telecommunications Operator from Mobile Deployment Wing, Amn Mpokela explained that she could now operate different components of the Tactical Command and Control Communication Container (TC4) on her own, including components such as the Terminal Data Transmission (TDT), C21, TR178 and she could erect different antennas, such as the dipole and 637k. Amn Mpokela emphasises: “For any telecommunications operator to fully appreciate and understand the application and functions of these components, he or she must be exposed to exercises such as Exercise WINTER SOLSTICE.” She also expressed her sadness that the exercise was only two weeks long. She said that closing the gap between theory and practice was very important.

Born and raised in Cofimvaba in the Eastern Cape 23-year-old Amn Mpokela joined the SA Air Force in 2011 after successfully completing Grade 12. Growing up she had imagined herself as a medical doctor, but soon patriotism and the will to serve her country prevailed. She now believes that she is living her dream. She said: “There is nothing more enjoyable than joining what you love and having a good career.”

Her advice to other young people who want to join the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) is that they should join to serve the country and be part of the military family, and not for the money. Amn Mpokela believes that the SANDF needs disciplined and committed soldiers.
SA Army Foundation says farewell to its General Manager

By Cpl Itumeleng Makhubela
Photos: Sgt Elias Mahuma

Maj Gen Keith Mokoape’s tenure as the General Manager of the SA Army Foundation has come to an end. The Board of Control of the SA Army Foundation held a farewell function for him at the SA Army Foundation Headquarters in Centurion on 2 July 2012.

Maj Gen Mokoape retired from the Foundation after turning 65 and left the reins to Mr Angel Ramphele, the Marketing Director of the SA Army Foundation, who will be taking over.

Giving praise to his successor, Maj Gen Mokoape said: “Mr Ramphele has been managing the two sides of our business, on the one hand our members, our soldiers, in the various locations where they are and on the other our business partners and business associates. This is no mean feat and includes the management of all the stakeholders. Thus he has been the main generator of revenue for the Foundation.”

Maj Gen Mokoape’s gratitude to his entire staff was also based on the achievements of the Foundation. It has been able to increase profitability year on year and in 2009 the Foundation amended its constitution to include military veterans, SA Army Reserves and the Diplomatic Corps, including defence attachés.

The SA Army Foundation was also tasked by the Financial Services Board to roll out an educational programme throughout the SA National Defence Force, which has also attracted the armed forces of other countries including Burundi, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Tanzania and helped them set up similar organisations.

Maj Gen Mokoape said: “Considering that there are 57 000 military veterans whose database is currently being verified, and that the aim of the Army Force Design is to have more than 60 000 members, we can grow the membership of the SA Army Foundation significantly and therefore touch the lives of hundreds of thousands of our countrymen and women.”

Outlining some of the obligations of the Foundation, Maj Gen Mokoape pointed out that it was meant to ensure that the morale of its members was high, enhance cohesion and improve the living standards of its members. He said that he had Mr Ramphele to thank for making sure that SA Army Foundation members understood the benefits of its product.

The introduction of the new General Manager was by no means a surprise as the incumbent’s personality was known within the structures of the SA Army. Mr Ramphele has led the Marketing Division of the Foundation for 15 years and will now take up a new challenge as the General Manager of the SA Army Foundation.

Mr Ramphele said: “General Mokoape’s words of motivation meant a lot to the staff members and we will miss his encouragement to each and every employee to continue on a journey of self-improvement and development. I am sure his legacy will live on in the minds and hearts of all our staff as we increase opportunities to develop their skills as meaningful members of the Foundation and society.”

He acknowledged his predecessor’s vision of the Foundation continually improving the lives of its members and their families by working for the soldiers. Mr Ramphele added: “I would like to express my great appreciation for the trust that General Nobanda and the Board display in allowing me to lead the SA Army Foundation into the next phase of its existence, a challenge I am very much looking forward to, especially in today’s exciting commercial climate.”

The Chairperson of the Board of Control, Maj Gen Luvuyo Nobanda, said that Maj Gen Mokoape had made the SA Army Foundation a successful entity during his time and would support Mr Ramphele as the new General Manager who was sure to achieve the same results. He indicated that the new position came with other responsibilities, but the Board had full confidence in Mr Ramphele’s experience and abilities.
The KwaZulu-Natal Military Tattoo celebrates military culture and music

By Mr Kgabo Mashamaite
Photos: Sgt Elias Mahuma

The Natal Mounted Rifles parade ground in Durban became a hive of activity between 11 and 13 July 2012 as members of the public were treated to a spectacular music and drill display by members of the SA National Defence Force during the annual KwaZulu-Natal Military Tattoo.

The aim of the event was, among others, to celebrate five successful years of military parades, music and re-enactments by military personnel from all Services and civilian organisations, including international guest appearances.

The public could not have asked for more as this year’s KwaZulu–Natal Military Tattoo provided them with a double dose of top–notch military music. The organisers decided to spoil them by staging two shows per day, the first starting at 17:00 and the second at 20:00 three days in succession. The event organisers provided an opportunity for those military music lovers who could not attend during the day because of other commitments by repeating the performances in the evenings.

Members from 121 SA Infantry Battalion in Mtubatuba opened the proceedings with a Zulu dance, to the delight of the foreign holidaymakers. The SA Army Band Kroonstad took to the stage and capped the proceedings with a ballet performance. The SA Air Force Choir, under the direction of Mr Pat Sathekge, serenaded the audience while the SA Army Band Polokwane made their first appearance at the show.
During the KwaZulu-Natal Military Tattoo members of 121 SA Infantry Battalion open the proceedings with a Zulu dance.

The SA Military Health Service Pretoria Combined Pipes and Drums also took to the stage to perform items such as Amazing Grace.

Spectators were also treated to other military traditions, such as a gun-run demonstration in which three teams from the Air Defence Artillery Formation demonstrated their strength and speed by dragging an anti-aircraft gun from one point to another in less than three minutes.

The SA Navy Precision Drill Squad also set the scene alight with their well executed drill moves, while members of 2 Field Engineer Regiment exhibited an Improvised Explosive Device and assured the public of the SA National Defence Force’s ability to provide a safe and secure environment for South Africans.

The horsemen of the Umvoti Mounted Rifles Equestrian Club also came to the fore and performed some amazing stunts to the delight of the crowds.

The Royal Hospital School Band from the United Kingdom, which was on a tri-centenary tour on their way to Cape Town, also made a one-night only international guest appearance on 12 July 2012.

The highlight of the event was the massed bands consisting of 130 musicians, including the SA Police Service KwaZulu-Natal Band under the direction of Lt Col Gerald Seekola.

The SA Air Force Choir, under the direction of Mr Pat Sathekge, serenades the audience during the KwaZulu-Natal Military Tattoo.
Fourteen engineering students of the SA Navy University Reserve Training Programme (SAN URTP) reported to False Bay College (Westlake Campus) for their first practical engineering phase from 2 to 20 July 2012.

There were twelve mechanical and two chemical engineers. Thirteen students were undergraduates and one was doing his Masters degree in Engineering. This practical phase consisted of a week each of electrical, automotive and fitting and turning.

During the electrical phase, the students had to do electrical safety in the workshop, project planning (full cycle of project management), design and construct a single phase circuit, motor relay and do fault finding.

The mechanical instructor allocated three engines that the students had to strip completely and reassemble. They also focused on mechanical maintenance, normal repair, fault-finding and had to demonstrate the testing of the repaired engines.

The third week of the practical training was spent on fitting and turning. Aspects covered were the use of basic hand tools and workshop skills, manufacturing a tack hammer on a lathe and a milling machine.

On Wednesday afternoons the students had drill instructions. They also had a chance to shoot on the “mock shooting range” at the Maritime Warfare School.

In the September 2012 vacation the students will have one more module (welding) during which they will manufacture a bread oven made from steel.

The SAN URTP is unique in that there are military and practical phases. The practical phases form part of their academic requirement to graduate as engineers. The final phase (Basic Military Training) will take place from 27 November to 14 December 2012. The Military Training for Officers Part 1 commences in January 2013.

* Enquiries can be forwarded to Capt (SAN) M.J. Grobbelaar at: mjgrobbelaar@yebo.co.za

The Engineering students of the SA Navy University Reserve Training Programme with their projects.
In order to equip and empower themselves with sign language techniques, eleven members of the Department of Defence (DOD) successfully completed the Beginners Sign Language Course that was presented at 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria from 16 to 20 July 2012.

The objective of the course, which was co-ordinated by the Disability Equity Section of Chief Directorate Transformation Management and presented by the Tshwane Sign Language Centre, was to enable DOD members to communicate with hearing-impaired members.

According to Gnr Landelani Ntamo from the Light Artillery Regiment in Potchefstroom, the course came at the right time to enable him to communicate with hearing-impaired colleagues and friends.

Gnr Ntamo said: “The Beginners Sign Language Course has helped me a great deal because I can now communicate and understand the signs used to communicate with hearing-impaired people. The course has also inspired me to become a sign language interpreter in the DOD.”

For Gnr Sandile Nxele from Light Artillery Regiment the course is a heaven-sent opportunity because he has experienced challenges in communicating with people as he is hearing-impaired.

He said: “I used to rely on reading people’s lips and therefore had challenges taking instructions because when the commanders issue instructions, my colleagues will interpret for me, but if I also have a query, we will need an interpreter to interpret for the commander so that he or she will understand me. The course has helped a great deal as I am now able to communicate with my fellow hearing-impaired people using the correct signs.”

Mr Peter Gouws, the Sign Language Facilitator from the Tshwane Sign Language Centre, congratulated the students on their hard work and dedication. He said that the students obtained an A symbol average, which is a definite sign of their dedication.

Ms Adele Snyman, the course co-ordinator, also thanked the group for accepting the invitation and urged them to practise their new skills. She added that she hoped she would see them at the Advanced Sign Language Course.
Focus on transformation management

By Ms H.A. Ely, Assistant Director Transformation Management Empowerment

Photo: Sgt Elias Mahuma

Chief Director Transformation Management’s (CDTM) mandate is to institutionalise transformation, human rights and equity principles within the DOD, monitor the implementation of these policies and advise the DOD on transformation issues.

The three-day seminar was designed to sensitis members and employees in the DOD to Transformation Management concepts. The first objective of this seminar was to create a broad understanding of specific subjects relating to transformation management and equity. The second objective was to create the sort of environment in which participants could, through practical exercises and discussions, explore the impact of their stereotypes, perceptions, attitudes and behaviour towards mission readiness and thus establish and promote a cohesive working environment.

The theme of the seminar focussed on transformation concepts such as diversity, values, perceptions, shared values, prejudice, discrimination, racism, sexual harassment and disability equity. Attendees learned about their own identity and areas in which one might find stereotypes. They learned about diversity, socialisation and values and how their own and others’ attitudes might have an impact on their working environment. The participants were informed about the Regulatory Framework that guides Transformation Management in the DOD and they were also exposed to other “isms” such as racism and sexism.

Feedback from attendees included statements such as “The course was informative, interesting and challenging because it changed the way we used to see things” and “It opens your mind, educates you and teaches you more about sexual harassment and discrimination against other people. It also broadens your mind about people who are ‘disabled’ as we call them. I have learned that one rather speaks about person with a disability. The topics dealt with by Transformation Management could be challenging and emotional, which could easily be ignored, rather than addressed and put into perspective. Ignorance of these matters could lead to unnecessary prejudice and negative perceptions. I am, therefore delighted that the personnel of the Chief Directorate Transformation Management was willing to present a seminar at DOD CCDT to reach a larger learner group”.

CDTM, Section Transformation Management Empowerment, has scheduled similar Transformation Management Awareness Seminars in various regions across the country. The team has also conducted a seminar at 6 SA Infantry Battalion (Grahamstown) over the period 26 to 28 June 2012.

The next Transformation Management Awareness Seminar is scheduled for 12 to 14 September 2012 for PSAP on salary levels 5 to 8. Nominations for this seminar can be forwarded to Mr V. Phantshang at 012 392 2613.

An additional Transformation Management Awareness Workshop has been scheduled for PSAP on salary levels 2 to 4 on 23 October 2012. Ms H.A. Ely may be contacted on 012 355 5927 or nominations may be faxed to 012 355 6259 (nomination forms are available on the Intranet).

* Services, Divisions and Units are invited to contact Col R. Africa on 012 355 5458 or Ms H.A. Ely on 012 355 5927 to conduct the Transformation Management Awareness Seminar in their environments.

Participants at the three-day Transformation Management Seminar in Pretoria.
SAMHS members put their sporting skills to the test

By Mr Kgabo Mashamaite
Photo: Sgt Elias Mahuma

Over 300 Basic Administration Course members from four SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) units descended on the Pretoria Military Sports Club in Thaba Tshwane on 24 July 2012 to enjoy themselves during their 7th annual sports day.

The aim of the event was to bring together members of the SAMHS Basic Admin Course from the four units and for the SAMHS Joint Physical Training, Sports and Recreation to evaluate members concerning skills acquired during their course.

Pitted against each other were members from the Military Health Training Formation Headquarters, the School of Military Health Training Unit, the SAMHS Nursing College and the School of Military Training.

Among the activities of the day were the iron man competition that was divided into categories such as the dead lift of a 20 kg fire bucket full of sand, pole throwing involving four teams consisting of four individuals to see who could throw the furthest, a sand bucket relay over 50 m and a relay pulling a 3 500 kg Isuzu bakkie for over 100 m by four members in a team.

Potted sports was another category, which included a sack relay race, a spoon and golf ball race, a three-legged race and dribbling with a rugby ball between cones. Another category was mini soccer where awareness was created for people with disabilities. The participants’ hands were tied with a rope to give them a feeling of confinement as someone with disabilities. Other categories were volleyball and tug-of-war.

The highlight of the day was in the iron man category. The stamina of students was put to the test. Two teams at a time pulled a 3 500 kg bakkie as in a relay marathon. The crowd roared with laughter when one member tried for five minutes in vain to pull the “stubborn” bakkie off the starting line. The exhausted member was eventually rescued by a fellow team member pushing the vehicle from behind.

Delivering his closing remarks, Brig Gen Pieter Oelofse, the General Officer Commanding SAMHS Training Formation, thanked all the participants for going all out to test their sporting abilities. He encouraged members to be motivated by the team efforts displayed at this event in respect of all SANDF activities.

Awards

The 2012 Sports Day Award went to the School of Military Health Training with the Nursing College in second place while the School of Military Training and the SAMHS Training Formation shared the joint third place.

Potter Sports Award: The School of Military Health Training
Mini-soccer Award: The Nursing College
Volleyball Award: The School of Military Health Training
Iron Man Award: The Nursing College
Tug-of-war Award: The School of Military Health Training
The best team spirit: The Nursing College

Pulling a 3 500 kg Isuzu bakkie was the highlight of the Basic Administration Course sports day where the stamina of the members was put to test.
Sport has a role to play in uniting countries, because it speaks a language and has ideals beyond the reach of politicians,” - Mr Nelson Mandela.

Recently SA Soldier had an interview with Brig Gen Gordon Yekelo, the Director Physical Training, Sport and Recreation, who gave us an inside look into sport and recreation in the SANDF.

He said that the Directorate Physical Training, Sport and Recreation (DPTSR) aimed at resuscitating and revitalising physical training and improving the quality of life of all members of the SANDF by promoting mass participation in sport.

Asked how the DPTSR was planning to turn things around in promoting sport and recreation Brig Gen Yekelo outlined the role of the Directorate and said it was responsible for the provision of strategic direction and guidance in sport throughout the SANDF/DOD, and provided internal and external opportunities for members to participate in sport and to involve local communities.

Brig Gen Yekelo added that the Services also have their own PTSR sections with the same function. He mentioned that the SA Army still did not have a fully-fledged PTSR section to ensure that the SANDF/DOD has a shared vision together going forward. The SA Army is working on establishing that capability to conduct the PTSR function.

He said: “However, owing to the nature of the SANDF, the PTSR function serves more than just the matter of healthy lifestyle and wellness. This function is at the centre of force preparation, combat readiness and the maintenance of readily deployable forces.” Brig Gen Yekelo added that it was unfortunate that the SANDF and its Commanders had over the years relegated these critical aspects of this capability to the periphery of the defence capability.

Brig Gen Yekelo is a doer, not a talker. He said that the leadership of the SANDF was geared to implementing the sport and recreation programme of action. He added: “We are presently engaged in serious discussions around this matter and members can be reassured that the Chief of the SANDF and the Chiefs of the Services have committed themselves to ensuring that PTSR becomes one of the central areas of focus in the short to medium term.”

He acknowledged that physical training and fitness were going to become a critical aspect in the assessment of members’ performances as career progression included attendance of courses and promotions. This is in order to ensure that members are prepared and ready to defend the country and all ordered missions and tasks.

The Director PTSR believes that the future of sport and recreation is not just the responsibility of a single entity, but a collective action. He said: “In pioneering the developmental path of sport in the SANDF we will forge ahead to make the SANDF a compelling place to work, invest and participate in sport. Most importantly, we recognise that we cannot do this alone. This is why there is the emphasis on partnerships with stakeholders in the sports sector and on working together at regional and unit levels so that we have a role to play in bettering the lives of our members. A key area of focus is the enhancement of participation of all members in sport.” He added that the SANDF was making a radical departure from the situation of the last 18 years where participation in sport had been voluntary for members.

Brig Gen Yekelo mentioned that sport had the power to heal old wounds as it embraced a spontaneous gesture of racial reconciliation. He said that despite many international disappointments, South African athletes had risen to the occasion in winning honours against the world’s toughest and best teams.
“SANDF athletes took a big step in the international arena by participating in sports competitions organised under the banner of the International Council of Military Sports (CISM), the Eastern and Southern African Liaison Office (ESALO), the International Olympic Committee while at the continental level, such events were organised under the banner of the Organisation of African Military Sports.

He said that sport for peace was another objective which the SANDF was promoting to increase participation in sport during the United Nations and the African Union missions as part of peace promotion and peace building.

Brig Gen Yekelo exclaimed that sport had the potential to build social cohesion and national unity. He added that the DOD was committed to the objective of the Sports and Recreation South Africa national sports and recreation plan.

He added: “This plan identifies the DOD as an enabler of sports development in South Africa. There is therefore reason to believe that close collaboration between the DOD, Sports and Recreation South Africa and South African Sports Confederations and Olympic Committee can deliver a professional sports capability that can help resolve the challenges of deferred transformation of sport in South Africa.”

He said that the intention was to ensure that the SANDF contributed to youth development and social cohesion, which was why the Chief of the SANDF had agreed, among others things, to open up its sports facilities to local communities, especially disadvantaged ones and to host and present sports related youth adventure and leadership camps in SANDF bases.

In conclusion, he said that DPTSR aimed at enhancing the sustainability of “home-grown” sporting events to attract mass participation. He concluded: “The SANDF will make an impression when it hosts the African Military Games (AMG) 2014 in South Africa. The AMG 2014 will also serve as a celebration of 20 years of democracy and the formation of the SANDF. It will also serve as a platform from which to launch the Defence Sports Capability to greater heights in the 2015 Military World Games in Korea and possibly for defence athletes to participate in Rio in 2016 and beyond.”

Brig Gen Yekelo said that in pursuance of all these objectives the DPTSR would recommend to the Military Command Council that the SANDF establish a credible Physical Education and Sports School to serve as the centre for the education and training of SANDF athletes, PTSR officers and PT instructors to ensure that we develop the capacity to manage and conduct the full cycle of PTSR activities

By Cpl Ally Rakoma

The SANDF Netball Championships took place at the Pretoria Military Sports Club in Thaba Tshwane from 9 to 13 July 2012.

During the award evening the Patron of SANDF Netball, Brig Gen Bukus Potgieter (General Officer Commanding of Military Health Support Formation) said in her welcoming address that team sport such as netball provided a realistic platform for developing oneself, not only as an athlete but as a human being.

She added that where there was competition, failure was never far away. She elaborated: “Unfortunately we learn more about ourselves and others if we fail. Remember, success is never final and failure is never fatal.

It is courage that counts. Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, to all the people you can.”

The Gauteng Netball Team Coach, Col Jackie Mohloane, said that these were exciting times for netball in the SANDF. As the overall winners of the championships it will help them to grow the Gauteng Netball Team brand and to market their team. Col Mohloane proudly said: “If you can’t beat us, join us and if you can’t prove it, you have not done it.”

In conclusion, Lt Col Lynette Plomp, the Chairperson of SANDF Netball, thanked the officials, teams and players for their efforts throughout the championships. She urged them always to work together and carry their passion forward.

Gauteng was the winner in all three team competitions (veteran, male and senior sections). The SA Army female and male sections were the winners in the matches played between the Services.

Best Overall Player of the Tournament – Pte Joyce Maphipha (44 Maintenance Unit)

Best Defender – Amn Herman Wiese (AFB Ysterplaat)

Best Shooter – WO1 Renate Geldenhuys (Western Cape Signal Unit)

Best Centre Court Player – Esn Mathaba Senoamadi (Fleet Maintenance Unit)

Best Team Spirit – Netball squad of Limpopo

Best Overall Player of the Tournament – Pte Joyce Maphipha (44 Maintenance Unit)

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Best Team Spirit – Netball squad of Limpopo

Results of the championships
Doing good for others - 67 Minutes in service of humanity

By Col (Dr) Tobias Masuku, Chaplain General Division

Those who are ready to join hands can overcome the greatest challenge” – Mr Nelson Mandela.

The above quote shows that Mr Mandela is a person who does not want to take personal accolades, but who needs to be understood as part of the collective. The message behind this is that many contributions put together collectively, no matter how small each one of them may be, can make a great impact. This means that every person’s positive contribution is very important. This quote also encourages human beings to bring their unique contributions to the table as part of the collective. This legacy of Mr Nelson Mandela is seen in the 67 Minutes set aside every July for positive contributions of love and charity to the needy. This message is conveyed in many utterances of Mr Nelson Mandela.

What is the actual meaning of this saying? The message conveyed can be understood within the context of others who echoed something similar. The Commander of the Apollo 11 mission, the late Mr Neil Armstrong’s landing on the moon as the first human being to do so on 20 July 1969 viewed that achievement not only for himself but for the whole human race. For instance, when he set foot on the moon, he stated: “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind”. Mr Nelson Mandela’s friend, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, also indicated his support for Mandela’s dream when he said: “Do your little bit of good where you are; it is those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world”.

The list is endless for quotes like those of Mr Nelson Mandela. What message is conveyed in these quotes? Individual contributions towards teamwork for the good of humankind can produce the desired results, no matter how big the challenges may be. They encourage all people to contribute their part in doing good works regardless of the size of the contribution. What looks like a small contribution ends up making a big impact in the collective.

The Scriptures also carry examples of small elements that end in something big. One may think that something is a small contribution for the good of others, but God has the ability to multiply or transform it into something big. This means that one should not be discouraged from contributing positively regardless of the size of the contribution, no matter how small the contribution may look. For instance, one of the smallest seeds on earth (2 mm in diameter) is the mustard seed (Matthew 13:31-32). It is so small that others may overlook it. It is used as a spice in various countries. Those who want to lose weight are advised to stay far away from it because it carries a reasonable amount of fat. Small as it is, it does wonders. If planted, it can be transformed from being a seed into a big tree with branches on which birds can build their nests. Remember the event when God (John 6:1-11) used five loaves and two fishes to feed the multitude.

What do all these have to do with us today in the Department of Defence? Let us not undermine our positive contributions towards others, no matter how small those contributions may be. It is therefore important to make a positive impact in communities around us. There are many examples of contributions which may look small, but that can have an enormous impact on the lives of others. Take for instance the adoption of a needy child by a unit where members may contribute an amount from their salaries towards the child’s upbringing, including his or her education. The contribution may begin like a mustard seed and end up transforming the child into a very important person in society who may also positively transform others.

Let us therefore look around us and make positive contributions for the betterment of the needy. Let us make every day of our lives a Mandela Day.
Promoting the continuous development of junior managers

By Mr S.K. Ntozinkulu, Senior Personnel Practitioner, PSAP ETD
Photo: WO1 Linda Moore

 Altogether 43 Public Service Act Personnel (PSAP) on salary levels 6 to 8 recently successfully completed the Emerging Management Development Programme at the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) in Pretoria.

The objectives of this programme were to provide PSAP on salary levels 6 to 8 with cutting-edge competencies to prepare them for the future challenges of the junior management service.

The Programme was presented in a highly interactive style over a period of 15 working days and consisted of three blocks of five days each. A lively interactive mix of new thinking and individual and group learning characterised the proceedings.

The content, logistics and facilitators of the Programme were rated excellent. The learners indicated that they were equipped with knowledge, skills and a better understanding of their roles as junior managers.

Chief Directorate Human Resource Development (CD HRD) acknowledges the great need for the development of PSAP who are emerging managers. It is envisaged that another Emerging Management Development Programme will be co-ordinated by CD HRD (PSAP: Education, Training and Development) through PALAMA in the 2013/14 Financial Year.

The learners’ contributions throughout the Programme constituted clear evidence of the success of the Emerging Management Development Programme. Learners shared ideas and common interests and found new ways of improving their own and group performances so that they were able to address their personal developmental areas. This programme has played a vital role in filling critical skills gaps required from junior managers.

These Public Service Act Personnel on salary levels 6 to 8 successfully completed the Emerging Management Development Programme at the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy.
Madiba, We Salute You.