Commander-in-Chief
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FRONT COVER: Mr Jacob Zuma, the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, after being sworn in for his second term as President of the RSA. (S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole)
We commence this edition on a sombre note as we pay tribute to three fallen soldiers of the SA Air Force: Maj Tsepo Malia (37), Capt Marcelino Wembie (28) and Capt Francois Hugo (27). They lost their lives when the Cessna Caravan C208 aircraft they flew crashed near Lydenburg in Mpumalanga on 17 June 2014. We extend our sincerest condolences to the members’ families and loved ones. Read about their Memorial Service on page 5.

In this edition we also report on the newly appointed Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Mr Kebby Maphatsoe. Read on pages 10 and 11 all about his first official visits to the Services and Divisions of the SANDF.

Our journalists and photographers also attended the Presidential Inauguration at the Union Buildings in Pretoria on 24 May 2014 to bring to you in-depth coverage of this historic occasion when Mr Jacob Zuma, the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, took the Oath of Office on his second term as President of the RSA.

The tradition of an inauguration parade in South Africa dates back to 10 May 1994 when the first democratically elected President of the RSA, former President Nelson Mandela, was inaugurated at the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

It made me proud to see that the Chaplain General, Brig Gen (Rev) Andrew Jamangile, officiated for the first time during the inauguration of the President of the RSA. It was an honour to see the SANDF Chaplain Service officiating at such a high-profile event. This was also evident during the passing away of our first Commander-in-Chief, former President Nelson Mandela, where the Chaplain General officiated. Read on pages 12 to 15 about the role that the SANDF played during the Presidential Inauguration.

Nelda Pienaar
Editor SA Soldier

Ons begin dié uitgawe op ‘n swaarmoedige noot onderwyl ons hulde bring aan drie gestorwe soldate van die SA Lugmag: maj Tsepo Malia (37), kapt Marcelino Wembie (28) en kapt Francois Hugo (27). Hulle het gesterf toe die Cessna Caravan C208 vliegtuig wat hulle gevlieg het naby Lydenburg in Mpumalanga op 17 Junie 2014 neergestort het. Ons innige meegevoel gaan aan hul families en geliefdes. (Lees oor hulle Gedenkdiens op bladsy 5.)

In hierdie uitgawe doen ons ook verslag oor die nuutaangestelde Adjunk-minister van Verdediging en Militêre Veterane, mnr Kebby Maphatsoe. Lees op bladsy 10 en 11 alles oor sy eerste amptelike bezoek aan die Weermagsdele en Divisies van die SANW.

Ons joernaliste en fotograwe het ook die Presidensiële Inhuldiging by die Uniegebou in Pretoria op 24 Mei 2014 bygewoon om aan julle in-diepte verslaggewing oor hierdie historiese geleentheid te bring waar mnr Jacob Zuma, die Opperbevelhebber van die SANW, vir sy tweede termyn as President van die RSA ingesweer is.

Die tradisie van ‘n inhuldigingsparade in Suid-Afrika dateer terug na 10 Mei 1994 toe die eerste demokratiese gekose President van die RSA, voormalige President Nelson Mandela, by die Uniegebou in Pretoria ingehuldig is.

Dit het my trots gemaak om te sien dat die Kapelaan-generaal,brig genl Andrew Jamangile, vir die eerste keer by die inhuldiging van die President van die RSA opgetree het. Dit was ‘n eer om te sien dat die SANW-Kapelaamsdiens herken word om by syke hooi profiel geleenthede op te teer. So was dit ook die geval tydens ons eerste Opperbevelhebber, voormalige President Nelson Mandela se afsterv, waar die Kapelaan-generaal opgetree het. Lees op bladsy 12 tot 15 oor die rol wat die SANW tydens die Presidensiële Inhuldiging vertolk het.

Nelda Pienaar
Redaktrise van SA Soldier
The DOD pays tribute to three fallen soldiers

By Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photo Pte Jonathan Mogano

On 24 June 2014 the SA Air Force held a Memorial Service at Air Force Base Waterkloof to pay tribute to three soldiers who lost their lives when a Cessna Caravan C208 aircraft they were flying crashed near Lydenburg in Mpumalanga on 17 June.

The three soldiers were remembered as men of honour who had given their lives gallantly in the service of their country. Maj Tsepo Malia (37), Capt Marcelino Wembie (28) and Capt Francois Hugo (27) were part of 41 Squadron based at Air Force Base Waterkloof and had participated in an operational training camp.

Paying tribute to the fallen men Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang, the Chief of the SA Air Force, said that the SA Air Force would never forget their bravery and would honour their dedication.

He said: “They did everything patriots were expected to do for their country. Their memory shall forever live with us.”

Speaking on behalf of the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, the Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Mr Kebby Maphatsoe, expressed gratitude and sympathy to the families and mourners. He wished the injured soldiers, Sgt Bongani Mabusela (36) and Cpl David Ramasilo (47), who remained in hospital a speedy recovery.

He said that the three soldiers were on a mission to enhance their skills, which only the SANDF and the SA Air Force, in particular, could offer. He added that they died in the line of duty doing what they loved: “They died ensuring that South African skies remained protected. The three were part of the long history of those who had given their lives for South Africa”.

Mr Oupa Mogotlane, speaking on behalf of the families, said that everyone was devastated and that their fallen sons had died doing what they loved, ie flying. Mr Mogotlane said: “It could have happened to anyone. We know it was an accident. There have been many more before, some in war and some in accidents. We do not hold any grudges.”

In honour of the fallen a moment of silence was observed and wreaths were laid on behalf of the Department of Defence, the SANDF and the SA Air Force, after which family members were given the opportunity to light a candle and place roses next to the portraits of their loved ones to honour their memory. The service was followed by a ceremony to receive their mortal remains.

Mr Godfrey Kallis, Capt Wembie’s brother-in-law, praised him for living up to his calling. He said that Capt Wembie was like a brother to him: “He never forgot his roots and his home, Lavender Hill, in Cape Town. Every time he came home he would always go to his primary school to give inspirational talks to youngsters. We thank God for lending him to us. His death is more than just our loss”.

May their souls rest in peace.

Poem

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those who thou think’st thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonerest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul’s delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell;
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell’st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

- Members of 41 Squadron, Air Force Base Waterkloof

ABOVE: They may have departed, but their memories shall forever live with us fltr: Maj Tsepo Malia, Capt Marcelino Wembie and Capt Francois Hugo.
LETTER OF APPRECIATION

The Defence Advisor acknowledges and appreciates receiving the SA Soldier magazines sent through to his office. The SA Soldier magazine is distributed to the following entities in and around Zimbabwe:

- The Commander Zimbabwe Defence Force
- The Commander Zimbabwe National Army
- The Commander Air Force of Zimbabwe
- The Chief Defence Intelligence
- The Chief of Staff
- Members of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces
- The Commandant and members of the Zimbabwe Staff College
- The Commandant and members of the National Defence College
- The Commandant and members of the SADC Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre
- Defence Attachés accredited to Zimbabwe
- The South African Ambassador to Zimbabwe

The magazine promotes mutual understanding and friendly cooperation between the armed forces of Zimbabwe and the RSA. Col M.J. Mathiba, Defence Advisor to Zimbabwe

THE MILESTONE OF DEMOCRACY

Congratulations to our SA Soldier magazine for an extremely well written edition about our democracy, which described the celebration of 20 years of democracy.

Our democracy encourages us to develop courage, build bridges and then to trust those bridges and cross them in attempts to reach other people. People fail to recognise that the balance of power in society is a structural force that has been achieved along a historical path. It is great to see South Africa being more inclusive by thinking of the needs of our different brothers and sisters, rather than focusing solely on the past.

As SANDF members we have steadily advanced the interests of the African people and our partnership with others around the continent. We accepted this democracy to maintain peace and stability in our neighbouring countries. Though the focus was on temporal issues, let us not forget our lost beloved ones.

Let us quote one of our legends, the late former President, Mr Nelson Mandela: “Let freedom reign, the sun never sets on so glorious a human achievement”. We are to use our democracy not only to see our own needs met but to advance the purpose and plans of the country. When we go through a crisis in our walk with democracy we do not need to go out and look for the past.

What we need to learn in our walk with democracy is how to access and walk in what is already there. And when we do this, we will touch a lost world with the saving and delivering effect of democracy with peace.

Let us continue to share our democracy which is our milestone. I salute you! S Sgt Neo Samuel Monyamane, Polokwane

GRADUATE ASPIRES TO ENCOURAGE SOLDIERS

I graduated on 22 April 2014. The qualification I achieved was a Post-graduate Diploma in HIV / AIDS Management in the Workplace. A total of 278 students started in 2013, some from as far afield as the Philippines and Bangladesh. Most were medical doctors, nurses, teachers and those in the legal professions. Owing to the strict selection process which included having to achieve an average of 65 per cent in all subjects, only 62 students who applied for the Master of Philosophy in HIV/ AIDS Management in the Workplace were accepted, myself included. If all goes well, I intend to pursue a doctoral degree in Philosophy in 2015.

I hope that my graduation photo can be published in SA Soldier and that it will serve as a motivation for other members in uniform to improve their tertiary qualifications. Photos of other members who graduated in the past encouraged me to further my studies. Maj Gabriel Crisp, email

Let us hear from you!

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 concerning the Department of Defence. Regrettably, anonymous letters cannot be published - Editor.
INSPIRING WRITER OF NOTE

Pte Edward Ntoko Zo Mpho Ndlovu (29) who works at the School of Armour in Bloemfontein recently released a book titled Matsimane and His People. Pte Ndlovu started working on his book in the year 2001. Although the book is not about the DOD, he mentions in his book how the SA National Defence Force afforded him an opportunity to travel to many places, among others Lesotho and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Both these places triggered questions about his surname “Ndlovu” as this surname also exists in Lesotho and the DRC.

His Zulu surname with traces in Sotho made him more eager and the thought of compiling a book became more serious. In our interview he mentioned that he was inspired to find his origins and keep his identity. He said: “It is important not to lose one’s origins and to know where one came from and where one is going”. Indeed it is important to know the origins of our families.

HOPE FOR POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER SUFFERERS

I am a retired member of the Regular Canadian Armed Forces. I have twice visited your country, and on each occasion I met many SANDF members.

Canada may seem a far-off country to most South Africans. Yes, the climate up here has cold winters with ice and snow, which you may find hard to imagine. Yet, members of the Canadian Armed Forces have served as peacekeepers in Africa, such as in Namibia during its transition and later in Rwanda during and after the genocide in 1994, and currently in the Sudan and in South Sudan. It was a Canadian, Maj Gen Romeo Dallaire, who was the military commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda during those tragic events in that country. Maj Gen Dallaire, now Senator, has spoken out about an issue of importance to soldiers of all nationalities: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Senator Dallaire has admitted that he has suffered from PTSD as he has been haunted by memories of the brutality he saw in Rwanda.

Another Canadian soldier, Lt Col Chris Linford, who had also served in Rwanda, and later in Afghanistan, has also come forward to admit that he too has suffered from PTSD. As a nursing officer Lt Col Linford contends that there is treatment and recovery from this nightmare. His story can be found in his book Warrior Rising: A Soldier’s, (Victoria, BC, Canada, Friesen Press, 2013).

I have heard that various forms of PTSD affects many former and serving South African service personnel, whether due to recent peacekeeping duties in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the Central African Republic and in other places, or conflicts during the apartheid era. I do not know what programmes may be available for South Africans in treating PTSD, but I recommend Lt Col Linford’s account and his message of hope for all those who suffer. For more information please send me a message. Cpl (reserve) Alex Greer, 39 Service Battalion, Canada

*For more information interested readers can write to Cpl (reserve) Alex Greer at: 38 Lewis Street, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada V8V 2E8, 1-250-383-3420 or send him an email at: greeralex@hotmail.com - Ed.

Pte Ndlovu is an inspiration and an encouragement to others and he says that nothing is impossible to achieve. This poet, writer and aspiring photographer used his own finances to publish the book, and described how difficult it was to publish a book. Owing to work commitments as a Personnel Clerk at the School of Armour, as well as courses, the book has not appeared yet, but the official launch will be in July in Pietermaritzburg. Nevertheless, Pte Ndlovu has been promoting the book and negotiating with bookshops with a view to sales.

As we speak copies of the book are on their way to bookshops in the USA, Rwanda, the DRC, Sri Lanka and Ethiopia as there are people there who are interested in the book. Pte Ndlovu enjoys the simple pleasures in life, including travelling and writing. For further details Pte Edward Ndlovu can be contacted by email: mfanakithi.ne@gmail.com Pte David Tshivhula, 1 Parachute Battalion

MOTIVATION TO RUN

I am so proud and motivated by one of our Defence Corporate Communication members, Lt Col Thérese Bester, who completed her first Comrades Marathon. Congratulations, Lt Col Bester! You made us proud, well done! Ms Doris Swandle, Secretary of Director Defence Corporate Communication

ROAD TAKEN

I am proudly writing this letter as part of the winning team. I am touched by the contribution of our soldiers who are playing a vital role in peacekeeping missions. Look at the new baby, South Sudan, as an additional country on the continent of Africa and our soldiers were physically on the ground making sure peace and stability were maintained. Burundi today is no longer a war zone, but a tourism destination because of our military team. Look at all of Africa: our soldiers are currently preaching about peace. Their role is to change all war zones into tourism areas. They are flying our RSA flag higher and higher. Their contribution within our own country is also remarkable. They put our National Defence Force on the map of the world. Their names are written in the family tree of the world. Their names are written in heaven as they are written in Africa. Who can forget their contribution in neighbouring countries during floods ...

• The list is endless. Cpl M. Guduza, Potchefstroom
AFB MAKHADO CELEBRATES ARMED FORCES DAY

The Officer Commanding Air Force Base Makhado, Brig Gen Schalk van Heerden, recently urged all serving members at Air Force Base Makhado to take part in the celebration of Armed Forces Day by paying a special tribute to our peacekeepers who have fallen in the line of duty while serving the country.

The celebration was aimed at honouring all men and women in uniform who serve the nation. Brig Gen Van Heerden was addressing members of the base who were participating in the celebration of the Armed Forces Day event in support of the bigger event at the Bloemfontein military base where all Services of the SANDF had gathered.

Some of the activities on the day that formed part of the event were: the drill phase parade in columns of flight, cleaning of the housing area and sport, including soccer, volleyball, netball and a fun run. He highlighted the objective of the celebration, which was to unite all South Africans behind our military, to allow the SANDF to interact with communities, to expand public understanding of the military, to showcase the latest equipment and technology that protects the public and to demonstrate the readiness of the military to meet any threat or challenge.

Brig Gen Van Heerden also thanked and congratulated all members of the base for their hard work and outstanding performance during 2013, which had yielded fruitful results. The base received the prestige unit of the year award during the celebration of the birth of the SA Air Force on 1 February 2014 at AFB Waterkloof in Pretoria. Other awards scooped on the day were: the aviation safety award, the Royal Air Force Award to 85 Combat Flying School and the best security squadron award to 515 Protection Squadron.

Other successes of the base in 2013 were winning the SA Air Force Fittest Soldier Competition and receiving most of the individual sports awards and the best non-commissioned officer award which went to F Sgt Craig Lee of 2 Squadron. Brig Gen Van Heerden praised each and every member of the base for their hard work and the contributions they had made, which had led to these awards. He told members to remain focused in order to achieve better results! The following factors contributed much to these awards: passion, patriotism, professionalism, discipline, team spirit and dedication. Hard work pays off; well done to Air Force Base Makhado. Sgt Thomas Mulaudzi, email

SOLDIERS REACHING OUT TO KOPANANG CARE CENTRE

Members from the SA Army Technical Training Centre departed for the Kopanang Care Centre in a village called Ratjiepan in the North West Province on 3 April 2014. The strong team of about 18 were armed with a “Kudu”, spades, rakes, forks and a positive attitude. They were determined to help those who cannot help themselves. On arrival the members of the SA Army Technical Training Centre went straight to work.

The care centre was cleaned inside and out, with improvements to the garden which increased seven times in size after the young men were done with it. The weeds, grass and thorns that were bothering the elderly and the occupants with disabilities were removed and the area looked clean and presentable.

This was not enough for the “boys” as their morale was very high and they were in the mood of giving; they therefore greatly increased the size of the vegetable garden which could now produce seven times the amount of vegetables produced before.

The centre houses people with disabilities, the elderly and the blind. It is not funded in any way and has no donors for its daily upkeep. It is run by the local women who take food from their own homes to support the centre even though they are unemployed.

The SA Army Technical Training Centre had donated food parcels and two wheelchairs earlier in 2013. During April this year food was donated by the officers of the SA Army Technical Training Centre. Capt Ephraim Makola, email
GROUP LIFE INSURANCE SCHEME
Deduction Code: 3889

Start planning now for those unforeseen life events

Presentations will be held at all major units & further information will be provided via the internet & marketing brochures shortly.
The Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans visits SANDF Services and Divisions

By Mr Lufuno Netshirembe

A s part of his orientation in his portfolio as the newly appointed Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Mr Kebby Maphatsoe visited SA Army Headquarters on 23 June 2014 and Joint Operational Headquarters on 27 June 2014 in Pretoria. The objective of these official visits was for the Deputy Minister to obtain a thorough understanding of the SA Army and Joint Operations Division.

At the SA Army Headquarters the Deputy Defence Minister was welcomed by the Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, who introduced the Army Command Council.

A presentation was made by Brig Gen Eduard Drost, Director Strategic Direction, including an overview of the SA Army and its challenges. Brig Gen Drost indicated that the primary challenge of the SA Army was the slow and lengthy procurement process it took to replace obsolete equipment, which gave insight into the workings. He mentioned to the Minister that the SA Army was spending a lot of money to keep its equipment in an operational state. Brig Gen Drost pointed that it was not all doom and gloom in the SA Army as they were making strides in, for example, recruiting professionals from the private sector. Recruiting from the private sector saves money because the SA Army spends less in training these professionals. He further pointed out that the SA Army had invested money in improving their communication systems to synchronise the communications of the SA Army, the SA Air Force, the SA Navy and the SA Military Health Service.

Brig Gen Drost further stated that the SA Army prided itself on its values, especially its military professionalism. The SA Army is committed to success, impartiality and productivity in the execution of its mission. It is competent, dedicated, disciplined, trustworthy, fair and accountable for its actions. Honour: the SA Army behaves ethically, honestly and transparently and promotes respect for life, property and human dignity as entrenched in the law of armed conflict. It is patriotic: all members of the SA Army pledge themselves unconditionally to the country and its people by being loyal and selfless soldiers and citizens. Pride: the SA Army members proudly honour African military traditions. This is maintained by practising the military ethos and being loyal to their units and fellow soldiers in the fulfilment of their duties.

Lt Gen Masondo told Mr Maphatsoe that the SA Army took great care in the selection process for the SA Army because soldiering was not considered as a job, but a calling. Lt Gen Masondo said: “Being a soldier is not an ‘eight to five job’ but a lifestyle in which one should be willing to die to protect his or her country. It is therefore a personal call to be patriotic.”
The Deputy Defence Minister thanked the SA Army for being such a good host. He promised to do everything within his mandate to help improve matters where needed.

The next stop for the Deputy Minister was the Joint Operational Headquarters in Blenny. He was met by the Deputy Chief of Joint Operations, Maj Gen Mbulelo Phako. A presentation was made to the Deputy Minister on programmes being carried out by Joint Operations Division. Maj Gen Phako told the Deputy Minister that the mandate of Joint Operations Division is to be responsible for all joint force employment and to command all SA National Defence Force (SANDF) operations as directed by the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke.

The Deputy Minister was informed of the internal and external operations in which Joint Operations Division was involved. Internally Joint Operations Division offered safety and security support to the SA Police Service through Operation PROSPER. In Operation CHARIOT the SANDF under command of Chief Joint Operations provided humanitarian and disaster relief internally and externally. In Operation ARABELLA the SANDF provided search and rescue service when necessary and when there was no civilian capability available to carry out such an operation. In Operation CORONA the SANDF is involved in RSA border safeguarding.

The SANDF promotes regional and continental peace, safety, security and stability in external maritime operations in Operation COPPER and anti-piracy in the Mozambique Channel. The SANDF was also involved in Operation CORDITE in the Sudan, and Operation MISTRAL in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Deputy Minister Maphatsoe was further informed about the successes of Operation CORONA from 1 January to 2 June 2014. Part of the successes included that undocumented migrants were apprehended, while stolen vehicles, weapons, copper and livestock were recovered.

The Deputy Defence Minister thanked Joint Operations Division for the sterling job they were doing despite the challenges they faced.

The Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans will further visit the SA Air Force, the SA Navy, the SA Military Health Service and the other Divisions of the SANDF as part of the orientation programme.
President Zuma returns as Commander-in-Chief

By Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela and Pte Phillip Pitso

The President of the RSA, Mr Jacob Zuma, the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, took the oath on his second term as President of the RSA at the Nelson Mandela Amphitheatre at the Union Buildings in Pretoria on 24 May 2014. The Chief Justice of the RSA, Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng, led the procession during an event that had drawn local and international dignitaries to the spectacle.

As he took the Oath of Office, President Zuma said: “In the presence of everyone assembled here and in full realisation of the high calling I assume as President of the RSA I, Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma, swear that I will be faithful to the RSA and will obey, observe, uphold, and maintain the Constitution and all other laws of the Republic.”

After the fifth successful general elections South Africa geared itself to inaugurating its newly elected president. The inauguration ceremony coincided with the country’s 20 years of democracy celebrations.

President Zuma said: “I am greatly honoured to stand before you today, to accept the mandate bestowed upon me by millions of our people, to lead this great nation for the next five years. I accept this responsibility and privilege with great humility, given the history of our country and where we come from as a nation.”

Over 4 500 local and international dignitaries, including heads of states and former heads, packed the Nelson Mandela Amphitheatre on that historic Saturday morning.

President Zuma commended the country’s ability to achieve a democratic government: “This is a nation that has worked tirelessly to build a new society from the ashes of apartheid, opting for reconciliation and progress instead of retribution. This year we mark 20 years of freedom, and 20 years since President Nelson Mandela took the oath of office at this very amphitheatre.”

He said the country would work tirelessly as it enters the second phase after its fifth democratic general elections. The President added: “This second phase will involve the implementation of radical socio-economic transformation policies and programmes over the next five years. We have already placed before the nation, the National Development Plan (NDP), our road map which outlines the type of society we envisage by the year 2030. Through this programme we will move South Africa forward to prosperity and success.”

ABOVE: Senior leadership of the SANDF acknowledges the arrival of President Jacob Zuma at the Union Buildings for his inauguration ceremony, flr: Lt Gen Aubrey Sedibe (Surgeon General), V Adm Samuel Hlongwane (Chief of the SA Navy), Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang (Chief of the SA Air Force), Lt Gen Vusi Masondo (Chief of the SA Army), Lt Gen Derick Mgwebi (Chief of Joint Operations) and Gen Solly Shoke (Chief of the SANDF). Brig Gen Brig Gen John Kobie, General Officer Commanding General Support Base Garrison Thaba Tshwane, welcomes President Zuma, while Capt Kelebohile Tshabalala, an Engineering Technologist at SA Air Force Headquarters, looks on. (Photo: Sgt Elias Mahuma)
His priority during the next five years will be to mobilise the society behind the 2030 vision outlined in the NDP, the country’s socio-economic development blueprint. President Zuma explained: “Economic transformation will take centre stage during this new term of government as we put the economy on an inclusive growth path.”

The implementation of the NDP will help move the country closer to the cherished vision of a truly united, non-sexist, non-racial democratic and prosperous South Africa. The President emphasised that through this programme South Africa would move forward to prosperity and success.

President Zuma said: “Today we wish to acknowledge the contribution of every South African to the process of renewal, reconstruction and development of this country in the past 20 years of freedom. It is through your hard work that we are able to count so many achievements in only 20 years of freedom.”

The SANDF conducted the Military Ceremonial Inauguration Ceremony in which a Guard of Honour consisting of the senior leadership of the SANDF, the National Ceremonial Guard (NCG) and the National Ceremonial Guard Band met President Zuma on his arrival at the Union Buildings.

The President elect arrived to meet Generals of the SANDF and the SA Police Service (SAPS) and immediately proceeded to the Nelson Mandela Amphitheatre. As part of recognising all religious faiths, representatives from different religions conducted inter-faith prayer to bless the occasion.

After taking the Oath of Office, the President took position to face the continued on page 14
There was a mass fly-past and other displays by eight aircraft formations. The salute fly-past consisted of three helicopters, namely an Oryx, a BK117 and an Agusta A109 light utility helicopter from different squadrons.

The helicopter formation consisted of helicopters from various squadrons and bases around the country. Flying at around 70 knots, which is about 150 kilometres an hour, the formation included a BK117, Agusta A109, an Oryx and the Rooivalk. The Rooivalk, the country combat support helicopter, has numerous combat capabilities and can therefore conduct successful combat operations as has recently been ably demonstrated in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The light transport formation consisted of a Dakota C47TP from 35 Squadron at Air Force Base Ysterplaat, a Pilatus PC-12 and Cessna Caravans from 41 Squadron based at Air Force Base Waterkloof.

The basic training formation consisted of Pilatus PC-7 MK2’s and Silver Falcons from the Central Flying School at Air Force Base Langebaanweg. The formation flew in the shape of the figure 20 to symbolise the celebration of 20 years of democracy in South Africa, and it left the crowd stunned.

The medium transport formation consisted of Hercules C130s, which are the backbone of the SA Air Force’s medium transport capability. The Hercules is a true workhorse in SANDF operations, and is based at 28 Squadron at Air Force Base Waterkloof. The C130s have served the SANDF with distinction since 1963.

The Hawk formation consisted of five Hawks from 85 Combat Flying School at Air Force Base Makhado in Limpopo. They were painted in the National Colours and flew with camouflaged aircraft symbolising the SANDF’s protection of the country. These aircraft are utilised for the training of fighter pilots.

The Gripen formation consisted of Gripen aircraft from 2 Squadron at Air Force Base Makhado. The Gripen is the front-line fighter aircraft of the SA Air Force and is capable of travelling faster than the speed of sound. They
and well suited to the African battlespace.

After acknowledging the salute the President then addressed the nation. At the end of his speech, he moved to the back of the podium again to take the position between the Generals of the SANDF and the SAPS to face the Guard of Honour for the last time.

Following the address of the President the VIP transport formation, escorted by Gripen fighter aircraft including the Inkwazi (the Presidential Jet), a Falcon 50 and a Falcon 900 flew past.

The ceremony was concluded by the President addressing the public gathered at the southern lawns.

ABOVE: A fly-past performed by four Silver Flacons aircraft of the SA Air Force and an aircraft of the SA Airways over the statue of Mr Nelson Mandela at the Union Buildings. (Photo: S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole)
The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans engages Defence Attachés

Article and photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, recently met in Pretoria with South African Defence and Military Attachés deployed around the globe to discuss matters, especially key issues that have a bearing on their ability to execute their functions more effectively.

The purpose of the meeting was to inform the Defence and Military Attachés of their role as diplomats in carrying out their constitutional mandate. The meeting highlighted the successes and challenges pertaining to security in the RSA and the world at large.

The conference was called by the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans to outline three key objectives, namely to establish a structured forum for dialogue and exchange with the leadership of the SANDF, establish a consultative forum for change management in the organisation and share ideas on some of the key issues facing the organisation in the short, medium and long term.

The main objective of the conference was to assess the state of defence diplomacy in terms of its human resource capacity, its overall strategic approach, design, coordination function and impact on the organisational objectives in order to enhance areas functioning well and propose interim solutions for those areas that are not.

During the discussions, the delegates identified factors which would enable them to deliver on their mandate, and those that were hampering the successful execution of their tasks as they seek to improve on their ability to realise the objectives of Defence Foreign Relations.

Among others, the conference covered topics such as the role and conduct of Defence and Military Attachés, the counter-intelligence role of Defence Attachés, their role with regard to the military veterans department, the Defence Review, defence cooperation and management of Defence Attachés.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula said that Defence Foreign Relations was the first line of contact with foreign defence personnel and as such had to employ the best personnel, those who would not only project a positive image of the organisation, but also ensure the attainment of set objectives.

She said it was therefore important as an organisation to look closely at the methods used for selection and preparation of personnel to deploy as Military or Defence Attachés, adding that while most of them were doing their job with diligence and professionalism there were still some challenges in certain areas.

The Minister affirmed that it was our deepest commitment to achieve the full spectrum of our constitutional
mandate to ensure the successful attainment of the output required, including the meeting of its ordered commitments, mission ready defence capabilities, and sound defence direction and defence compliance within the Regulatory Framework. This will be framed by a value system which first and foremost upholds such values as discipline, transparency, fairness, excellence through leadership, honesty and integrity.

Consequently, successful execution of their duties required professionalism on two levels, namely militarily and diplomatically. Military professionalism presupposes knowledge of the area of the specialty as a military officer, and conduct befitting a military officer, which included posture, bearing and conduct.

In conclusion, Minister Mapisa-Nqakula urged the delegates to know and understand the do’s and don’ts of the diplomatic world, and have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities as official representatives. She said: “You are expected to have a thorough understanding of your host country and its neighbours concerning defence and security related matters.”

ABOVE: Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, Minister of Defence and Military Veterans (middle, front), with the Chiefs of Services and Divisions, takes a moment for a photo with the delegates.
Chief Human Resources received a courtesy call from India

By Ms Thuli Ntuli, Intern SA Soldier

Photo: Mr Themba Mntyali

Chief Human Resources of the SANDF, Lt Gen Norman Yengeni, received a delegation from the Indian National Defence College study tour at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria on 12 May 2014. During the visit, Lt Gen Yengeni held a discussion with V Adm Sunil Lanba, the Commandant of the Indian National Defence College who led the Indian delegation.

They discussed ways in which academic institutions in the defence forces of both South Africa and India could help promote socio-economic development in both countries. Lt Gen Yengeni expressed his delight at how far both defence forces had come.

Lt Gen Yengeni said: “South Africa can learn many things from a fast growing country such as India. I know India produces a large number of engineers, many of whom go to the States. South Africa should also strive to produce high-level skills at the same rate as India.”

ABOVE: Lt Gen Norman Yengeni, Chief Human Resources of the SANDF (right), presenting a token of appreciation to V Adm Sunil Lanba, the Commandant of the Indian National Defence College, who led the Indian delegation.

As part of their visit to the South African National Defence Force, General Hulusi Akar, Commander of the Turkish Land Forces, and his delegation visited the Military Academy in Saldanha last month.

The Turkish delegation, accompanied by Brig Gen Hendrik Kamffer, Director Army Reserves, arrived at the office of Brig Gen Lawrence Mbatha, the Commandant of the Military Academy. A presentation was made by Brig Gen Mbatha and Prof Samuel Tshehla, the Dean of the Faculty of Military Science, which included an overview of the Military Academy and the Faculty as a whole. This was followed by a unit tour that ended with a formal dinner during which the Turkish and SANDF delegations formally exchanged gifts in keeping with this military tradition. Addressing the Military Academy leader group, General Akar stated that both he and his wife, Ms Şule Akar, had enjoyed their visit to South Africa and had found it very informative and were looking forward to visiting Robben Island.

General Akar mentioned that the South African Military Academy appeared to be very professional and he requested that the two academies should foster the relationship in future. In closing, General Akar commended the Military Academy and extended an invitation to the Commandant and Dean to visit the Turkish Military Academy in order to strengthen the relationship between the two academies as he believes the two academies could learn a lot from each other. Brig Gen Mbatha said: “There is no doubt in my mind that the objective of the visit was reached. The Turkish delegation expressed their gratitude for the presentation, the tour around the unit and the hospitality of the South African Military Academy.”

ABOVE: General Hulusi Akar, Commander of the Turkish Land Forces, addressing the Military Academy group.

Turkish Land Forces delegation visits the Military Academy

Article and photo by Maj Engela Meintjes, Communication Officer Military Academy

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ABOVE: General Hulusi Akar, Commander of the Turkish Land Forces, addressing the Military Academy group.
“Deliver on time and in time,”
cautions V Adm (Ret) Mudimu

By Ms Lulu Mzili, General Manager: Marketing and Business Development Armscor
Photo: Courtesy of Armscor

Just over a month after being appointed Chairperson of the Armscor Board, V Adm (Ret) Johannes Mudimu is already hitting the ground running. In his address to Armscor staff, V Adm (Ret) Mudimu emphasised the importance of serving with nobility, pride and integrity.

He said: “Armscor should deliver on time and in time; high levels of professional ethos must be maintained at all times. Our responsibility as a board is to create an enabling environment to ensure that Armscor is capacitated and capable of delivering on its set mandate.”

Armscor is geared towards acquiring defence materiel in time to ensure that the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) is well equipped and ready to safeguard the sovereignty of the country and its citizens. This is critical to the growth of the defence industry.

In his address, V Adm (Ret) Mudimu cautioned employees to avoid corrupt activities and to uphold Armscor’s corporate values. He said that corruption was an obstacle to progress and undermined good intentions.

Members of the Armscor Board are already embarking on roadshows to familiarise themselves with the environment. They will first visit the
• test and evaluation facilities (Gerotek vehicle testing and Alkantpan ballistic testing range)
• defence science and technology institutes (Institute for Maritime Technology, Protechnik Laboratories, Hazmat Protective Systems, Defence Decision Support Institute, Ergonomics Technologies, Fluid and Mechanical Engineering Group, Armour Development)
• Naval Dockyard.

This strategic move will help the Armscor Board make informed decisions to facilitate delivery on its mandate.

The Board reiterated the important role played by employees in the success of the organisation and commended them for previous achievements. Employees were encouraged to work as a team and to move both Armscor and South Africa forward.

With V Adm (Ret) Mudimu at the helm, Armscor is committed to strengthening its relationship with all its key stakeholders and will endeavour to take the defence industry to greater heights.
The SA Army strengthens relations with its military attaché community

By Candidate Officer Marumo Machete, SO3 External Communication SA Army Corporate Communication

Photo: S Sgt Chene Kruger

The Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, convened a meeting of the annual Military Attaché Advisory Corps (MAAC) at the SA Army College in Thaba Tshwane on 16 May 2014.

It was a gathering of nations at the SA Army College when over 33 senior officers from 31 countries, representing all seven continents, met in an interactive setting to share experiences and chart a way forward for the advancement of military relations between their countries.

Addressing the Army Command Council and the military attaché community, Lt Gen Masondo stated the importance of the military and its role in a democracy.

He stressed the need for the military to stay abreast of political developments within their country while at the same time remaining non-partisan. Lt Gen Masondo quoted Burkinabé luminary Thomas Sankara: “A soldier without any political and ideological training is a potential criminal”.

During his address Lt Gen Masondo sympathised with Commander Saleh Usman, Nigerian attaché and Dean of the MAAC, on the abduction of over 200 young school girls in Chibok, Borno state, Nigeria. He said: “Let me use this opportunity to extend our message of hope to the Nigerian people. Our thoughts are with them in their efforts to rescue the more than 200 young girls abducted.”

He said that the SA Army joined the Government of South Africa and the world in the call: Bring Back Our Girls.

Lt Gen Masondo also said: “Those girls belong nowhere else than with their loving families and in their schools learning to safeguard a prosperous future for themselves, their country and the entire African continent.”

The Chief of the SA Army also took the opportunity to engage his audience on South Africa’s Cabinet approved Defence Review which aims to make the country’s National Defence Force stronger and equal to the task before it, namely to defend the borders and territorial integrity of South Africa and maintain peace and security across the African continent.

He took the opportunity to lend the SA Army’s support to military attachés in attendance whose countries were experiencing hardships of one form or another.

Lt Gen Masondo extended words of support to the Malaysian and Chinese attachés in connection with the Malaysian Airlines Flight MH370 that disappeared without a trace in the south Indian Ocean a few hours after take-off.

continued on page 33
The Office of the Military Ombud celebrates its second anniversary

By Pte Phillip Pitso, SA Soldier
Photos: S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

The Office of the Military Ombud hosted a symposium at Eco Fusion Office Park in Centurion, Pretoria, which coincided with its second anniversary. The symposium was hosted to reflect on its role as a guardian for members of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

The theme of the symposium was: “Fairness, Independence, and Trust”. As the first of its kind in Africa the Military Ombud plays a crucial role in ensuring that the armed forces operate with integrity and in a manner which is both accountable and transparent. By handling individual complaints, as well as exploring thematic and cross-cutting issues the Ombud institution helps to prevent human rights abuses, eliminate waste and malpractice, offers recourse in cases of internal military grievances and contribute to the overall good governance of the armed forces.

Lt Gen (Ret) Themba Matanzima welcomed the guests and thanked everyone who was involved in the establishment of the office. He specifically thanked the Office of the Public Protector, the Independent Electoral Commission and the South African Auditor General. He further indicated that they were still looking into ideas and practices that would help the institution to grow, so that it could meet the demands of a modern SANDF.

Experts were requested to analyse and discuss the theme of the symposium. Deputy National Director of Public Prosecutor (DNPP), Dr Silas Ramaite, who has ample experience in constitutional law, deliberated on fairness and independence. He explained what constituted an independent institution and said it was based on fairness and transparency, more especially in a military environment.

Mr Linda Ntuli, an accomplished author and public speaker, gave a dynamic and inspiring presentation on trust as it manifested in a team or corporate environment. Mr Ntuli challenged everyone to nurture and harness their work relationships.

As Lt Gen (Ret) Matanzima explained two years ago in his acceptance speech: “The SANDF will investigate impartially without fear, favour or prejudice”.

ABOVE: Maj Gen (Ret) Henry April (left), a member of the Permanent Defence Force Service Commission, asking a question during the discussion.

LEFT: Lt Gen (Ret) Themba Matanzima, the Military Ombud, welcoming the guests.
The Peace Mission Training Centre (PMTC) in conjunction with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) recently hosted a Workshop on Gender Equality at PMTC with the theme “Enjoy same rewards, resources and opportunities”. The workshop was co-facilitated by Lt Col Dipuo Raadt from PMTC, Ms Aiko Holvikivi and Ms Karin Grimm from DCAF.

In our society today, communities are made up of people with a wide range of ideas and orientations, including issues as fundamental as gender. Anyone engaging in his or her community may be challenged by ideas and orientations that they have not considered.

Differing ideas about gender can be very challenging, especially if a person has not thought about the issues of growing up male or female and how gender expectations affect day-to-day working relationships. The workshop invited people to think and discuss gender and their attitudes toward it.

The workshop provided the participants with the opportunity to discuss issues of mutual interest with a view of improving gender awareness in the workplace. It also afforded them the space to discuss the meanings and linkages between gender, security and defence issues.

The aim of the workshop was to analyse and discuss a series of gender issues, such as supporting equal reward for both women and men for work of comparable value and encouraging commanders to understand gender related issues in the Department of Defence (DOD) to enable them to respond accordingly to the problems that might arise in the workplace.

The following aspects were covered during the workshop: the relevance of gender in the DOD, the relevant international, continental, regional, national and institutional gender policy framework, how to prevent and respond to sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, attitudes, knowledge and skills to enable a non-discriminatory gender policy to be introduced during military training in order for participants to understand gender equality and institutionalise it in working environments.

Courses to be presented at PMTC are as follows: Gender Awareness for Instructors Course for Officers (Lieutenant – Lieutenant Colonels); all Services over the period 10 to 21 November 2014 and Gender Advisers over the period 21 July to 1 August 2014 (Warrant Officers to Lieutenant Colonels). The Course Coordinator is Lt Col Dipuo Raadt, tel (012) 674 5090. These courses are still open for nominations.

ABOVE: Maj Gen Olga Nodola, Chief Director Transformation Management (5th from right, front), workshop participants and facilitators in front of the Peace Mission Training Centre.
The SANDF participates in Ficksburg Career Exhibition

Article and photo by 2Lt Derick Sekgobela, Acting Communication Officer 2 Field Engineer Regiment

The sports fields of Ficksburg were abuzz when the 2014 Ficksburg Career Exhibition was recently hosted. The youth from the local community were present to acquire information and advice from the experts who exhibited at this function. The career exhibition was organised by a group of departments in active service in the Ficksburg area. Four schools participated, namely Boitumelo Senior Secondary (SS) School, Maralleng SS School, MJ Mohlahli Communication Tech School, and Tlotlisong SS School.

The opening address was made by a representative of the Mayor of Setsoto’s Office, Mr Jobere Makobe, who expressed his gratitude for the support of the different organisations in making the event a success. The Ficksburg Career Exhibition was an initiative of the Free State Marching and Drilling Programme by the veterans of the SA Revenue Services in the Free State province. They adopt different high schools in the province and introduce a discipline plan in the form of drilling and a code of conduct for learners in the school.

The career exhibition was presented by various organisations, such as the Department of Home Affairs, student counsellors from the University of South Africa (Unisa), the Fire-fighting Division, the SA Police Service, Air Force Base Bloemspruit, as well as the Human Resources Recruitment Office Bloemfontein and 2 Field Engineer Regiment representing the SA Army. These organisations assisted the Grade 12 learners with their questions concerning possible careers in their fields of interest.

2 Field Engineer Regiment had its share of shine as Capt Marius Volkwyn and the Paratroopers Section displayed different items of engineering specialised equipment, some of which was used as part of the Engineering Doctrine Course. The SA Air Force members also displayed one of their aircraft engines, an R5 Assault Rifle, mess etiquette, training programmes and career paths in the SA Air Force, as well as a marching and drilling programme.

Later in the day, different schools had a drill competition.

The Fire-fighting Division also demonstrated its fire drills and explained different fire-fighting methods. They entertained the spectators with their own drills.

The day ended on a high note as the learners received an opportunity to drive in a Gerco Carrier. One of the learners mentioned that this initiative had really helped with discipline. Nthabiseng Mogorosi, one of the senior learners, said: “The drill programme helps us with our behaviour, and also assists the teachers to control the learners, especially senior learners.”

This initiative goes beyond instilling not only discipline in learners, but it also helps develop the best moral behaviour in the youth. They can build a youth with good strong qualities, young men and women of integrity. South Africa, as a whole, can reform the thinking calibre of its youth and redefine the meaning of learning through such programmes.

ABOVE: Learners doing the “Right dress with elbow intervals” during their drill demonstration for spectators.
# MILITARY SKILLS NATIONAL COMPETITION
## ENTRANCE FORM

*(After completion fax to 012 355 1570 / e-mail: uys@cornergate.com)*

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What is the Military Skills Competition?

Every year the Reserve Force Council is host to the Military Skills Competition, supported by the Defence Reserves. The competition is open to all ranks, gender and ages. We have invited various countries to enter teams for the 2014 competition and are looking forward to observe how their skills have developed over the past few decades. Unit commanders are urged to enter at least four members to be considered for the team prize.

Please note: All entries to be submitted through your unit.

Disciplines

Rifle Shoot: 200m
- Deliberate: Prone position: 10 rounds in 2 min.
- Rapid: Prone position: 10 rounds in 1 min.
- Wearing of helmet paratrooper is compulsory.
- Dress: 4b: Long sleeves (Cammos)

Pistol Shoot: 25m
- Deliberate: Standing position: 10 rounds in 2 min.
- Rapid: Standing position: 10 rounds in 30 sec.
- Wearing of helmet paratrooper is compulsory.
- Dress: 4b: Long sleeves (Cammos)

Water Obstacle: 50m
- The competitor must cross five obstacles in a lane of a 50m swimming pool as quickly as possible.

Land Obstacle: 500m
- The competitor must pass over 20 obstacles on a 500m track as quickly as possible.
- Dress: 4b: Long sleeves (Cammos)

Combat Run: 8km
- Running the full distance over different types of terrain in as short a time as possible.
- Dress: 4b: Long sleeves (Cammos)

Hand Grenade:
- Throwing four grenades, 1575g, at each of four targets placed at 15m, 20m, 25m, 30m.
- And three attempts to throw the grenades as far as possible. Furthest to count.

Contacts

Reserve Force Council:
- Mrs Fryer
- Tel: 011 444 2843

Defence Reserves:
- Col Motswadira
- Tel: 012 355 6300

SA Army: Force Prep: ETD:
- Lt Col Kamana
- Tel: 012 355 1516

OIC MILCOMP 2014:
- Lt Col J.J. van der Westhuizen
- Cell: 083 321 9356
- Email: uys@cornergate.com

Closing Date for Nominations
30 September 2014

Fax Nominations to:
- Lt Col Kamana: 012 355 1570

E-mail nominations to:
- Lt Col Van der Westhuizen: uys@cornergate.com

Website: www.rdiv.mil.za
The SA Army’s vision to enhance its mission readiness through the systematic rejuvenation of its human resource composition was further endorsed when over 1 900 young recruits from all over the country graduated during their passing-out parade at Infantry School in Oudtshoorn on 16 May 2014.

The passing-out parade was held to acknowledge and showcase the skills and discipline the Military Skills Development System (MSDS) recruits had acquired during their Basic Military Training as well as to display, endorse and enhance the image of training provided by Infantry School.

This was more than just a graduation day for the recruits. It was a moment of pride for families, friends, instructors and the SA Army because of the young people who chose to serve instead of responding first to the need of self-fulfilment. This particular type of young person is usually passionate, dedicated, very bright and eager: exactly what the SA Army is searching for.

The Basic Military Training introduced them to military discipline and military culture. They conquered and withstood the vigorous course of being taken from a civilian to being a well-trained South African soldier. Through this training they were transformed and were different from ordinary civilians.

ABOVE: Middle, fltr: Brig Gen Siseko Nombewu, outgoing Officer Commanding of Infantry School, Maj Gen Lindile Yam, General Officer Commanding of Infantry Formation, Col Abram Nthejane, incoming Officer Commanding Infantry School, Brig Gen Xolani Mankayi, Chief of Staff of Infantry Formation, and Brig Gen Michael de Goeede, Director Force Preparation of Infantry Formation, with the achievers of Infantry School.

LEFT: Maj Gen Lindile Yam, the General Officer Commanding of Infantry Formation (right, front), and his entourage inspect the parade.
The training they received not only provided them with military skills, but also contributed to their social upliftment by providing them with general life skills beyond the military environment that they can use after completing their military service.

Young people who graduated and demonstrated skills during the passing-out parade acquired these skills through the Military Skills Development System (MSDS), which was initiated and implemented by the Department of Defence (DOD) to empower the youth with specific military formative and functional skills, many of which are nationally accredited and portable into the civilian labour market.

The MSDS serves as a developmental opportunity through which strong leadership qualities are developed and sound values and ethics of civic responsibility are instilled in the participating youth, which qualities make these young people highly sought after by employers after completion of their MSDS services. These also alleviate poverty by granting employment and career development opportunities to the youth. Through this programme the SANDF provides access for youth to education, employment, health and other services to afford them better living conditions. These efforts are being made to provide youth with ample opportunities to develop their skills, capabilities, personalities and become good citizens of the country. The SANDF provides a complete and committed soldier with an unquestionable patriotism through the MSDS.

In his opening address Maj Gen Lindile Yam, the General Officer Commanding of Infantry Formation, said that he was honoured and proud of the many sleepless nights of planning, hard work, endurance and dedication of the youth.

In closing, he wished all the recruits well as they were embarking on an unforgettable journey. He mentioned that the SA Army was a unique family and prided itself on discipline and commitment.
The SA Army Young Lions Skills Development Programme is an annual project which was initiated in 2009 by the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

The intention of the programme is to involve selected youth in an adventure of military discipline, skills development and a training programme which will help support the annual recruitment into the SANDF.

The SA Army Infantry Formation instructed Lt Col Godfrey Mokoma, Officer Commanding of Regiment De la Rey, and Maj Johann Boshoff, a Young Lions Programme Coordinator, to conduct the programme which consisted of 84 Grade 11 and 12 learners from different local schools in Potchefstroom. The Young Lions Skills Development Programme encourages learners to join the SANDF. This outreach programme assists in...
identifying youngsters with the right profile to become part of the rural development programme or join the Military Skills Development System (MSDS) after they complete Grade 12.

During his welcoming address at Regiment De la Rey, Lt Col Godfrey Mokoma said: “It is crucial that young men and women realise that life is about choices and that they need to exercise them wisely; we hope that your time with us will be an informative one. I urge you to knuckle down and accept the challenges of your new environment. Here we function with orders, instructions and discipline.”

During their visit to various military installations, they were introduced to the life of a soldier and were taught drills and other disciplinary requirements of the military. Their next visit was to the SA Army Specialised Infantry Capability (SAASIC Reserve Force) where they were briefed on the roles and functions of the SAASIC Reserve Force and Military Veterinary Institute.

Lt Col Henry Holder, Officer Commanding of the SAASIC Reserve Force, said: “This unit welcomes everybody who wants to make a difference. As a soldier you will live by its code of conduct. You will work with your fellow members, you will serve your country and defend its integrity, and you will commit yourself to the unit and serve as a volunteer. Here you will have a cause and therefore you will be successful.”

The Officer in Charge of the Military Veterinary Institute, Lt Col Leon Henry Coertzen, and S Sgt Jacob le Grange of SAASIC Reserve Force conducted the lectures. The learners also visited 102 Field Workshop for general knowledge of the heavy recovery trucks that load tanks and tons of equipment.

The 2014 annual SA Army Young Lions Skills Development Project coincided with the 80th anniversary of Regiment De la Rey. The Young Lions ended their mock training at the Dirkie Uys Shooting Range with Exercise LERATA, meaning “noise”, where pyrotechnics were demonstrated with a high volume of fire from various weapons and a live attack during the night.

S Sgt Michael Saayman from 1 Tactical Intelligence Regiment exhibited thermal imaging equipment and explained that SA Army Intelligence was a force multiplier as it had invested in equipment and technology to provide SA Army forces with the ability to out-perform their opponents in both human and material terms.

A Young Lions participant, David Olyn (20) from Potchefstroom Technical School, said: “It is a unique experience as we usually watch this on television. It is hard work, but fun, and this Young Lions programme teaches me discipline, respect and military knowledge to enable us to work as a team.”

Another Young Lions member, Theo Roos (18) from Ferdinand Postma, said: “I feel very excited and honoured to have successfully completed the Young Lions Skills Development Programme as I have longed to see the capabilities of the SA Army. I experienced things I never thought I would in my life. On behalf of my fellow Young Lions, we thank the SANDF for initiating this prestigious skills development programme for the young people of South Africa.”
Young Lions’ tough challenge in Potchefstroom

Cape Town. Regiment De la Rey is responsible for organising the programme in Potchefstroom.

The Regimental Sergeant Major of Regiment De la Rey, WO2 Jeremiah Matho, said the unit had already conducted its sixth Young Lions Skills Development Programme and that basic military standards of fitness were adhered to even though they were training learners. He indicated that they were not worried about their sluggish start as training would be jacked up once they start introducing the young people to more military components during their school holidays camp.

The unit had to deal with the arrival of 375 Grade 10 learners from local schools in Potchefstroom. Only 70 will be chosen to be part of the Young Lions Programme and will return in June during their school holidays for orientation in the military environment, particularly the SA Army. The programme is a preparation and recruitment phase for potential candidates entering the Military Skills Development System (MSDS).

Mpho Moruri from Boitshoko High School, who had the best time on a 2.4 km run (12:39 minutes), found the challenge to be most difficult but very exciting. Katelyn Weston of Ferdinand Postma High School said the programme was more like a fitness camp and required discipline and focus.

The SA Army Young Lions Skills Development Programme Provincial Project Coordinator, Maj Johann Boshoff, who is also a school principal at Die Wilge Hoërskool in Potchefstroom, told the learners that they had been chosen as part of an upliftment programme that would teach them the lessons of life.

Maj Boshoff stated that Regiment De la Rey was one of the few units that conduct the annual programme. He said the aim of the programme was to groom participants for the MSDS in which the best learners were selected every year from twelve schools.

He said that although they were able to run the projects as a unit, they faced a number of challenges, including logistical arrangements. He indicated that they intended involving other units in Potchefstroom.

Maj Boshoff said: “I must congratulate the people involved in the programme. And to the learners, please convey my gratitude to your principals and teachers for letting you be part of the Young Lions.”

Regiment De la Rey is a conventional combat ready Infantry Reserve Force unit. It has both motorised and mechanised infantry capabilities and is a core component of the SA Army.

By Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photos: Pte Jonathan Mogano

Regiment De la Rey invited schools in Potchefstroom to its annual Young Lions Skills Development Programme Selections. Grade 10 learners from local schools underwent endurance tests, including a 2.4 km run, rope climbing and object identification.

The programme is intended to involve selected youth in an adventure of military discipline, skills development and a training programme which will also support the annual recruitment of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF). The programme consists of four pilot projects that were launched in Potchefstroom, Johannesburg, Grahamstown and Cape Town. Regiment De la Rey is responsible for organising the programme in Potchefstroom.

LEFT: A soldier shows the learners how rope climbing is done.
The Defence Reserves, in conjunction with the SA Army and the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS), were involved in a marketing and recruitment campaign to attract participation of the best in the University Reserve Training Programme (URTP).

The focus this time was on students in the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province, specifically the students of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the Durban University of Technology and the University of Zululand.

Defence Reserves took charge throughout the campaign with representatives from both the SA Army and the SAMHS doing presentations.

Institutions of higher learning have proved to be the breeding ground of quality leaders and scarce skills. To date the URTP has boosted the Defence Reserves with more than 150 junior officers. Nationwide this programme has proved to be quick and effective: since its inception in 2011 as it has been rolled out on eleven campuses in five of the provinces of the country.

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, was quoted as saying most of the officers were older than 50, with 51 per cent of the Reserves who are Colonels being 61 years old on average. Brig Gen Debbie Molefe, Director Defence Reserves, said: “Graduates and under-graduates will enhance the professional, intellectual and leadership qualities of the Reserves.” Now the URTP is effectively closing that gap and increasing scarce skills within the Defence Reserves.

The students were assured by Col Ed Carton-Barber, SSO Force Preparation (Reserves), that this was a great opportunity to enhance their lives. He added that the programme would not disrupt their ambition to finish their studies.

Students came in eager to hear and find out what this programme was all about. All in all this marketing and recruitment campaign attracted a total of 1 612 students on the three campuses. Students showed interest. One such student was Gugu Mkhize, who is doing her final year Bachelor’s Degree in Public Management at the Durban University of Technology. She said she could not wait to join the programme.

After this massively successful marketing and recruitment campaign the Chief of Defence Reserves, Maj Gen Roy Andersen, and his council are left with the enormous task of choosing exceptional leaders with scarce skills in order to groom a force that may in time make an indelible contribution and an immense difference in the SANDF.
The SA Military Health Service
aero-medical intensive care evacuation system

By Capt Gary Owen Muller, Defence Legal Services Division
Photo: Pte Jonathan Magano

The Institute for Aviation Medicine (IAM) is the custodian of aero-medical evacuation and is a specialised unit within the Tertiary Formation of the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS).

The IAM has been involved in airlifting our soldiers since World War II. The need to get the wounded to medical care as quickly as possible has been identified as vital to improving the chances of survival after injury. Naturally air transportation reduced the time it took for an injured or sick member to reach such definitive care.

However, aero-medical evacuation requires specialised equipment and trained medical personnel to execute a successful mission. Aero-medical evacuation within the SANDF has always been challenging due to the fact that dedicated air ambulances were withdrawn from service, leaving no permanently ready and equipped means to transport a patient. Although the SA Air Force has a number of transport aircraft in which patients can be managed, all these aircraft had first to be reconfigured to achieve air ambulance status. Aero-medical crews were given the task to configure the cabin in order to create an environment conducive to the optimal care of the in-flight patient.

With advances in medicine and the medical equipment used to monitor and care for a patient the IAM has remained abreast of these developments.

However, there were serious challenges in evacuating patients by air:
- No power source was available to charge up medical monitors
- Oxygen cylinders were big and bulky and had to be tied down to prevent movement during flight
- Patients could easily be secured to the stretchers, but not to the aircraft cabin
- Patients had to be restrained on rudimentary “beds” in the aircraft or even at times strapped to the floor
- Medical monitors and equipment lay around the cabin unsecured
- Only poor lighting was available in most aircraft cabins
- Even simple things such as a place to handle intravenous fluids were not available in the cabin
- No single dedicated aero-medical evacuation aircraft existed in the SANDF. A suitable aircraft first had to be reconfigured as an air ambulance.
These challenges amounted to unsafe working conditions and increased the risk of further harm being caused to the patient during an air evacuation.

The need to have a suitable aeromedical evacuation platform was realised.

During March of 2012 the IAM was invited to present at the first Aeromed Africa Conference held in Cape Town. The conference brought together all the role-players in the aeromedical evacuation field. It was at this conference that a patient transport unit in the Agusta and PC-12 aircraft was displayed by the Red Cross Air Mercy Services.

With specifications suited to the SANDF, the task was undertaken to procure an operational patient transport unit in all current SA Air Force aircraft utilised for aeromedical evacuations. Unlike aeromedical transport units in the private sector in which the platform is permanently installed in the air ambulance, the SAMHS had to ensure that this platform could be adapted to any aircraft the SA Air Force allocated to execute an aeromedical mission.

Once specifications were laid down the requirement went out to State tender. Robin Coss Aviation (RCA), a Cape Town based company which builds aircraft and aircraft components, won the tender. The building of the units commenced in mid-2013. The SANDF ordered six of these units, which were subsequently delivered in March 2014. RCA formally handed over the units to the Mobile Military Health Formation in April 2014. The handover coincided with a training exercise which members from the IAM, 7 Medical Battalion, the Mobile Military Health Formation and Area Military Health Unit Hoedspruit attended.

Having RCA Intensive Care Units in the SAMHS has to a large extent solved the problems that needed addressing with regard to effective aeromedical transport. An integrated power supply will now produce enough energy to power any medical monitor, defibrillator or ventilator beyond the life of the internal battery. Built-in oxygen cylinders mean no more loose projectiles in the cabin, while the high-flow Heyer points and increased volume will ensure that oxygen is continuously available.

Independent lighting in the aircraft’s cabin is available, as well as a telescopic intravenous fluid pole for hanging fluids. A patented shelf system can accommodate medical monitors and ventilators within the confined space of the air ambulance. The system is adaptable to any aeromedical evacuation aircraft that the SAMHS can use for flights and is compatible with modern aircraft that may be procured in the future.

The RCA aeromedical intensive care unit is self-contained. A fully immobilising stretcher with aviation-safe restraints is fitted and can be removed to load a patient in the hospital or clinic prior to movement into the air ambulance. A patented loading system will also improve the safety of embarking/disembarking a patient.

In operating the RCA aeromedical evacuation system the SAMHS will continue to provide excellent care for its soldiers and their dependants in the foreseeable future. The SAMHS now possesses one of the most advanced aeromedical evacuation systems in the world to better manage patients in-flight and in so doing, provide continuous critical care even in the most difficult environments.

The Chief of the SA Army said: “We noted the despair and heartbreak of the people of Malaysia and China following the disappearance of Malaysian Air Flight MH370 with 239 people on board and would like to assure them that they will never walk alone. Their pain is ours too. We share their loss."

“We join the whole world in praying for the location and recovery of the plane so that the victims’ families can have some form of closure.”

Commander Usman said: “You are always readily available to be with us here as the MAAC, regardless of your tight schedule, which shows the high regard with which you consider us. Your speech here touched so many of us and we value and appreciate your leadership and words of wisdom.”

Lt Gen Masondo promised to maintain the annual MAAC briefing which helps build lasting relations between the military of participating countries and provides a platform to share expertise.
Defence Works Formation extends its footprint in Mpumalanga

By Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela and Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photo: Pte Jonathan Mogano

Maj Gen Joseph Ledwaba, the General Officer Commanding Defence Works Formation (DWF), inaugurated Col Benjamin Mbanjwa as the new Officer Commanding of the Regional Works Unit Mpumalanga during a parade held at the Nelspruit Rugby Club.

Col Mbanjwa holds a Diploma in Human Resource Management and a Certificate in Project Management from the University of Pretoria and a Senior Management Programme Certificate from the Tshwane University of Technology.

Since integration, Col Mbanjwa has served in different capacities in the SANDF. His recent appointments include being the Defence Attaché to Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. He attended courses in International Relations and Diplomacy and Events Management at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas.

Regional Works Unit Mpumalanga was the last region to formally establish an independent unit on 1 January 2013. Regional Defence Works Programmes in Mpumalanga were managed from Limpopo province according to the structure that existed at that time.

In 2009 the Department of Defence (DOD), under the instruction of the Ministry, established the Defence Works Capability to address the poor state of defence facilities. Following the mandate given to the Chief of the SANDF for the establishment of a Defence Works Capability, guidelines for a facility management structure at the Chief Logistics Headquarters were drafted.

In 2011 interim Regional Works Units were also established throughout the country with the objective of sharing knowledge and for practical skills transfer in labour-intensive construction and artisan training in areas such as electrical maintenance, air-conditioning, painting, carpentry, bricklaying, wall and floor tiling.

The creation of the DWF was approved by the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans on 23 March 2011 and established on 1 April 2011. The DWF was established to provide a cost-effective solution to facility management and maintenance services for the immoveable assets of the DOD.

The mandate of the DWF was to provide the Department with the capability to manage its facilities, including maintenance and repair, construction and facility integrated skills development. Currently, the DWF has approximately 20 projects registered in Gauteng province in the Thaba Tshwane area.

The DWF falls under the Logistics Division. The central elements in the DWF designs are inspired by the functions of the formation:

- The spade represents earthworks and construction.
- The pickaxe was inspired by the dolabra of the ancient Roman legions which used this tool not only to dig but also to fell trees and shape timber in the construction of Roman camps and fortifications. It thus represent both civilian and military construction.
- The trowel represents those functions of the formation related to building work.
- The lightning flash represents those functions of the formation related to electrical work.

As is the case in all SANDF Formation Headquarters, the DWF headquarters unit has the crossed swords at the top of the design. The castellated border belongs to the DWF construction unit. The design was inspired by the battlements of a castle and represents involvement in major construction works.

The rising sun represents the Works Training School providing the light of knowledge. The designs of the Regional Works Units are distinguished by elements derived from the provincial coat of arms or elements which are traditionally associated with the location of the unit. The Regional Works Unit Mpumalanga has the head of a kudu antelope.
Members excel in record management training

The members of the Southern Military Police Region (SMPR) achieved a 95.45 per cent average for their assessment after undergoing a two-day Record Management Programme. These results surpassed that of the Military Police members and Services and Divisions. Lt Col Ian Laubscher from the Documentation Centre, who presented the successful training programme to thirteen members of the SMPR situated at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town said: “This were the best results so far in the DOD.”

These members came from the Aerial Office in the SMPR area of responsibility and are not necessarily record management functionaries but were placed and given the responsibility to fulfil this function.

The training programme addressed all relevant subjects on the daily functioning of record management in the DOD. This is to standardise and generalise the record management function and practices at all Services and Divisions. General feedback from the learners is that there is a definite need for all Record Management personnel and all clients to receive such training.

The Command and Management Information Systems (CMIS) Division and specifically the Documentation Centre is responsible for providing record management, centralised records archiving, information and military historical research as well as a library management service for the DOD. The documentation centre is constantly probing into more effective ways and methods to improve these services. This has led to the provision of specific training to Services and Divisions to improve and maintain effective record management practices in the DOD.

A record management office (commonly known as a Registry) is the heart of any unit (business) and its mandate is to centralise and control the handling of all official correspondence.

The flow of written information is a non-negotiable process that involves record management personnel as well as the clientele or users. File users or clients also have an important role to play, such as to return a file (100, 200, 300, 400 and 500 series) within 72 hours to the Record Management Office, to use the correct file reference, send documents via the Record Management Office and not by fax/email/client-to-client, etc, thereby ensuring that the handling and control of official correspondence is done effectively and in a professional manner.

As requested by Lt Col Alfred Sibozo, SO1 Information Communication Technology, the Provost Marshal General offered a two-day Record Management Training Programme to members working in the Northern, Western, Central and Southern Military Police regions.

The Regional Provost Marshal and staff of the SMPR are committed towards improving the record management function/service at all levels within the SMPR, which supports such training efforts. Lt Col Allen Bronkhorst, SO1 Special Investigation Branch/Special Support SMPR, coordinates all arrangements. He sets a very high standard for a winning team.

Well done to Southern Military Police Region!
Can salt and smoking really cause hypertension?

By Martina Nicholson Associates (MNA) on behalf of Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS)

Photo: Ms Nozipho Zondo

High blood pressure or hypertension is an extremely dangerous medical condition and greatly increases the risk of heart failure, stroke, kidney failure or other life-threatening events. GEMS members asked Dr Joe whether smoking and the consumption of salt could contribute to the development of this condition.

We therefore asked GEMS members to send us their questions about hypertension, or high blood pressure as it is more commonly known. We wanted you to tell us what you wished to know about this important medical condition which has such a great impact on so many South African families.

In this article we explore specific questions received from members, including that of “Sannie” in Booyens and “Salt Lover” in Berea, KwaZulu-Natal. Based on the comments and questions we received, we have put together an article specifically about whether smoking and the high consumption of salt can be linked to high blood pressure.

Can smoking cause hypertension?

It is evident from their questions that a number of GEMS members were most interested to know whether smoking could cause high blood pressure. The truth is that while smoking causes a temporary surge in blood pressure, this soon drops off and there is no direct evidence linking smoking to elevated blood pressure.

That said, we do know that smoking assists with the process of the hardening of the arteries and atherosclerosis, the build-up of fatty deposits in the arteries. This in turn may over time assist in elevating blood pressure.

Smoking has also been linked to the development of heart disease, a number of different cancers and obstructive pulmonary disease. Giving up smoking for a year significantly reduces your risk of heart attack. So while there may not be direct evidence linking smoking to hypertension, there are many good reasons to give it up.

Is salt really so dangerous?

The excessive consumption of salt has for a long time been linked to high blood pressure and as a result has been considered a killer. A recent medical study questioned whether there was really a link between salt and ill health. However, the consensus of most health authorities around the world is that the excessive use of salt in our diet does raise blood pressure and is extremely unhealthy for most people.

This is certainly the case for the South African government, which is taking steps through legislation to reduce the amount of salt that food manufacturers put into food. Food manufacturers have until June 2016 to comply with the first set of salt guidelines.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of South Africa also considers excessive salt intake as hazardous to human health and has put in place a special lobby group to inform South Africans about the dangers of salt.

How much salt is safe to consume?

One of the problems is that so much of the salt that we eat is contained in the processed foods and takeaways we buy. South Africans are also fond of adding extra salt.

According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that the average adult consume less than 5g (a teaspoon) a day, but it has been estimated that many South Africans have in excess of 40g! Salt is even found in foods such as bread, margarine, butter, savoury snacks and a host of other things. Many products marketed as health products also contain high levels of salt.

Cut down on your salt consumption

Most consumers are unaware of the dangers of buying foods with a high salt content and of adding extra salt to their food. What can you as a consumer do about this? Well, you can buy foods that do not contain so much salt. Check your food labels and stop adding extra salt to your food. Rather use other spices to flavour your food.

Sources
Heart and Stroke Foundation of South Africa: http://www.heartfoundation.co.za/
National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, www.nhlbi.nih.gov
When last did you have your blood pressure checked?

Issued by Martina Nicholson Associates
Photo: Ms Nozipho Zondo, Intern at SA Soldier

High blood pressure or hypertension is an extremely dangerous medical condition and greatly increases the risk of heart failure, stroke, kidney failure or other life-threatening maladies.

Why is it important to have your blood pressure monitored regularly?

High blood pressure is usually a symptomless medical condition and most people are completely unaware that they suffer from it. This is until a medical practitioner undertakes a routine blood pressure check and finds that their blood pressure is abnormally high or that they suffer from some sort of health problem as a result of their condition.

If we consider how dangerous consistent high blood pressure can be to our health, it is critical that we make regular visits to our healthcare practitioner for a health check-up, which includes blood pressure readings. It is also important to discuss your hypertension risk with your doctor, particularly if you are an older individual or if you have any history of high blood pressure.

What does blood pressure monitoring involve?

A blood pressure test is easy and completely painless. The doctor or nurse will use a type of blood pressure monitor or stethoscope. The monitor will usually have a cuff that is wrapped around your upper arm. Blood pressure can also be taken at home with a variety of home blood pressure monitors that are available on the market today. It is imperative that such a device should give accurate readings, however.

- Adults should have their blood pressure checked every one to two years if their most recent reading was normal.
- Those who suffer from high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes or other serious medical conditions should have their blood pressure checked more often as recommended by their healthcare practitioner, and at least once a year.

How is hypertension diagnosed?

Our blood pressure changes all the time, usually dropping when we sleep and rising when we are nervous, anxious or exercising. Smoking may also temporarily increase one’s blood pressure. For this reason we as doctors do not diagnose an individual with high blood pressure after just one high blood pressure reading.

Such a diagnosis should only be made after several blood pressure readings taken on several different occasions, including when the person is relaxed and at rest. A doctor will assess how many such readings should be taken based on the patient’s risk factors for high blood pressure. Those who have diabetes or have had a heart attack may, for example, be particularly vulnerable. Once diagnosed, a patient can be treated using medication and introducing lifestyle changes such as an improved diet.

What causes high blood pressure?

This is a very good question and the truth is that in most cases no direct cause is found. We call this essential hypertension. This type of hypertension usually develops over time and surprisingly accounts for 90% to 95% of cases. Some experts believe that ageing may play an important part in this kind of hypertension, as the arteries harden over time and become less flexible, causing blood pressure to rise.

In a minority of cases, high blood pressure is caused by other medical conditions such as kidney disease or hormonal problems, and this is called secondary hypertension. However, there are a number of risk factors for hypertension, and it is more commonly found in certain groups of individuals. These include people who:

- Have a family history of hypertension.
- Are older individuals – the risk increases as people age, men being more vulnerable from middle age and women after menopause.
- Suffer from diabetes – more than half of those with type II diabetes tend to develop hypertension.
- Suffer from other chronic conditions such as kidney disease, sleep apnoea and elevated cholesterol levels.
- Are of African or Indian origin.
- Are obese – the heart usually has to work harder in obese individuals.
- Are not physically active.
- Have a poor diet that includes a lot of salt and few fruits and vegetables.
- Drink an excessive amount of coffee.
- Drink too much alcohol – more than two units a day can elevate blood pressure.

These at risk individuals should take particular care to monitor their blood pressure and work with their doctors to manage their condition. If this is done, high blood pressure can usually be successfully managed.

Sources
Heart and Stroke Foundation of South Africa: http://www.heartfoundation.co.za/
National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, www.nhlbi.nih.gov

Health Matters
History of the South African Irish Regiment - 1914 to 2014

By Maj Izak Stins, SA Irish Communications Officer and Lt David Chambers, SA Irish Support Company Second-in-Command
Photos: Maj Izak Stins

The South African Irish Regiment (SAIR) is celebrating its centenary this year, having served the nation with pride, honour and dedication since its formation in 1914.

The Regiment was formed at the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 with the aim of raising an “Irish” Regiment from among the citizens of Irish descent in Johannesburg and its surrounding areas to fight for the Empire against Germany.

Although the Regiment was raised on 9 September 1914 with the permission of the Union Defence Force Headquarters; the battalion's first official parade, with six companies, formed up at Booyens Camp in Johannesburg on 1 December 1914. This was the date that it was officially announced in the Government Gazette. The 1st of December is thus generally regarded as the Regiment's birthday.

After training, the Regiment was made part of 4 South African Infantry Brigade (part of the Northern Force) and embarked from Cape Town for the then German South-West Africa on 21 December 1914. On 25 December 1914 the Force landed at Walvis Bay and went into action immediately. The Regiment itself first came into contact with German forces on the following day, barely three months after it was raised.

At the end of the campaign in South-West Africa, active Citizen Force regiments were by law not permitted to proceed to other theatres of war as such. Special war service units were created to fight in East Africa and Europe. Volunteers from the South African Irish Regiment were formed, together with members of other units, into the composite 9 South African Infantry Regiment (9 SAI). 9 SAI campaigned in East Africa where it earned honours at Kilimanjaro and in East Africa 1916-17.

The SA Irish were deactivated on 31 December 1919. On 29 January 1921, at a ceremony in Johannesburg, the Regiment was presented with the King’s Colour by Prince Arthur of Connaught, the then Governor-General of the Union of South Africa, in recognition of its service in South-West Africa.

At the outbreak of World War II in Sidi Rezegh. In practice, the usual designation for the Regiment was thus the South African Irish Regiment.

The South African Irish Regiment initially consisted of a Regimental HQ, a support company and three infantry companies. A pipe band was added in 1940. Initial training was conducted in 1940 at Barberton, where the Regiment was grouped together with 2 Regiment Botha and 3 Transvaal Scottish to form the 5th South African
Infantry Brigade. In July of the same year the brigade was shipped to Kenya via the port of Durban to become part of 1st South African Infantry Division.

After concentrating at the town of Gilgil in Kenya, the Regiment took part in the invasion of southern Abyssinia on 1 February 1941 as part of the East African Campaign. It distinguished itself during the fighting at El Gumu, Hobok and Banno in early February as well as more famously during the capture of the fortress of Mega at the point of the bayonet on 18 February 1941. 5 Brigade, including the South African Irish, then returned to Kenya and embarked at Mombasa on 18 April for the North African theatre.

The SAIR reached Suez in Egypt on 1 May and immediately began training for desert warfare. Operation CRUSAIDER, the invasion of Libya and the relief of Tobruk, began in November 1941. 5 South African Infantry Brigade, supported by the Transvaal Horse Artillery Regiment, took part in the bloody fighting at Sidi Rezegh on 23 November 1941.

23 November 1941 is a date indelibly etched in the psyche of the Regiment. An overcast Sunday, it was a momentous one for the Regiment. It was ushered in by a cold wind which cut through even the warmest clothing, bringing shivery rain with much low cloud throughout the day. At first the day was quiet with sporadic contact with the enemy.

In the afternoon, the real storm broke over 5 Brigade as it was attacked by the Afrika Korps 15th Panzer Division using armour and supporting infantry. The SA Irish bore the initial brunt of the attack and, with its sister units, resisted the might of German armoured units in heavy fighting at close range before finally going down in defeat when the infantry was finally overrun as their ammunition ran out.

The bloody fighting at Sidi Rezegh was remembered by the Germans as Totensonntag – “The Sunday of the Dead” in view of the seriousness of their casualties, particularly among the leader group – which they later considered to be one of the reasons for their inability to finally reach the Nile some weeks later.

The bloody defeat at Sidi Rezegh meant that the South African Irish had effectively ceased to exist as a unit; the casualties were extremely heavy (only 140 men of all ranks escaped). In addition, several members of the unit drowned while on their way to Italy by ship as prisoners of war when the ship was torpedoed by an Allied submarine.

Initially survivors of the Regiment served with New Zealand units until the end of November, when they rejoined the remnants of the decimated 5th Brigade at Mersa Matrih. Owing to their heavy losses, the South African Irish and 3 Transvaal Scottish were amalgamated to form a composite battalion which was later reconstituted as 2nd Regiment Botha together with additional replacements coming from the 2nd Witwatersrand Rifles. In this form, the remnants of the South African Irish were once again in action during September 1942, during the fighting at El Alamein.

As for the SA Irish Regiment itself, on its return to South Africa in 1943, was reconstituted as 4/22 Field Regiment, South African Artillery. In this guise, the Regiment later returned to North Africa as a component of the South African 6th Armoured Division and also took part in the subsequent invasion and campaign in Italy.

The Regiment received four battle honours for its service during World War II, but they were not awarded immediately because, at the time of the publication of the honours, the unit was an artillery regiment - artillery regiments in the South African Army do not carry any honours.

However, when the Regiment was later reconverted into an infantry unit it became entitled to those honours and they were incorporated into the colours of the Regiment.

At the end of World War II the Regiment requested conversion into an infantry unit, but this was refused, as there was no intention at that time to establish additional Active Citizen Force infantry battalions. Instead, in June 1946 the SAIR was formally converted into an artillery unit designated 22 Field Regiment (South African Irish), South African Artillery. It remained 22 Field Regiment SAA until 31 December 1959. On 1 January 1960 the Regiment was reconverted into an infantry unit and regained its old name, the South African Irish Regiment.

From 1960 to 1974 the Regiment re-established its traditions and competence as an Infantry Regiment, and during this period received the Freedom of the City of Johannesburg (November 1966) and its Regimental Colours (November 1968). Also during this period the Regiment formed and trained “The Hunter Group”, a volunteer special force unit, which was the precursor to the Reserve Force Reconnaissance Regiments.

In 1971 members of the Regiment and Regimental Association started the annual visit or “raid” to Barberton. In 1966 and 1971 the Regiment participated in the 5th and 10th respective anniversaries of the Republic.

The period from 1974 to 1988 saw the Regiment mustered with 72 Motorised Brigade and being re-established as a conventional
infantry unit. During these years the Regiment saw active duty in Angola during Operations SAVANNAH and PROTEA and undertook operational duties during the Border War, and internal security duties within South Africa. In addition, the SAIR took part in exercises at the SA Army Battle School, e.g. QUICKSILVER and THUNDERCHARIOT.

In 1987 the Regiment underwent conversion from a motorised infantry regiment to a mechanised infantry regiment. In 1979 the Regiment was granted the Freedom of Entry to the City of Barberton in remembrance of the World War II training period and the frequent “raids” to the town. In 1984 the Regiment, as part of 72 Motorised Brigade, participated in the parade celebrating the 10th Anniversary of its formation.

In 1989, owing to the reorganisation of the forces within the conventional force brigades, the Regiment was transferred to 81 Armoured Brigade. This year was also the 75th anniversary of the formation of the Regiment and this event was celebrated with a battalion parade in Barberton. During 1991 the Regiment organised the national 50th anniversary parade of the Battle of Sidi Rezegh in Johannesburg. In the same year, owing to further restructuring of the conventional forces the Regiment was transferred to Northern Cape Command and reverted to a motorised infantry regiment.

During this period the Regiment successfully performed duties in support of the civil authorities in maintaining law and order and undertook more training exercises at the SA Army Battle School. From 1992 to 1998 the Regiment went through a period of significant decline as the annual intake of national servicemen dried up with the ending of conscription. In 1998 the regimental musters was only four strong.

In 1999 the Regiment received authority from Infantry Formation to recruit untrained members directly from the streets and trained them on a part-time basis. On completion of internal training the recruits were sent to a regular army training establishment for final assessment and evaluation.

The success of this approach led not only to the expansion of the concept, but also the transformation of the Regiment, not only with the first black riflemen to enter its ranks, but black officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) joining the unit. During this time, the SA Irish continued its tradition of innovative thinking by motivating and facilitating the joint recruitment and training of new volunteers for all the Gauteng based Reserve Force motorised infantry regiments by creating and operating a combined training team centred on Kensington Garrison, which provided the critical mass of instructors, administration officials and equipment to quickly revitalise units that did not have the means to do so themselves.

Indeed, it is no exaggeration to state that the ability of the Johannesburg based Reserve Force infantry units to meet the SANDF deployment needs since 2003 may be directly attributed to the efforts of the SAIR in 2001, which benefited all units.

In addition to training the “off-the-shelf” recruits, from 2003, SA Irish officers were also a dominant driving force, in conjunction with the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) in conceptualising and planning the University Reserves Training Programme (URTP). The URTP, which is now a formal SANDF programme, recruits and selects potential officers directly from universities and provides part-time training up to first commissioning for successful members, and thereby provides a flow of professionals into the ranks of the Reserves, and indeed the SANDF.

By 2004 the Regiment had reverted to two companies in strength with a Regimental Headquarters, the same size it had traditionally been during the 1950s and 1960s. Since 2003 members of the Regiment have been being deployed almost annually on external deployments in support of United Nations and African Union peace operations in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Sudan. At the same time the Regiment reached effective battalion strength for the first time since the end of National Service. The Regiment is again preparing for peacekeeping deployments in Africa in 2014, as well as being on standby for internal deployment on South Africa’s borders.

In addition to external deployments and its own routine infantry readiness training requirements, 2006 and 2007 saw the Regiment tasked with conversion training for ex Commando members converting to the conventional reserve following the closure of the Commando units. The Regiment is also proud to have participated in Operation PROSPER, our final tribute to our former Commander-in-Chief, Mr Nelson Mandela, at his funeral. Beyond the routine duties of Reserve Force infantry soldiering, the SA Irish are also tasked with ceremonial duties by the SANDF in support of the National Defence Force and at national remembrance observances. On parade, the SA Irish are distinctive with their green hackles and green trews for the infantry, while the regimental pipes and drums are resplendent in saffron kilts.

Indeed, the Regimental Band has achieved an enviable international reputation, having been invited to participate in various international military tattoos (eg the Edinburgh Military Tattoo and the Basle Tattoo) as well as the annual domestic tattoos in Cape Town and Durban and the South African Tattoo at Monte Casino where it has proudly showcased the regimental pipes and drums are distinctive with their green hackles and green trews for the infantry, while the regimental pipes and drums are resplendent in saffron kilts.

The regimental motto of the SA Irish is “Faugh-a-Ballagh” (“Clear the way”). The original motto of the Regiment in 1914 was that of the Royal Irish Rifles (later the Royal Ulster Rifles), “Quis Separabit?” (“Who will separate us?”). During World War II it changed to “Faugh-a-Ballagh”, which has remained to the present time. The motto echoes the history of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, the First Battalion of Irish Rifles, “Quis Separabit?” (“Who will separate us?”) during World War I to “Faugh-a-Ballagh”, which has remained to the present time. The motto echoes the history of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, the First Battalion of Irish Rifles, “Quis Separabit?” (“Who will separate us?”). During World War II it changed to “Faugh-a-Ballagh”, which has remained to the present time. The motto echoes the history of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, the First Battalion of Irish Rifles, “Quis Separabit?” (“Who will separate us?”).

Regimental battle honours were conferred for service in South West Africa 1914-15, East Africa 1940-41, Western Desert 1941-43 and Sidi Rezegh. SAIR has never applied for battle honours related to the 9 SAI service in East Africa in World War I (where large numbers of “ex” SAIR members served with 9 SAI), nor for operations in Angola or the Border War. Today the Regiment continues to serve the government of the day with pride, honour and dedication as it has since 1914 ... with the same fighting Irish spirit.
Celebrating 21 years of support to the Comrades Marathon

Article and photo by S Sgt Menzi Cele, Area Military Health Unit KwaZulu-Natal

Area Military Health Unit KwaZulu Natal (AMHU KZN) has been supporting the Comrades Marathon since 1993 when it established a refreshment station at Vuleka Community Centre at Botha’s Hill (every year since except 2010 due to World Cup commitments). This year the Unit supported the 90th running of the Comrades Marathon on 1 June 2014 and celebrated 21 years of support to the Comrades Marathon this year.

Members of AMHU KZN presented themselves in uniform at this event in order to promote the professional image of the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) and make its presence and visibility felt.

The presence of the AMHU KZN had a significant impact on the athletes by boosting their morale, especially DOD/SANDF members that participated in this long and strenuous down-run from Pietermaritzburg to Durban.

The unit prides itself on having provided almost ten tons of refreshments for the very appreciative athletes in the race.

The Officer Commanding AMHU KZN, Col Trevor Pillay, expressed his gratitude to all unit members who have consistently supported the Comrades Marathon and also acknowledged the support rendered by the Army Support Base KZN Transport Section.

ABOVE: An athlete receiving treatment from the military “medics”.

ABOVE: Athletes passing Military Vuleka Community Centre personnel and trucks.

LEFT: An excited SANDF athlete greeting soldiers.

ABOVE: Members of Area Military Health Unit KwaZulu-Natal at the roadside where athletes were passing.
2014 Comrades Marathon - Pietermaritzburg to Durban

The 2014 Comrades Marathon took place at the time of a very important milestone for South Africa as we celebrate 20 years of freedom and democracy. Although the marathon began in 1921 in different circumstances, it has since then seamlessly fitted in with the objectives of the free and democratic society born in 1994 when millions of South Africans voted for the first time. The dream that was started by Mr Vic Chapman in honour of World War I heroes to highlight the triumph of the human spirit over adversity resonates with the ideals of the founding father of our democracy, who encouraged the spirit of comradeship and selflessness.

It is in this spirit that thousands of marathon runners braved the gruelling 89km through the valleys and slopes of KwaZulu-Natal in the quest to run the Ultimate Human Race – the Comrades Marathon - on Sunday, 1 June 2014, as the Pietermaritzburg City Hall clock struck 05:30.

This is an event that has evolved to embrace the diversity of our country in all respects and is an event that belongs to the people of South Africa. It is a race that stretches body and mind to the limits, a journey in which athletes experience many highs and lows. It is a journey in which athletes fight a battle, not only against a team or opponent, but against themselves. This is a race in which all men and women are equal, as all have the same hills to climb and the same road to tread to achieve their goal: a challenging event that is a great leveller.

There are few events on the SA sporting calendar that generate as much interest, excitement, pride and national unity as the aptly named Comrades Marathon.

A Comrades Marathon “down run” is by no means a race for the faint-hearted. It consists of 36km of energy-sapping, uphill running and provides the ultimate test of human endurance.
Many runners claim to prefer the “up run” over the “down run”, but logic dictates that when all else fails, gravity will pull you downhill, while only sheer guts and flagging energy reserves can power a runner uphill in the final stages of a Comrades Marathon.

**DOD achievements**

Altogether 20 000 athletes from 72 countries entered for the 89th Comrades Marathon in 2014 of which about 18 700 qualified and 16 000 finally registered at the Comrades Marathon Expo. Only 15 300 athletes started the race of whom 11 983 successfully completed it. A total of 3 317 failed to make it to the finishing line before the 12-hour cut-off. Altogether 135 runners from the Department of Defence (DOD), including Defence Reserves, completed the race.

The SANDF had a special stand at the Sahara Kingsmead Stadium in Durban where all the families and friends of the runners got together to watch as the runners entered the stadium. The stand was identified by the banners of the DOD and the SANDF. Lt Col Chris Craig-Mackie and his team from the KwaZulu-Natal Military Athletic Club assisted the Defence runners with their needs and provided warm soup. The Area Military Health Unit KwaZulu-Natal manned a refreshment station 50km into the race for the 20th year, which is an achievement on its own (see article on pages 44 and 45).

The first SANDF athlete to cross the finishing line was L Cpl Edward Sibanda (54) from 5 Special Forces Regiment (SANDF Athletic Club Limpopo). He was also the first SANDF Master Athlete (age group 50 to 59) and 14th overall master in a time of 07:20:29 (overall 392nd position). He completed his 19th Comrades Marathon.

In the second position was Cpl Onkabetse Thole from 3 SA Infantry Battalion (SANDF Athletic Club Kimberley) in a time of 07:20:39, only 10 seconds behind the first SANDF runner, in an overall 395th position. They both obtained silver medals for running under the 7½ hour cut-off – an excellent achievement!

In third position was Lt Thabo Chidi from Joint Tactical HQ Gauteng Province (SANDF Athletic Club Central Gauteng) in a time of 07:50:25 (overall 713th position).

The first SANDF woman runner was Capt Nokholo Hlezupondo from Area Military Health Unit Eastern Cape (SANDF Athletic Club Eastern Province) in a time of 07:51:26 in 32nd position among the female runners.

In the second position was WO2 Sandy de Beer from Army Support Base Durban (SANDF Athletic Club KwaZulu-Natal) in a time of 08:20:45 in 50th position among the female runners and 10th in her age group.

In the third position was Ms Martha Pretorius from the SANDF Athletic Club Western Province in a time of 08:34:30.

All these runners obtained a Bill-Rowan Medal for running under the 9-hour cut-off time.

The first Defence Reserves runner was Mr Mdumiseni Zondi from Natal Carbineers Athletic Club in a time of 06:50:45 (overall position 150th) - an excellent achievement.

Col Zirk Lourens (11:18:18) from the SANDF Athletic Club Pretoria completed his 30th consecutive Comrades Marathon - a first for a serving member in the SANDF.

Lt Col Chris Steyn, also from the SANDF Athletic Club Pretoria and the Chairperson of the SANDF Road Running Association, completed his 23rd consecutive race in a time of 09:28:59.

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**SANDF athlete conquered 30th consecutive Comrades Marathon**

By Ms Michele Boshoff and Ms Karen Fick, daughters of Col Zirk Lourens

Photos: Courtesy of Jetline Action Photo

One of the greatest challenges for any South African is to complete a Comrades Marathon. It is truly a great achievement that requires hard work and discipline. To complete the Comrades Marathon more than once is therefore so much more of an achievement, which has so far only been achieved by an even smaller group of athletes. Then you get the real Iron Man of the long road who begins to collect special numbers. It is this athlete that becomes addicted to the pain and excitement of this race that brings him or her back year after year for another challenge.

This year Col Zirk Lourens, our dad, conquered his 30th consecutive Comrades Marathon - a first for a serving member in the DOD/SANDF.

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ABOVE: This year Col Zirk Lourens conquered his 30th consecutive Comrades Marathon, a first for a serving member in the DOD/SANDF.
Marathon, a first for a serving member in the SANDF/DOD. He has been serving in the SA Air Force for 38 years and is currently the Senior Staff Officer Logistics at SA Air Force Headquarters. As an additional task he has also been the PRO for SANDF Athletics for the past 20 years. He will turn 60 in 2015 when he retires from the SANDF. It is his dream to attempt to complete 40 consecutive Comrades Marathons. He is also one of only nine athletes who have completed 24 Om Die Dam 50km ultra marathons.

Although our dad had serious calf and Achilles-tendon injuries three months prior to the 2014 Comrades Marathon, and has covered only 435km (instead of the usual 1 450km) since November 2013 he was determined to run and finish the race within the 12 hours cut-off time. He finally entered the Sahara Kingsmead Stadium with his special board indicating his achievement, in 11 hours and 18 minutes. He was applauded and cheered by the spectators and was live on SABC2 TV and the big screen at the stadium.

He has run 49 500km during his 30 years of training and participation in races. He only runs six months of the year, from January to June at 04:30 in the mornings.

Our dad said that there was a lot to be learnt from an event such as the Comrades Marathon. First, it takes real strength of character to see a person through this race, something that applies to professional runners and enthusiastic amateurs alike. Then there are basic human values that are needed to carry you over the darker periods on this unrelenting 90km course: perseverance, single-mindedness and determination to be your best. Finally, the Comrades Marathon is an event that inspires ordinary people to do something extraordinary, to change their lifestyle from a sedentary existence to something far better for your health and well-being.

He got involved in his first Comrades Marathon in 1983 while he was seconded to the previous Ciskei Defence Force in King Williams Town. He met a friend and colleague, Lt Col Denis Shawn, the then Officer Commanding of 1 Ciskei Battalion at the time, who was training for his first Comrades Marathon. He convinced our dad to train with him four weeks prior to the Comrades Marathon. At the time our dad was not running at all, and could hardly finish 4km. Our dad had not known or heard about the Comrades Marathon, as he did not participate in road running at all. After watching the broadcast of the Comrades Marathon on 31 May 1983 and after seeing the different sizes and shapes participating and his friend, Denis, successfully completing the Comrades Marathon, our dad told himself: “If they can finish the race, so can I”. In October 1983 he started to train with his friend, Denis, to attempt his first Comrades Marathon in 1984 and he never looked back …

There are many highlights, but the three that stand out are when Mr Wally Hayward (5 times winner since 1930) presented him with his first Green Number on completion of his 10th consecutive Comrades Marathon and Mr Jackie Meek (5 times winner of the Comrades Marathon since 1960) handed him his Double Green Number on completion of his 20th consecutive race. Finally the King of Comrades, Mr Bruce Fordyce (9 times winner of the Comrades Marathon 1981-1990), presented our dad with his Triple Green Number on completion of his 30th consecutive Comrades Marathon. It was the cherry on the cake having the three most-greatest athletes of the Comrades Marathon hand him his Green Numbers. Our dad’s race number - 6630 - was awarded to him in 1984 when he entered the Comrades Marathon and he kept it as it became a personalised number similar to his “ID” number.

Our dad fondly said: “Since I started to run the Comrades Marathon in 1984 my lovely wife, Amanda, and two daughters, Michele (then four) and Karen (then two), now married and their husbands and grandchildren supported me every year. They all take leave and support me on the route and wait for me at the finishing line. My granddaughter, Ivanke Fick (5), has already done three 5km SPAR fun runs, one in a pram and two on own steam. She is a Comrades Marathon runner for the feature!”

His running tips for someone who wants to run the Comrades Marathon:

• Firstly, believe in yourself and your capabilities and know how far you can push your limits.
• Do not get caught up in the excited pace in the early stages of the race.
• Try to stay with a group of runners who have completed the Comrades Marathon previously.
• Do not get onto a “Sub–hour Bus” when you cannot afford the ticket, you will get lost before Drummond (half way).

Our dad has the following to say regarding the Comrades Marathon: “The camaraderie among the runners and the spectators’ support from start to finish is dear to my heart. After all these years I still get excited and goose bumps at the start, and never forget to thank the Heavenly Father on the completion of the race, and acknowledge the Almighty. Amen”. 

ABOVE: Flt: Kenny Craig (completed 40 Comrades Marathons), Col Zirk Lourens (Triple Green Number holder) and Bruce Fordyce (9 times winner of the Comrades Marathon and Triple Green Number holder) after Col Lourens completed his 30th consecutive Comrades Marathon.
Motivation to run the Comrades Marathon

By Lt Col Thérèse Bester
Photo: Courtesy of Jetline
Action Photo

It has been one of my life-long dreams to participate in the Comrades Marathon. I have been watching the Comrades Marathon on television every year for as long as I can remember. Watching the Comrades Marathon last year I made up my mind to participate in the Ultimate Human Race in 2014 instead of watching it on television.

The challenge was to qualify, for which you have to run at least a 42.2km (marathon) in under five hours. I knew I could only run as far as 10km, so a lot of work has to be done to achieve that milestone! (During 2012 I was following a training programme in the gym, and on the road under the supervision of a biokineticist I was training in my own time, but could only run between 5km and 10km. The only race I participated in was the 10km race during the Spar Women’s Challenge and it was tough at that stage.) The first Wednesday after the 2013 Comrades Marathon I joined the Pretoria Military Marathon Club and obtained an official Athletics South Africa licence number. I then had the ticket to participate in road races.

I took the big step and started to participate in road races. I gradually had to run further and further. The goal was to qualify for the Comrades Marathon. The entries for the Comrades Marathon were opened on line between September and November 2013. I entered in September 2013. I had to enter my qualifying race results before 6 May 2014. Between June and December 2013 I participated in two 10km, three 15km, five 21.1km and a 32km races.

Between January and May 2014 there was much hard work to be done. I knew I had to complete at least a full marathon in good time to obtain a good seeding. In January 2014 I participated in the Akasia 3 in 1 (42.2km marathon). It was very tough. In February 2014 I participated in the Infantry School Congo 42.2km Marathon which was during the SANDF Marathon Championships, where I obtained second position in the Ladies’ Veterans category. I ran a very good race and used this time as a qualifier for the 2014 Comrades Marathon. It gave me an “F” seeding. I knew I must prove to myself that I could run further than 42.2km.

In March 2014 I participated in the Old Mutual On- Die- Dam Ultra Marathon (50km). It was very far, but I completed the race in a good time.

In April 2014 I participated in the Old Mutual Two Oceans Ultra Marathon (56km) and managed to complete the race in time. (Over the period 27 May 2013 to 27 May 2014 I ran 1 455km to prepare for the 2014 Comrades Marathon.)

Finally the big day arrived on 1 June 2014, and I participated in the Ultimate Human Race, the Comrades Marathon (89km) from Pietermaritzburg to Durban in KwaZulu-Natal. What a big moment in my life! I dedicated my first Comrades Marathon to both my late parents. At the start line I had so many goose bumps. I completed the race in time and obtained the Vic Clapham Medal (between 11 and 12 hours). My objective was only to complete the first race in time, which I did. It is my plan to participate next year in the “Up-run” from Durban to Pietermaritzburg to obtain the back-to-back medal and my objective is to qualify for a bronze medal (between 9:30 and 11 hours).

How does one prepare to participate in road running? At first it is important to obtain the correct running gear, ie running shoes to suit your stride and proper running socks. The running shoes must be at least one size bigger than your normal shoe size, because when you run long distances your feet swell so there must be enough room in the shoes. The running socks must be at least one shoe size bigger to prevent blisters, especially between the toes. A proper training watch to monitor your time, route, heart rate, etc is also essential.

Diet is also very important. You have to eat well balanced meals. If you eat proper food, you will have higher levels of energy to train and run. Try to restrict yourself by not eating junk-food (take-aways). Drink a lot of water.

Cross-training is just as important. Follow a gym programme that will complement your running programme.

It is advisable to have a qualified trainer or biokineticist to assist you, as this will ensure that you to not over-train and subject yourself to possible injury.

Rest is also just as important as training. You have to take at least two days off every week from your training programme. This will ensure that your muscles rest and recuperate.

Additional supplements are just as important for athletes. You have to take additional supplements, especially calcium and magnesium, Vitamins B and C. Listen to your body and consult your doctor to give you the best advice according to your body’s requirements.

The correct food and fluid intake during a long race such as a marathon or ultra-marathon must be tested before you attempt the longer runs. Only to drink water along the route is not enough - you must take in the food and rehydrating liquids offered to ensure that all the minerals that are lost during the race are replaced. You have to eat a proper balanced porridge at least two hours before your long runs. A few days prior to a long run you have to take in enough carbohydrates and protein.
Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord - 1 Corinthians 1:31

By Chaplain Patricia Mogale Aneto, Chaplain at 2 Military Hospital

It has become the norm that in our social gatherings we feature only because of things we have. Others have been pressured into lying and conforming to other standards in order to fit in. May we be conscious of the fact that it is costly, not only financially, but emotionally, psychologically and spiritually as well?

The present day calls on men and women to lay all the stress on education, positions, intelligence, even physical strength. When we look at 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, the Bible reminds us to look into what we were before our calling. We are reminded that God chose that which looked foolish, weak, despised, lowly and shameful and to nullify the wise.

God is an enabler; He empowers and grants wisdom to those who seek it. He does not want us to trust in our own positions, wealth, intelligence, etc. Hence our country is what it is because of people who are full of boasting and running after things they see. We need to put God first, who is the Maker of heaven and earth and everything in them. One may ask a question: “Why do we love His things and run after His things?” God wants us to love Him and put Him first. Things that are abundant are found only in Him. When we seek after them without Him, we can only experience strife and stress.

It is time that believers arise and declare that it is in Christ Jesus that we live, move and have our whole being. Jesus Christ made us and completed us; life without Him comes to nought. He is our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

In Philippians 2:5-8, the Bible shows us that to get ahead and be at a place where God wants us is to have the attitude of Christ. Though He was God, He never stood on His rights as equal with the Father. He became nothing and took on the nature of a servant. He was humble and obedient to God even to the point of death on the cross.

For too many of us that is something unheard of, hence the many challenges in the SA National Defence Force and in our homes and communities. We have to realise that being where we are is not a matter of pride, but of sacrifice as we are called to serve the country. In this way a lot of stress will be avoided. May ranks not be a symbol of pride, but the honour because they do not make a man. A man is a man when his or her life is based on the character of the one who made him.

Boasting in our own strength, wealth, intelligence, etc can only lead to disappointments and discouragement as all these things are temporary. They pass away, but a man who boasts that his or her life is Christ has a guarantee of a genuine future. May we learn from Him to be humble. As the Bible says in 1 Peter 5:6: “Humble yourselves under God’s mighty hand that He may lift you in due time”. Our lifting may not be today, but in God’s own time and place. Let us wait on Him for those who are in Him suffer neither shame nor disgrace. And when it is He doing the job in the life of a man, He surely will complete it because He is faithful.

May God build for Himself a national defence force after His own heart: men and women whose pride is in the Lord and who boast day and night about His grace and mercies. And may the God of love, the Defender and Protector of His people, make all of those who boast in Him declare like David in Psalm 27:13: “I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living”. God bless you all. Amen.
SANDF gives a family a new start after a fatal fire

By Lt Col Thandy Muavha, SO1 Corporate Communication Defence Works Formation
Photos: Lt Col Arno Botes

In 2011 the Mbiko family from Zwelitsha Nyanga in the Western Cape lost their house in a fire and left them destitute. The fire killed three children.

The occupants were an elderly woman, aged 84, with 8 children and 13 grandchildren. Only four of her children are still alive. For almost three years the family has been staying in two of their five-roomed house as all the others were completely destroyed.

Chaplain Mizamo Diba of Regional Works Unit Western Cape discovered their miserable circumstances and contacted the Ward Councillor for assistance, but was informed that they could not help. Chaplain Diba then approached Col Mziwoxolo Mfeketo, the Officer Commanding Regional Works Unit Western Cape, for assistance.

On investigation, Col Mfeketo decided that the case merited attention, since it is one the priorities of the Department of Defence to have outreach community projects. Critical to the conducting of the project was the role played by sponsors in donating building material to rebuild the house.

The renovated house was recently handed over to the happy Mbiko family. The main functionary was Maj Gen Joseph Ledwaba, the General Officer Commanding of Defence Works Formation, representing both the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans and the Chief of the SA National Defence Force.

ABOVE: The cutting of the ribbon ceremony at the renovated house of the Mbiko family in Nyanga, fltr: WO2 Mongezi Zonke, Maj Gen Joseph Ledwaba, General Officer Commanding of Defence Works Formation, Ms Nomaindia Mfeketo, Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, and Ms Jessy Mbiko, the owner of the house.

LEFT: Members of Regional Works Unit Western Cape busy rebuilding the Mbiko house.

BELOW: Inside the renovated house.
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