Honouring the Battle of Bangui warriors
“Combating crime is the responsibility of every member of the DOD”

Honouring the Battle of Bangui warriors

South Africa and Uganda enhance diplomatic relations

The SANDF in need of educated and skilled young South Africans

Deputy Minister Maphatsoe visits Logistics Division

The SANDF and the Military Ombud sign an MOU

The Chief of the SA Army briefs the media

SANDF Reserves Team wins International Military Skills Competition

Phenomenal women of the SANDF ended Women’s Month in style

DOD Transformation and Gender Conference

SA Air Force Women’s Indaba

SA Navy Youth and Gender Seminar 2014

Celebrating the pillars of society

Working together for the advancement of women’s economic empowerment

Beating breast cancer is early detection

Demystifying endometriosis

“Enhancing our asset management proficiency to sustain DOD military capabilities”

SANDF Women’s Football Championships

An avid Fauresmith Endurance Rider

AFB Waterkloof names floating trophy after soccer star

SANDF women golfers did us proud

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FRONT COVER: Honouring the Battle of Bangui.
(Photos: Sgt Elias Mahuma)

ABOVE: Attendees at the SA Air Force Women’s Indaba wore traditional attire. (Photo: Ms Nozipho Zondo)

For the latest news on defence matters in South Africa, visit our website at: www.dod.mil.za
Since we have celebrated 20 years of freedom for women in Defence on 9 August SA Soldier has decided to commemorate this exceptional day by publishing a substantial number of articles on our women in Defence in this edition.

National Women’s Day (9 August) is not just another public holiday. 9 August is proof of our women’s extraordinary courage. On 9 August 1956 - that historic day - thousands of South African women marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against passes for women.

Hence women of all races in South Africa have a proud legacy of determination and strength. Women are the custodians of the core values of society.

All women in the DOD/SANDF are remarkable people in that they are challenging a previously male dominated organisation.

They are facing daily challenges in which they are called upon to prove that their potential can carry them in the defence environment.

We are proud of our women in Defence and what they have so far achieved in a previously male dominated organisation.

We have qualified themselves for careers that were previously largely preserved for men. Our women are also numbered among the soldiers who are and were deployed inside and outside our borders and on the continent.

Central to the Constitution of South Africa is its commitment to furthering equality among all people.

Since the SANDF supports the Constitution it is committed to addressing gender discrimination by furthering gender equity by means of its interventions, training programmes, etc.

Hence we have an obligation to protect our women’s rights by restoring a culture of respect and love for the women of our nation.

But to foster real change, hard work regarding our attitudes and behaviours is needed.

Let us all get involved in mentoring our young women and developing capacity within the next generation of women leaders so that we can benefit from sustained economic growth, improved literacy and efficient service delivery.

We hail all the women in Defence for contributing to making the DOD/SANDF a better environment for all, in whatever small way, by facilitating dynamic changes in the organisation.

Nelda Pienaar
Editor SA Soldier

*Translation into IsiNdebele done by Ms Thuli Ntuli, Intern SA Soldier.
“Combating crime is the responsibility of every member of the DOD”

By Pte Phillip Pitso
Photos: Ms Nozipho Zondo

The Military Police Division held an anti-criminality conference to accelerate and intensify the effort to fight crime within the DOD and communities served by it at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) International Convention Centre in Pretoria.

The purpose of the conference was to work out a strategy on increasing crime awareness and to review anti-criminality measures in the DOD and the communities it serves, and to inform DOD members about policies, processes and procedures on the prevention of crime.

As the custodian of discipline and a reputable force the SANDF is expected to be a shining example, therefore the issues of crime and discipline are of critical importance. DOD officials and officers gathered over a period of two days to deliberate on crime in the DOD.

With the theme “Combating crime is the responsibility of every member of the DOD” the Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Mr Kebby Maphatsoe, said when he opened the conference: “Criminality therefore is not a functional issue or the sole responsibility of the SA Police Service alone. It is a social issue whose management and prevention are directly related to the social values maintained by a society. Criminality in the DOD cannot therefore be viewed in isolation. Services and Divisions need to support each other to win the fight against crime”.

DOD senior officials, such as the Chief Human Resources, Lt Gen Norman Yengeni, and Brig Gen Tsepo Stanley Buhali,Provost Marshal General, attended presentations and deliberations on matters such as crime trends, combating cash-related crime, building integrity, ethics, morality and law.

Crimes such as theft and fraud, including abuse of financial resources, contribute to the high level of ill-discipline in the DOD.

The Military Police as the custodian of military policing and security is charged with restoring community safety and building trust.

Stanley Buhali, Provost Marshal General, attended presentations and deliberations on matters such as crime trends, combating cash-related crime, building integrity, ethics, morality and law.

The conference concluded that the task was to intensify military policing, law enforcement and be guided by the Military Discipline Bill which seeks to promote a disciplined force that will enhance the security of the people and the territory of the RSA as required by the Constitution.
A good woman is always humble, and humble people are blessed with the most powerful gifts of them all (bayathandeka). She cherishes her children and tells them she loves them every day. She continues to love, care and support her children to the best of her ability, because a home without a mother is like a building without a foundation because it lacks happy moments, the warmth of a mother’s love and advice - the secrets to a happy and healthy life.

A good woman leads by example at all times, inspires and motivates others to become the best they can be and treats everyone equally. She conducts herself in a way that will lead to her being remembered in future with admiration, not with disgust.

A good woman is always vigilant and behaves in a way that will not only open opportunities to others, but will leave a lasting legacy as well. Her unselfish behaviour is evident in her willing to empower others by transferring her experience, knowledge and skills so that people can be more effective in their working environment.

Women in general have proven to be fearless, brave, committed and of strong character. They have evolved in terms of their duties, responsibilities, careers and jobs that were conventionally reserved mainly for men. Nowadays, women can be soldiers and policemen.

I personally fully agree that the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) is setting a good example when it comes to gender equity and transformation. Most SANDF women do not underestimate their own potential and the contribution they can make as individuals, though not everyone is fortunate enough to be given an opportunity to prove themselves or showcase their potential.

The late former South African President, Mr Nelson Mandela, famously spoke of SA women as follows: “Let us join hands in response to the call of the women for unity, peace and development. Let us enter the new century with concrete results to measure our beautiful words. Equal power and glory to the women of South Africa”.

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R200 prize for the best letter!

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CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD WOMAN

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POWER AND GLORY TO THE WOMEN OF SOUTH AFRICA

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WOMEN’S STORY IN DEFENCE

Women across South Africa have a really good story to tell, especially in the Defence force. On the 9th of August South Africa celebrates these powerful figures on a day dedicated to all women. One cannot celebrate this important day without looking back at 1994. Since 1994 women in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) have been afforded good opportunities to express their talents and expertise, as they possess great leadership skills and have applied these skills despite the immense pressure of the past and cultural factors. Women in leadership have contributed a lot to advancing our country and the Department of Defence (DOD). Currently the Department is led by a great woman, Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, who succeeded the hard working Minister Lindiwe Sisulu. There has been great transformation in defence thus far. This is evident as we have women pilots, Officers in Command of different units, women driving Ratels, female submariners, engineers and technicians. Women jump from aircraft with parachutes and are in other jobs that the SANDF offers. Surely women are competent and have a good story to tell, and the next generation of young and upcoming women will take the SANDF forward.

Pte David Tshivhula, email

“WOMEN RECLAIM YOUR ROLE!”

The SA Army Combat Training Centre and all its units celebrated Women’s Day during Women’s Month. The Lohatlha Military Area Women felt it was time for them as women to step into their most confident selves and offer their brilliance to society, both at work and within families, if only because it was painful to live a life that felt small and insignificant. They came together to share their stories of hope, love and transformation as they needed to discover their power by aligning their values with their strength to gain confidence to share their work with the community.

The event was graced by the presence of Maj Gen Ansuyah Fakir, Chief Director Human Resource Development, who acted as the chief functionary. Present as guest speakers were Chaplain Nozengazi Geco, Chaplain of the SA Police Service at Postmasburg, and Ms Rachel Sedilang, educator at Assmang Primary School.

The Commandant SA Army Combat Training Centre, Brig Gen Bhasie Gqoboka, in his word of welcome spoke of the theme by putting emphasis on gender. He also said there would be challenges but that should never deter women from the path of determination and commitment. Challenges we encounter as women should rather make us strong and committed to resolutely spreading our wings.

Maj Gen Fakir underscored the theme by putting emphasis on gender. She said that gender was the role society puts on men and women, which has nothing to do with ability. She urged all uniformed and civilian members to gain experience, volunteer and never to be comfortable with what they knew. She encouraged women to be honest, to be their pure selves and be natural women, which correlated with what Chaplain Geco said in her devotion on “the mask”. Emotions escalated when Chaplain Geco unfolded the story of the mask, namely that women carry so much pain and still put on that mask that all is well. She encouraged them: “Shake it off.”

Ms Sedilang elaborated on the fact that we live in a society that expects so much from us. It is evident that in the developing world women play a vital role; they are more likely to become productive adults and contribute to the economic and social development of societies.

On this day 20 Public Service Act Personnel (PSAP) who had distinguished themselves by long-term service, or more than 25 years in the SANDF, were awarded trophies. The trophy for Woman of the Year 2014 uniformed member was awarded to Lt Genevieve Baffets, a Social Worker at the Lohatlha Sickbay, and the trophy for Woman of the Year 2014 PSAP was awarded to Ms Hannelie Coetzer, Acting Principal Adult Education Centre.

A great function it was indeed, filled with fun and entertainment. The SA Army Combat Training Centre Warrant Officers and Non-commissioned Officers served as waiters.

The “Brothers with Voices” musical group from Postmasburg gave a soothing touch to the event with their melodies, not forgetting a song introduced by Maj Gen Fakir: “The greatest love of all is happening to me” by Whitney Houston.

Bdr Onalenna Thlage, email

DISCIPLINE

From basic training you will hear the word discipline
This word will be passed on from one generation to another
What is discipline?
Discipline is strict self-control of a soldier
Discipline reveals excellence in the character of a soldier
As a soldier it is important to train yourself in this manner, for the benefits are great

Discipline involves staying focused and being committed to your work
Discipline is the ability to stay with something and see it through to a successful end
Discipline is the quality of sticking with a decision that you made as a soldier

If for instance, you decide, “I am going to start getting up by 5 am every day because I want to be punctual for roll call”
And then month after month you stick to your decision, that’s discipline.
You must be able to work without supervision.
To be disciplined entails having the determination to finish with excellence the tasks committed to you.

Discipline is similar to the word diligent.

If you diligently carry out the responsibilities committed to you
You will definitely be promoted at work.

Pte Victoria Mathibela, Platoon 1: 2014 JINI- Best Discipline Student
Women reclaiming their space in the military

By Maj Gen Ntsiki Memela-Motumi, Deputy Chief Human Resources

Photo: Ms Phethagatso Memela-Motumi

Throughout history, women’s involvement in the military has been accepted and appreciated in times of crisis. Interestingly, during these periods many of the restrictions and social conventions with respect to women’s activities are set aside or simply ignored to meet all the unusual demands of a pervasive war. It is important to recall that during the two World Wars women also demonstrated their willingness to serve beyond providing support services when they were brought into the other traditionally male preserves in the absence of a sufficient number of men.

In the South African context, women also fought side by side with their male compatriots during the liberation struggle, and the importance of their participation was indisputable because everyone’s participation was crucial. When the stories of abductions, torture and the brutal killings of our heroes and heroines came to the fore during the Truth and Reconciliation hearings, the populace reacted in the same manner, for example to the late Comrade Nkuthula “Phila” Simelane’s, horrific death. No questions were asked in respect to the correctness of women also taking up arms to liberate their country.

Indeed the 1994 integration process created a favourable environment for women to swell the ranks of the SANDF. Noteworthy is the fact that during subsequent years a survey was conducted on the reasons why women were choosing to enlist in our National Defence Force, which was underscored by four main themes. Firstly, patriotism and the desire to defend and serve our country. Secondly, they are motivated by their desire to obtain a new life experience, something out of the ordinary. Thirdly, they are interested in pursuing a career in the military, some often having dreamed of being a soldier. Last but not least, some thought of the military as a “man’s world” and cited this as a challenge and gave it as a reason for joining. Therefore, as the SANDF celebrates 20 years of democracy, we must seize this opportunity to take stock and applaud women’s achievements, but also focus our attention on the tasks that lie ahead, because the women’s long walk to freedom is not yet over.

Defence Policy stipulates that women have the right to serve in all corps, including combat roles. However, the obsolete military equipment poses a safety risk and a hampering factor in their greater participation. It has further been observed that general fitness is not a problem, but muscle strength and endurance become a challenge, not only for women but for all persons of small stature.

Taking these factors into consideration we have come to accept that we may not reach the set target in terms of women’s representation in certain areas. However, at this juncture there is no reason to believe that if women meet specific post profiles, their performance will be any different from that of their male peers, assuming that they are given the same opportunities and skills - Lt Col Catherine Labuschagne’s achievement of being the first fully qualified female fighter pilot, and the first woman in the world to fly a Gripen solo, bears testimony to this assertion. The Defence Ministry’s stance on obsolescence is that the solution lies in the modernisation of military equipment. This aspiration has been partly fulfilled with the acquisition of the new defence packages in the Air Force and Navy; hence the immediate renewal of defence capabilities is on our organisation’s radar.

As our country’s main challenges are unemployment, inequality and poverty, it thus becomes imperative for consensus to be built with the populace so as to deepen their understanding and appreciation on the importance of arresting the decline in critical defence capabilities through immediate and directed interventions as articulated in the Defence Review. The facts of the matter are that it is the responsibility of the State to provide basic services for its citizens. These are considered as essential human rights - and it is also the responsibility of the State to build and buy arms in order to protect itself against external threats.

It must also be conceded that the basic concept of security is undergoing a profound change all over the world. The security of people is moving to centre stage with more emphasis on income and job security, environmental security, security against crime, security of both individuals and of communities. Social sector development is deemed essential to enable all citizens to have a better life and equal opportunities.

National security is just as paramount, but its attainment is linked more and more with human security, hence consensus must be built on the importance of immediately halting a further decline in defence capabilities, as both social services and defence capabilities are essential for the security of the people and country.

The SANDF is one of the troop contributing countries in the world that deploys a significant number of women in its contingent during peace support operations (PSOs). Research conducted on women’s participation in PSOs indicates that the benefits of deploying them include the ability to put their military training into practice. Female peacekeepers also serve as role models to local women and convey a clear message of no discrimination and equality. Furthermore they also positively influence male colleagues to remain focussed by making them more reflective and responsible in terms of their behaviour and attitudes towards local women. Strangely enough, the elephant in the room at this juncture is women’s participation in Chapter Seven Missions.

Moving forward, the SANDF must have a frank discourse and respond to these frequently asked questions: To what extent are South Africans psychologically prepared and ready to accept that military personnel, including women, are likely to lose their lives and limbs or sustain serious injuries in the execution of their duties? Secondly, if women and men are subjected to the same training in
the SANDF, why do we doubt their readiness? Thirdly, to what extent is this protection of women influenced by patriarchal tendencies? The truth of the matter is that if this conversation does not take place, it means the aspiration of having a female General Officer Commanding Infantry Formation in the medium to long term is nothing but pie in the sky.

Currently, the majority of female soldiers in the SANDF are in the support corps, and the reality is that they will continue to be something of a novelty as long as their numbers in the combat corps remain so small - and their performance will continue to be subject to scrutiny from all sides, even from their subordinates. Therefore raising the number of women recruited at entry level would ensure that there is a significant pool from which to select for the different corps. Furthermore, the decentralisation of recruitment will also ensure a good fit between the post profile and the person. Given that the military is one of the most masculine of all social institutions, it is no surprise that women are expected to go the extra mile in order to prove to their male colleagues that they are indeed worthy to serve in this arena, whereas no big deal is made in respect to some of the male colleagues who are unconsciously incompetent.

Eliminating the gender gap is a protracted process that cannot be tackled by women alone. After all, section 198(a) of Chapter 11 of the Constitution stipulates that national security must reflect the resolve of South Africans as individuals and as a nation to leave in peace and harmony, to be free from fear and to seek a better life. We therefore need courageous powerful men to step forward as vocal and visible allies to serve as role models for other men on how to address inequality issues in their circle of influence. The fact of the matter is that in the 21st century any company that is not committed to gender parity throughout the organisation is obsolete. Moving forward, the quota system should be maintained because what is measured gets done and becomes easy to monitor. Women and girls need the support of their male colleagues, peers, fathers, brothers, uncles and husbands so as to be able to make meaningful contributions in any given sector.

As men are at the helm of most organisations they should regard it as their obligation to ensure that women and girls become equal citizens. The best that they wish for their mothers, sisters and daughters must apply to the workplace. After all, there is a growing realisation in the world today that the limitations on women’s access to resources and decision-making limit their ability to develop and exercise their full capabilities to their own benefit and that of society. Gender has become an important issue that has prompted efforts to equalise opportunities for women and men. The message has become clear that sustainable development cannot take place if it excludes half of the human race.

As mothers, women need to socialise their boys and girls differently in their formative years. We must educate our girls, encourage and inoculate them against cultural messages, including gender barriers that women and girls all over the world must still navigate. There is definitely no need to conscientise women to think and act like men. Women are ready and perfectly capable of leading. Bringing their “womanity” to decision-making in order to balance the abundance of masculinity is indeed the right thing to do. Therefore, consensus building on the gains of promoting gender equality in the workplace would further ensure that all of us understand that the achievement of gender equity is not a zero-sum game - implying loss for men and victory for women. It is rather a question of women and men being given equal opportunities, rights and resources to enable them to unleash their full potential.

It is indeed a constitutional injunction that social justice, human dignity, the advancement of human rights and freedoms, equal protection under the law, non-racialism and non-sexism must be regarded as our fundamental value system. This stance is informed by the recognition of past injustices, as well as the need to celebrate the diversity of South African society. The evolutionary process by which women are to be accepted into a domain pre-empted by men cannot be hurried by orders to do so. Therefore consensus building in order to be on the same page in respect to gender equity is imperative. Much of the burden of proof remains with women, but equitable opportunity to demonstrate ability to do the job must be provided by the organisation that admitted them in the first place. The truth of the matter is that no amount of legislation or modernisation will change the distinguishing and distinctive physical characteristics that women and men are born with. While each sex has its own innate characteristics, for the most part physical strength is a male characteristic.

In these reflections let us also concede that men do not have a monopoly on patriotism, desire for adventure or willingness to risk their lives - and until both share in the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, women will continue to be considered less than fully fledged citizens. Thus far it may seem that women’s own space in the SANDF has proceeded smoothly with the full support of the military system and male colleagues. But women’s claims have also been challenged as a result of the attitudes of some individual men within our organisation. Men who tell women that they should not complain about lack of ablution facilities in deployment areas disregard women’s military authority, and sexually harass women.

Moving forward, violence against women and children must be stopped and addressed as a men’s leadership issue and not that of women. Furthermore, we must also decisively address patriarchal attitudes and tendencies that are harboured by some women and men in the SANDF, as the fact of the matter is that patriarchy, like racism, is an insidious force that is often subtle and hidden, quickly denied and intractable. Lastly, there is no great abundance of men fit for high duties, therefore society cannot afford to reject the services of any competent person. The SANDF cannot be certain of always finding a man for any duty or function of importance. As a result, this organisation should accept that women must be considered when available and able to perform the tasks at hand.

Serving in the peace and security arena is about one’s willingness to sacrifice one’s life in order to protect others. If policy prescripts and the Constitution provide for this, it is the leadership’s responsibility to create an enabling environment for women to pursue successful military careers as it takes many years to rise through the ranks.

20 years into democracy we are proud to declare that women have indeed reclaimed their place in the SANDF. Moving forward, we must remain vigilant and never become complacent. Additionally, we also need to strengthen our organisation’s compliance and accountability mechanism in order to defend and consolidate our democratic gains. The long walk to gender equality is indeed not yet over. Malibongwe!
WOMEN OF MADIMBO BASE CELEBRATED WOMEN'S DAY

Woman's Day celebrations held by the women of Madimbo Operational Base at the Big Tree resort was a spectacular event. The women were ushered in by their male counterparts, treated with much adoration, tenderness and care as it is the day that symbolises the significance and paramount importance of women in the world and in life in general. On their arrival at the resort they were attended by the gentlemen who escorted them into the decorated dining hall to their tables. On the tables were snacks, juice and water served as starters, the champagne being reserved for the toast at the end of the function. The gentlemen pulled out the chairs for the women to take their seats. After the event was opened with Scripture reading and benediction, the programme commenced with a poem on the courage and strength of a woman, the soul custodian of the future generation. The guest speakers reminded the women of their worth and the vital step that women took on 9 August 1956. They stressed that women were the beautiful marvel of creation and they should pride respect, and take care of themselves. Drama was the main event. It displayed the true strength of a woman who had been abused on a daily basis. The audience was moved to tears and the audience empathized with the victim as she acted out the theme: “You strike a woman, you strike a rock”. The play rebuked some men for their malicious treatment of women, and to show men that women were made not from the dust, but rather from the rib, and that men are to hold women close to their hearts and protect them. Rifleman Nelly Manye thanked the guests for their kind words, and urged women to stand as a unit, to work as a team and to love one another. Capt Pogiso Tlhabanelo of 2 SA Infantry Battalion, the Second-in-Command of Bravo Company, was then called to make a toast and everybody was requested to stand up and on the count of three to shout: “Wa thinta Abafazi Wa thinta Imbokodo” (meaning: You strike a woman, you strike a rock); shortly afterwards lunch was served. For myself, I say to women: “Life is strike a woman, you strike a rock); shortly afterwards lunch was served. For myself, I say to women: “Life is

I write this poem in memory of my father,
As my heart is to flourish, there once was a man, so happy he'd be,
But one day, he left for a while, travelled for his job, much more than a mile, she was sad, he had to leave, and hoped for the best,
Hoped not to lament, his job upset her, but knew he was right,
He was in the military, he had to go on military operations,
Letters she'd receive from him every month, at times happy,
Good news always to seek, She sent him a letter telling him how pregnant she was, with their loving son, David Mothapo Jnr,
And he was astounding, couldn’t wait to come see,
When his loving wife gave birth to him, but he never made it, They wouldn’t let him go, so he hoped she wouldn’t be sad,
Oh say it isn’t so, but she was so grateful, that safe he’d be,
He always prayed for him, David Mothapo to see, but on the day Baby turned six, such sad news, A heart not to fix, Daddy had died,
While coming back, they found some things hidden in his green bug, David Mothapo so young, just couldn't see, why had Daddy left me? But at the funeral, he gave him a hug and said: Daddy I love you, I’m still your little bug, They found some letters, And a picture in a frame of baby David and Mommy, And Daddy the same, They were all together, becoming one,
Two years later, now David Mothapo is eight, he knows his ABC, and how to sit up straight, he had to go to school, to represent his dad, It’s just that he wasn’t there, and that made Mommy sad,
And as he went on stage, to talk about dear dad, Everyone thought he was a bum, and that made Mommy mad, But David didn’t care, they just didn’t know he was dead,
He fixed the tall microphone that was just above his head, He spoke so clear and kindly, and the words that he just said, Might have made men cry, when they knew his father was dead,
This is what he said: My Daddy isn’t here to speak, But I know he’s in my heart, Daddy barely visited me, loves sweet taste turned tart, He tried so hard to see me, every single year,
But that silly war, put me and Mommy in fear, I tried so very hard, to be brave for him, My father was a great man, His dear name was Snr David, My Daddy always wanted to be a lawyer. Oh and how he loved me so, and sent me these funny notes, And flowers, toys, and pillows, and his favourite quotes,
One was for me, to never give up and try, The other was for Mommy, for her to not cry, and every time she’d see these,
There’d be a twinkle in her eye, and her tears would suddenly vanish, At night I’d cuddle up, in his army uniform, and I’d pretend its him, keeping me warm, and I was happy she didn’t cry,
That harms, and I know that Mommy would be very happy too,
And when I hugged him in the coffin, we said I love you, The last letter he gave me, said he’d love me forever,
He’d be my guardian angel, and leave me and Mommy never.
And I know this might be silly, but when I close my eyes, I feel him right beside me, to my heart’s surprise, And Mommy feels it too, right in her heart, and I know that is love, It is a complete work of art, and if something by me, An angel you may see, I know Daddy kept his promise, Daddy never left me, And so did Mommy die too. Pte S.D. Mothapo, email

ABOVE: Woman’s Day was celebrated by the women of Madimbo Operational Base at the Big Tree resort.
CIVILIAN RISKED HER LIFE TO SAVE R3 MILLION FOR THE SANDF

Ms Susette Gates is a name that would not have been noticed in the operations of the SANDF in the Central African Republic (CAR) or where any of our SANDF members were serving, until her quick thinking and heroic actions became known.

When the SANDF was deployed in the CAR a few civilians were deployed as well, including Ms Susette Gates in the Finance Management Division who was a cashier or financial officer. She was in charge of the petty cash at the base where she was deployed.

On the fateful day, which many would wish to forget, the Seleka negative forces attacked members of the SANDF and 13 lives were lost. Among the soldiers was Ms Gates. When the negative forces overran the base, she had in her possession R3 million in foreign currency.

While at the mercy of the negative forces, who could do anything they wished, Ms Gates conceived a quick idea to save and smuggle out the money. She politely begged the armed negative forces permission to take her clothes with her.

At the risk of being searched, punished and killed, Ms Gates hid the R3 million in her clothes and successfully smuggled the money out of the base as the negative forces watched, probably thinking the poor woman was obsessed with her designer labelled clothes, yet she was actually saving taxpayers’ money.

Eventually her ordeal and that of her colleagues came to an end, and Ms Gates and others were evacuated to home the tax-payers’ money, although she had the opportunity to get rich quick by taking the money. Ms Gates is indeed a heroine who can be trusted with money.

Last year Ms Gates with Cpl Molatelo Nkoana, a medic who earned the nickname of “human navigator”, appeared in Parliament where they were honoured for their actions during the attack. The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, said: “They are heroines and true patriots”.

Ms Gates left on 29 August 2012 via Kinshasa in the Congo and the next day she and other colleagues landed in the CAR. She describes the day as the scariest in her life. She recalls seeing dead bodies lying in the streets, and the gunshots are still a vivid reminder of what happened during her first international deployment.

Although still traumatised by the experience in the CAR, Ms Gates is ready and willing to be deployed externally, but never “to set foot again in the CAR”. She believes that women should not be exempted from international operations. Her heroic actions are a testimony to the fact that success in the DOD/SANDF is not a preserve of men only.

She was relieved to arrive home and at present serves as a Senior Accounting Clerk at Joint Support Base Wonderboom.

Cpl Ally Rakoma, Pretoria

WOMEN’S DAY IN PEMBA

Pemba, Mozambique – The place where the SA Air Force and SA Navy come together for Operation COPPER, securing the waters of East Africa from an ancient seaborne threat: pirates.

There are currently 108 members making up the land and marine contingent and although we are away from our homes we still remember the significant days on the calendar.

Already feeling like a little community, Women’s Day presented us with an opportunity to celebrate the gentler sex. The women decided to go all out. They whipped out their formal dresses and shopped for fashionable shoes at the local market. They decided to have a women only celebration at Nautilus, one of the few upmarket restaurants close by.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the men were lighting the fires and preparing food for the women at the hotel. The Dakota crew took the initiative in arranging most of the festivities, supported by the rest of the contingent. The new faces from the strike craft managed to fit right in and enjoyed their liberty by the pool where they caught up on the sports.

The women returned from their excursion, amazed by what they found back home: men cheering as they climbed out of the convoy, the smell of good food and celebrations in the air. Everyone had a blast and conversed as if they had been friends for many years.

The Joint Tactical Force Commander, Capt (SAN) Christopher Manig, gave the contingent an inspiring speech about women in defence. This was followed by food and drinks that were served in our lecture room. The night wound down as the ship’s crew slowly departed for the strike craft, and everything returned to normal. The day was, without a doubt, a great success.

Capt Mynhardt Traut, Air Force Base Ysterplaat, 35 Squadron
The President of the RSA, Mr Jacob Zuma, the Commander-in-Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), on Armed Forces Day in Bloemfontein conferred medals on deserving recipients and said others would follow.

The Chief of the SANDF, General Solly Shoke, recently held a medal parade to commemorate the Battle of Bangui in Bloemfontein where 1 Parachute Regiment and detached elements of Intelligence and 7 Medical Battalion (SA Military Health Service) received medals.

A total of 120 iPhrothiya Ye Siliva Medals for bravery and outstanding leadership were conferred on the heroes and heroines of the Battle of Bangui. They had distinguished themselves through noteworthy conduct and meritorious service during the execution of their duties. These soldiers displayed acts of heroism during the Battle of Bangui while deployed for Operation VIMBEZELA in 2013 in the Central African Republic.

The SANDF fought against the Seleka negative forces at Bangui last year where 13 South African soldiers were killed and two others died later from injuries. Although outnumbered the South African soldiers fought like lions in a battle that lasted for two and a half days.

The medal parade was attended by all the Chiefs of Services and Divisions, senior officers, non-commissioned officers and family members. They paid homage to these heroic soldiers who will go down in South African history. The Chief of the SANDF, who officiated at the parade presented...
events

General Shoke said: “Today we pay homage to these soldiers who stood against the Seleka negative forces.” He went on to say that they had adhered to the SANDF Code of Conduct and were a special breed in the SANDF. He added: “You made us proud on the continent, people respect you; you stood by the oath you took.”

The Chief of the SANDF appealed to the soldiers to remember that loyalty and discipline were paramount.

SA Soldier spoke to Col Dumisani Mziki, who was the Second-in-Command of Operation VIMBEZELA. He said: “I feel I am someone, together with my 1 Parachute Battalion members. We thank the Chief of the SANDF: it is something I will never forget, but I am happy today.”

The Officer Commanding of 44 Parachute Regiment, Col Vusi Mahlasela, thereafter hosted all the invited guests at a light luncheon.
**South Africa and Uganda enhance diplomatic relations**

**Article and photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaoele**

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, recently hosted her counterpart from Uganda, Dr Kiyonga Chrispus and his delegation at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria to enhance diplomatic relations and gain an overview, especially of the defence health system, and of the economic, domestic and foreign policies of South Africa.

As strategic partners the two Ministers held discussions on a wide range of issues in various fields of mutual interest in order to optimise strategic capabilities and expertise that would help in realising democracy and good governance. The two Ministers emphasised that the meeting will pave the way for cooperation in defence relations and cooperation dealing with a number of significant areas for beneficial engagements.

Speaking at the meeting, Minister Mapisa-Nqakula emphasised the importance of the overall strategic partnership between South Africa and Uganda and said she hoped that the visit undertaken by her counterpart to South Africa would be beneficial to both defence forces and the two countries at large.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula said: “Therefore the importance that we attach to your working visit to our country has been informed by our relationship that was forged during the liberation struggle. This has since seen our diplomatic relations going from strength to strength since the dawn of our democracy in 1994.

“We attach great importance to the assistance that was given to us in pursuit of our liberation. This partnership that was cemented by the relationship during our struggle is one that needs to be nurtured and enhanced in our endeavour to strengthen democracy, peace and the security of our region.”

She added that since then there have been several high-profile visits and exchanges between the two countries and South Africa therefore viewed its bilateral relations with Uganda as a strategic partnership given its geopolitical position in the East African region. The relationship between the two countries is based on mutual and reciprocal friendship and is firmly grounded in liberation history.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula said: “Your interest in our military health systems and facilities gives further impetus to the already strong relations between our defence forces. As one of the very few militaries around the world with a stand-alone military health system within the SANDF there is a lot we believe we can share with you, Honourable Minister.”

The Minister concluded by saying that the vision for the future as reflected by both governments must be to create a very strong economic region in a secure and peaceful environment to enable them to improve the lives of the people. This relationship between them must be an enabler and catalyst of cooperation in various other fields, including economic development and trade.

South Africa and Uganda continue to cooperate closely and to coordinate their positions in a number of regional and multilateral forums, such as the Africa Union and the United Nations. The two countries share similar perspectives on the political and economic integration processes on the African continent.

In terms of military to military and defence cooperation and undertakings there have several delegations traveling between the two countries as reflected in the cooperation plan. Following the Memorandum of Understanding on Defence Cooperation a range of activities have taken place between the two defence forces.
The SANDF in need of educated and skilled young South Africans

Article and photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

The Head of Communication, Mr Siphiwe Dlamini, accompanied by the General Officer Commanding Training Command, Maj Gen Manfred Mabuza, the Director of Special Projects in the Office of the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Loziziwe Mdlatlose, other senior officers and members of the SANDF recently visited the Vaal University of Technology in Vanderbijlpark in an effort to raise awareness of the SANDF and foster a healthy relationship with the community.

Whereas the core responsibility of the SANDF is to protect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and people of South Africa, its role goes beyond that. It has an inherent capability to contribute to the nation’s economic development and to the upliftment of communities such as those of Vanderbijlpark.

The aim of the Public Participation Programme was to inform the students from the Vaal University of Technology and learners from surrounding schools about the structure, organisation, roles, functions and career opportunities in the SANDF, as well as to expose the youth to the military environment and to create an opportunity to educate them on military matters and the functioning of the SANDF.

A number of schools were invited to the static display to inspire the young people to serve present and future generations of their country in the SANDF. The day offered a fun-filled and educational programme for the youth with various activities and exhibitions as well as a static display which included a wide variety of SANDF hardware.

The SANDF’s participation included a talk on the various Services and Divisions in the SANDF, including exhibitions showcasing its capabilities, expertise and career opportunities for young people in poor communities as a means to promote their resilience and self-reliance.

Speaking to the students and learners, Mr Dlamini said that the SANDF was in the process of rejuvenating itself by recruiting young people from different backgrounds throughout the country. He said: “We particularly need educated and skilled young South Africans to serve in a modern and technologically advanced SANDF.”

He added that to be a member of the SANDF today means to be entrusted with a responsibility to defend the country’s sovereignty in accordance with the constitution and the laws of the country. This requires each member to perform his or her duty with honour, dignity, courage and integrity and to serve with loyalty and pride.

Judging by the number of people that attended the event, it was evident that this event was long overdue at the Vaal. In addition the day left the public with the unique experience of having witnessed the coming together of the SANDF and the very people it served.
Deputy Minister Maphatsoe visits Logistics Division

By Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photos: Pte Jonathan Mogano

The Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Mr Kebby Maphatsoe, recently paid a courtesy visit to the Logistics Division in Pretoria to study its operations.

Deputy Minister Maphatsoe said: “I am glad to be hosted here at the Logistics Division and to be introduced to the Services and Divisions of the SANDF. As a former logistic member myself, I feel that it is appropriate for me to make contact with a division familiar to me and learn about its role and functions.”

He said that the Logistics Division was one of the important sectors in the SANDF because of its role in operations and day-to-day tasks and conceded that it had been his wish to come back and serve the Logistics Division. Having considered a call-up as a Defence Reserve, he was pleased to interact with the Division at his level.

The Chief of Logistics, Lt Gen Bongani Mbatha, said he was honoured to host Deputy Minister Maphatsoe with whom he was well acquainted from their days in exile. He added that the Division required support, especially at Deputy Minister level, to operate efficiently.

Director Logistics Management, Brig Gen Michael Craig, briefed Deputy Minister Maphatsoe and described military logistics as an integrated series of processes required to ensure the availability of materiel, facilities and services as well as the movement of materiel and personnel in support of military operations.

The Department of Defence (DOD) has advanced in the establishment of the Defence Works Formation which is currently operating and executing certain renovation projects at DOD facilities in close cooperation with the Department of Public Works.

Brig Gen Craig said progress was going well and 56% of posts had been staffed. A total of 646 members have been qualified in construction skills and a further 348 members are currently busy with artisan training at a civilian institution.

He stated that the new Defence Review directed the DOD logistics system to provide combat service support on a joint and multinational basis, yet it recognised the uniqueness of systems operating in the land, air, sea and military health domain. It also provided for force provisioning, force preparation and force employment.
The SANDF and the Military Ombud sign an MOU

By Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photo: S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

The Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube, the Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), Gen Solly Shoke and the Military Ombud, Lt Gen Themba Matanzima (Ret) have recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria.

The two institutions have committed themselves to a bilateral cooperative agreement to assist the Military Ombud in the execution of his legislated mandate.

The purpose of the MOU is to provide a cooperative framework to assist the Military Ombud and the department with efficient and effective cooperation as required for the operation of the Office of the Military Ombud.

The Office of the Military Ombud is a statutory body established in terms of the Military Ombud Act 4 of 2012 to investigate complaints lodged by either current or former members of the SANDF regarding conditions of service and complaints lodged by the public regarding the conduct of members of the SANDF.

Gen Shoke said the SANDF would give its support to the Military Ombud and ensure that people complied with regulations from the office. He said: “We would like to assure you that we will give our utmost support in ensuring that you execute your mandate.”

He conceded that the office of the Military Ombud increased the workload of the SANDF. Gen Shoke said: “As you are aware we have an internal grievance procedure, but it is clear that before anybody comes to your office they should have exhausted the internal processes. Only then can they approach your office for an appeal of some sort.”

The Chief of the SANDF said the signing of the MOU was an important event that would facilitate the Military Ombud office. Gen Shoke said: “I hope that this will set an example to those under your command to cooperate with your office. Rest assured that we will make sure that people comply with the regulations.”

The Secretary for Defence indicated that the Military Ombud office had passed the first milestone by implementing the Military Ombud Act. A swearing-in ceremony was held in which a constitutional judge swore in the Military Ombud, Lt Gen Matanzima (Ret), who took the Oath of Office.

He said the second milestone was the opening of the Military Ombud office: “Now that the MOU is signed the office can be fully operational. I hereby commit the office of the Secretary for Defence to give unconditional support to your office.”

Lt Gen (Ret) Matanzima also indicated that the MOU would cement relations between the two institutions and create an enabling environment for the Military Ombud office to execute its mandate. He said they already had sound working relations with key stakeholders.

He said: “The memorandum is a symbol of a strong commitment by the leadership of the SANDF to create an enabling environment for the Military Ombud office to execute its mandate efficiently. The office also has an obligation towards members of the SANDF and the nation as a whole.”

As stipulated in the MOU, the Military Ombud has the obligation to appear before the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans and to provide a comprehensive briefing on its mandate and any other related matter when required.

It is also accountable for the utilisation and implementation of the various resources received from the Department in accordance with the MOU.

The office undertakes to respect the Department’s Individual Grievance Regulation, and for this purpose shall not operate as an office of first instance unless a complaint relates to a matter that is inherent in the system.
The Chief of the SA Army briefs the media

By Ms Thuli Ntuli,
Intern SA Soldier
Photo: Pte Jonathan Mogano

The Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, briefed the media on current developments in the SA Army at the SA Army College in Thaba Tshwane last month. The briefing was aimed at creating transparency regarding the workings of the organisation and its interaction with the public as reflected in the media. The Chief of the SA Army addressed the meeting and gave a detailed account of the SA Army’s progress thus far.

Lt Gen Masondo acknowledged the need for the media’s brutal criticism of the performance of the SA Army because the latter constituted the larger part of the SANDF. Lt Gen Masondo said: “…thus [we] are the biggest element of the Services and from the incidents it can be seen that chances are that you may find one or two of our members involved, but gradually our members are starting to disappear from the list of suspects: all thanks to the SA Army’s adoption of a zero tolerance of ill-discipline”.

He said since January 2014 the SA Army had achieved the following results: confiscation of close to 5 173.8 kg of dagga, 53 stolen vehicles, 19 firearms, 2 shotguns, a revolver and a huge amount of ammunition. They also seized contraband goods to the value of R24.2 million. He added that SA Army personnel had managed to arrest more than 7 029 undocumented persons. They also recovered stolen livestock, namely 152 cattle, 205 goats and 116 sheep.

The Chief of the SA Army also mentioned some of the stresses faced by the SA Army, especially the insufficient budget allocated to the SA Army. He said that though the SA Army still performed their assigned tasks diligently, the National Treasury would do well to fund it appropriately, adding: “We are excited in the SA Army since there is movement on the Defence Review front aimed at bolstering our efforts towards the fulfilment of the Mandate that the Constitution set us, for example combat ready forces to safeguard South Africa’s borders.”

Lt Gen Masondo said that the SA Army should revamp its aging equipment and deteriorating facilities. On the list of priorities for the SA Army were the Infantry’s acquisition of the Badger Infantry Fighting Vehicle, whose manufacture will begin in the 2015/2016 Financial Year, and the SA Army Air Defence Artillery’s short-range air defence star streak missile.

The Chief of the SA Army reassured the public that the SA Army can still defend the country’s interests even though its capabilities are affected by aging equipment. He gave the assurance that the SA Artillery Corps was currently developing its G6 gun which would boost its performance in the field. Lt Gen Masondo also expressed regret at the SANDF having to pull out of the Central African Republic. He said: “Since our withdrawal, the security situation has deteriorated into one where warlords reign supreme and compete with one another at the expense of the vulnerable citizens of the country.”

He encouraged the media to take note of the sterling work of our soldiers while deployed in the Central African Republic. Earlier this year, some of the soldiers were presented with medals by the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, President Jacob Zuma, for gallantry in the Battle of Bangui in Central Africa. He also dispelled rumours in the media that the SA Army had plans to redeploy more soldiers in that country.

The Chief of the SA Army did not rule out plans for the SA Army to respond rapidly in conflict-ridden countries should the African Union ask for assistance.
Denel delivers ambulances to the SANDF

By Ms Vuyelwa Qinga, Group Head of Communications Denel
Photo: Courtesy of Denel

Denel is in the process of delivering 17 truck-mounted ambulances for the SA Military Health Service.

The CEO of Denel Land System, Mr Stephan Burger, says the ambulances form part of a R20-million contract for military ambulances mounted on refurbished Samil 20 trucks. This follows a recent delivery of wide-body ambulances to the United Nations in Somalia based on the Casspir mine-protected vehicle.

The contract for the South African ambulances is managed by Land Mobility Technologies (LMT), a subsidiary of Denel.

Mr Burger says the acquisition of LMT in 2012 has significantly expanded Denel’s range of vehicles and products which can meet the requirements of local and international land forces. It added a capacity for mine-protected vehicles, hulls and cabs as well as product testing, simulations, maintenance and support of other products within the Denel Group.

It also places Denel in a better position to supply armoured vehicles and trucks to the SA Army under its projects Vistula and Sepula. In terms of these contracts the SA Army will acquire new logistical and support trucks (Vistula) and armoured personnel carriers (Sepula).

Mr Burger says LMT is a major subcontractor in Denel Land Systems’ current contract to build the Badger infantry combat vehicle for the SA Army. LMT provides the flat floor landmine protection kit for the 238 locally-designed vehicles to be delivered to the SA Army over a ten year period.

Among LMT’s other products are the Gecko 8x8 tactical vehicle, used by the SANDF, armoured truck cabs, the AV55 and AV91 light-protected vehicles and explosive ordnance disposal vehicles.

Armscor set to cement ties with East Africa

Ms Barileng Dichabe, Manager Corporate Communication Armscor

Armscor was proud to showcase for the first time in East Africa its capabilities in the areas of acquisition, research and development, the naval dockyard as well as logistic freight forwarding services. As part of its marketing support responsibilities, Armscor showcased the South African Defence Industry’s expertise in such areas as design, development, engineering in both land and aerospace structures, missile technology and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), military vehicles, integrated camp systems and many more, at the Land Forces East Africa Exhibition and conference recently held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Through its unparalleled Defence expertise and capabilities, Armscor is set to present collaborative views that will address security challenges experienced by the region and strengthen its defence infrastructure, which is crucial for maintaining peace and security in the region.

Driven by the vision to become the premier technology and acquisition agency for the South African Government and other governments of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, Armscor is forging ahead to penetrate the African Defence market, given the region’s increased defence budget which has substantially grown by an average of 13.6% per year. This is five times more than the industry average.

To the backdrop of celebrating 20 years of democracy, Armscor is proud of the role it has played and still plays in equipping the SANDF with defence solutions both to safeguard the sovereignty of the country and to conduct peacekeeping missions on the continent. Armscor is looking into establishing and strengthening collaborative partnerships that will not only improve the security of the region but also provide smart acquisition solutions to equip the region with state of the art equipment.

The highlights of the conference included engagements concerning East African military collaboration, smart acquisition, maritime focus as well as capacity building in Africa. Over 300 senior regional defence and military experts attended the conference, including government stakeholders and defence industry experts.
SANDF Reserves Team wins International Military Skills Competition

Compiled by Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photos: Courtesy of the Reserve Force Council

Nine members of the Defence Reserves recently participated in and won the Experienced Category of the Inter-allied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR) of the International Military Skills Competition in Hammelburg, Germany. The competition consisted of many essential military components required by soldiers to become combat ready.

Twenty-three international teams, mainly from North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) countries, participated in this year’s competition.

The Defence Reserves team for the first time won the Experienced Category.

Lt Col Uys van der Westhuizen (Infantry) and the team coach, Capt Dougie le Roux (Infantry). Competitors were Maj David Labuschagne (Infantry), Capt Zakes Ditshego (SA Air Force), Lt Wikus du Toit (Armour), Cpl Richman Hlope (Armour), Tp Zwelithini Ngidi (Armour), Rfn Brian Mdlalose (Infantry) and Rfn Herman Smit (Infantry).

Skills evaluated in this annual competition included tactical combat casualty care in a simulated environment, pistol and rifle shooting, crossing of land and water obstacles,
and a military orienteering march over different terrain forms and conditions. The march included subjects such as map-reading, distance estimation and hand grenade throwing.

Lt Col Uys van der Westhuijzen, the Team Manager, said: “What makes this competition even more challenging is the fact that the different shooting events need to be executed within set times, the obstacle crossings and the orienteering march in as short a time as possible and all of this is done in military uniform.”

He added that skills evaluated during the competition included pistol and rifle shooting, which were to be executed within a specified time. Land and water obstacles were also crossed within the shortest time possible. Tactical combat care was evaluated by means of a live scenario simulating injured soldiers requiring immediate emergency medical care in a combat environment. All these competition activities, including the swimming, were executed in uniform.

Lt Col Van der Westhuijzen said: “This competition focuses strictly on military skills that are essential for every soldier to perform his or her task in a combat environment. A typical example is the military orienteering march which consists of tasks such as map-reading, plotting your position on a map, running with uniform while carrying a weapon and throwing a grenade at a target - some of the typical exercises that a soldier might be exposed to when in a combat environment. Such skills help in instances when one needs to escape and evade the enemy or if one is lost in a strange environment. This competition is therefore different from many other competitions. The aim is to provide military skills or improve such military skills that contribute directly to the abilities of our soldiers in uniform.”

Lt Col Van der Westhuijzen added that the Defence Reserves team proved that it was fit and ready when measured against international standards. He said the international experience was great exposure for the members and it paid off as they gained first place in the competition.

Having previously brought home a trophy and medals in 2006, this was one of the biggest motivators for them to do more and outperform their opponents. He said having competing for many years without getting first place, they adjusted their training approach to exploit their strong points and address their shortcomings and learnt from previous experience.

He indicated that they would be hosting the annual SANDF Military Skills Competition in Potchefstroom soon. Lt Col Van der Westhuijzen said: “Units from all over South Africa participate in this event. We are also fortunate to have foreign teams participating in this competition. Namibia, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the USA have indicated their possible attendance at this year’s competition. This event is useful to select a training group to attend training camps where we will choose the final team to compete internationally. We call them the best of the best.”
focus on women

Phenomenal women of the SANDF ended Women’s Month in style

By Ms Thuli Ntuli, Intern SA Soldier

To cap all the activities for Women’s Month in the Department of Defence a Women’s Day Parade was held at Air Force Base Swartkop in Pretoria to pay homage to the country’s women and commemorate the apartheid struggle heroines.

The women in uniform demonstrated their discipline when they paraded smartly dressed in military precision in the uniforms of their Services in front of the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula.

During the parade there was a salute flight by an Agusta A109 light utility helicopter displaying the National Flag and an Oryx helicopter displaying the SANDF Flag. The National Ceremonial Guard Band led by a woman played music which was perfectly synchronised with the marching of the women soldiers.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula praised the women on parade and said that they should feel pride because their actions made it clear that women also belonged in the forefront and were not here by mistake or by favour.

The Defence Minister said that this year the parade was especially important as it coincided with the 60th anniversary of the Women’s Charter adopted in 1954.

Ms Mapisa-Nqakula said: “I also take pride in seeing more women swelling the ranks of the SANDF and being available to serve our nation.

ABOVE: Members of the SA Air Force marching on. (Photo: Mr Themba Mnyali)

RIGHT: The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, inspecting the parade. (Photo: Mr Themba Mnyali)

ABOVE: Female soldiers on parade. (Photo: Sgt Elias Mahuma)
The Defence Minister encouraged the SANDF women, saying: “There is no evidence to prove that men are better prepared than women to take charge of our new democracy”.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula said the women proved their mettle when they entrusted the SAS CHARLOTTE MAXEKE to the roughest conditions at sea in the service of our people.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula said that in the next 20 years the SANDF must promote strategic leadership among women soldiers. To this end they should seek inspiration from the women of 1954. She stressed that they must debunk the stereotype that women, especially black women, have no role in the workplace and are only fit to raise children.

Women such as Cpl Molatelo Nkoana and Ms Susette Gates were distinguished guests at the parade. They excelled in roles perceived to be hetero-patriarchal. Both had shown heroic strength during their deployment in the Central African Republic.

The Defence Minister ended by saying: “The SANDF has a bright future for you all. When you are here you are not lost in some man’s world, you belong here. You earned it.”

drafted the Women’s Charter in 1954. She hailed the great works of pioneering women leaders such as Ms Charlotte Maxeke and urged the women on parade to emulate her qualities.

Ms Mapisa-Nqakula said: “In 1997 we commissioned the third of our new submarines, naming her SAS CHARLOTTE MAXEKE. Like her, we entrusted the SAS CHARLOTTE MAXEKE to the roughest conditions at sea in the service of our people.”

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula said that in the next 20 years the SANDF must promote strategic leadership among women soldiers. To this end they should seek inspiration from the women of 1954. She stressed that they must debunk the stereotype that women, especially black women, have no role in the workplace and are only fit to raise children.

Women such as Cpl Molatelo Nkoana and Ms Susette Gates were distinguished guests at the parade. They excelled in roles perceived to be hetero-patriarchal. Both had shown heroic strength during their deployment in the Central African Republic.

The Defence Minister ended by saying: “The SANDF has a bright future for you all. When you are here you are not lost in some man’s world, you belong here. You earned it.”

ABOVE: The women-only parade drilled in detailed precision. (Photo: Sgt Elias Mahuma)

ABOVE: Members of the SA Navy on parade. (Photo: Mr Themba Mntyali)

LEFT: Female soldiers of the SA Military Health Service. (Photo: Mr Themba Mntyali)
At Denel, we are proud to be the strategic partners of the South African National Defence Force. We are global designers and suppliers of world-class defence and aerospace solutions. We contribute to the country's economic development. But more importantly, as we celebrate 20 Years of Freedom and Democracy, we remain committed to “Moving South Africa Forward.”
HOMEGROWN TECHNOLOGY ON THE WORLD STAGE

At Denel, we are proud to be the strategic partners of the South African National Defence Force. We are global designers and suppliers of world-class defence and aerospace solutions. We contribute to the country’s economic development. But more importantly. As we celebrate 20 Years of Freedom and Democracy, we remain committed to “Moving South Africa Forward.”
DOD Transformation and Gender Conference

By Cpl Ally Rakoma

During Women’s Month various initiatives and campaigns by government departments seek with sharpened focus to increase awareness about issues affecting women.

A three-day long DOD Transformation and Gender Conference was convened by the Chief Directorate Transformation Management (CDTM) at Air Force Base Swartkop. This year’s theme was: “Inspired, empowered to enhance and advocate change in the DOD”.

The DOD Transformation and Gender Conference is an annual event that coincides with the celebrations of Women’s Month. This year is particularly significant as it also marks 60 years since the adoption of the Women’s Charter of 1954. It is also 20 years after the adoption of the Women’s Charter for Effective Equality of 1994, and 20 years after the advent of democracy in our country.

The conference was a catalyst to drive dialogue among various stakeholders and was a platform which was instrumental in discussions centred around the impact of the transformation agenda. It was attended by Dr Sam Gulube, the Secretary for Defence, Prof Edna van Harte, the Chairperson of the Defence Force Service Commission, Service and Divisional Chiefs, Senior Managers of the DOD, members of the DOD in general and distinguished guest speakers.

In his opening remarks, the Secretary for Defence, on behalf of the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, said that as one of the state entities, the DOD had a duty to empower both genders for the purpose of enhancing transformation processes. He said that to accomplish this, there is a need for everyone involved in gender transformation to understand the environment in order to embrace it.

Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, the Chief of the SA Army, said that 20 years into democracy, as we celebrate the birth of our SANDF, we have reason to look back with pride on how far women have come to beat the odds. He said that the SANDF had created an enabling environment in which women are afforded the same opportunities as their male counterparts and they are not trained differently to the men. He added that women are deployed internally and externally and their presence serves as a powerful tool for challenging stereotypes.

Lt Gen Norman Yengeni, the Chief of Human Resources, pointed out that gender transformation was not an event, but a process. He said that in keeping with the constitutional aims and Government imperatives more women are swelling the ranks of the SANDF and that as a responsible authority for transformation and policy ownership falling under the CDTM cognisance should be taken that the struggle for freedom was inclusive in nature as women participated unshakably for equality. He said that guided by the Defence Review towards the future of the DOD, the SANDF takes stock of its human capital and will go through a process of strategic realignment and not look only at numerical changes.

Brig Gen Thandi Mohale, Director Equity Strategic Direction, provided an overview of transformation and gender equity within the DOD. She noted that great strides were made over the past 20 years of democracy to attain representivity and be a transformed organisation.

She said that transformation was not merely the enhancement and attainment of equity targets and goals, but also the implementation of policies and programmes to generate a transformed mind-set, attitude and behaviour.

Prof Van Harte said that the military was about tradition and heritage. She said that we had to reflect on transformation in the context of South Africa, Africa and of global society. She said: “Life is dynamic, we are dynamic as a society...”
and our organisation is dynamic.”

Father Smangaliso Mkhatshwa, the Chairperson of the Moral Regeneration Movement, has called for rapid transformation in the DOD. Providing the Moral Foundation for Leadership in Transformation, he said that gone were the days when the physical strength and masculinity of men were the requirements to succeed.

He said: “I salute members of the SANDF for the role they have played and continue to play in defending our hard-won democracy as well as for spreading their wings into African countries who need our support. By so doing they contribute to the economic development and security of the African continent. They have contributed in no mean measure to the geopolitics of Africa and beyond its borders.”

Father Mkhatshwa pointed out that assuming there was still gender inequality in the DOD, one must of necessity speculate that it manifests itself in various forms, eg allegations that certain men and women in the SANDF are promoted not because of merit but for a raft of other reasons. He added that the concept of transformation post 1994 is often reduced to issues that are peripheral to the fundamental challenges of systematic racism, sexism and nepotism. He said: “Transformation might also be perceived as rewarding friends and relatives with high positions even when they do not meet the legal employment requirements. Such actions would generally be regarded as unlawful.”

He also alluded to ethics and morality. He said: “Ethics is a discipline in the way we determine values. It is a study of how we value what we value. At a personal level it is the ability to discern right and wrong, good and bad, and to choose freely in an informed way to live what is discerned as right and wrong.” He stressed that we cannot debate gender inequality without confronting the reality of the abuse of power relations. He said that while there have been impressive changes over the past 20 years, the mind-set on gender remains stuck in the old stereotypes.

Father Mkhatshwa said: “Members of the SANDF are confronted with numerous situations in which issues of morality and ethics arise, whether in this country or abroad. The public expects members of the SANDF to reflect the highest level of moral integrity and commitment to the attainment of the common good.”

He pointed out that the SANDF in its quest for transformation is looking for good and visionary leadership. Father Mkhatshwa said: “The power is now in our hands. The new battleground, however, is radical transformation. To succeed, the transformation agenda needs able leaders who are regarded as role models. They should therefore be men and women of integrity who themselves continually aspire to the highest standards of morality.”

Women delegates were given the opportunity to converse about their experiences within their different working environments in the DOD. Other important issues highlighted during the conference were: the relevance of women in external deployment. The United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 stresses the need to mainstream gender perspectives in peacekeeping operations. It also links women to the peace and security agenda by calling for their participation at all levels of decision-making in conflict resolution, the peace process, post-conflict peace building and governance.

On the final day of the conference, one of the guest speakers, Ambassador Adv Faith Radebe, said that women do not form a society separate from men. She touched on the preamble to the Women’s Charter and pointed out that the social status of women is rooted in the liberation struggle, which championed the freedom of all of us. She urged women not to forget the legacy of past generations of extraordinary women.
The SA Air Force Women’s Indaba was held on the first of August 2014. The discussions held during Women’s Month at the SA Air Force Museum acknowledged the Women’s March of 1956 as a defining moment in the fight for women’s rights. The Deputy Chief of the SA Air Force, Maj Gen Gerald Malinga, revealed that in the next few years the SA Air Force would have its first female Major General. The news sparked rapturous applause from the women. He also encouraged women not to be complacent by simply working at Defence Headquarters. Maj Gen Malinga said: “How long has it been since our freedom, and we are in 2014 and still talking about women needing to be empowered? Women should grow themselves out of the role of being lesser people than men. They are capable of doing anything.”

The women that attended were clad in cultural attire. For the SA Air Force women the day consisted of several discussions about the shortcomings in women’s empowerment and gender mainstreaming in defence. There is, for example, a shortage of women in rough combat roles in defence. The discussions called for women to take up engineering in order to take back their power.

The discussions held during Women’s Month at the SA Air Force Museum acknowledged the Women’s March of 1956 as a defining moment for women in society. Speakers at the SA Air Force Women’s Indaba urged the SA Air Force to level out gender disparities in its own structures. The discussions also pointed out problems that were still being perpetuated by women themselves, such as unhealthy living habits and unending financial mismanagement.

Brig Gen Thandi Mohale, Director Equity Strategic Direction, who led one of the discussions during the SA Air Force Women’s Indaba, said: “Women should not lie down like a dodo” (defined by Google as an extinct large bird from Mauritius known for lying around waiting for food, which also describes an ineffectual person). She added: “Women should also read policies that help the transformation process so that they can become equal to the men.”

Brig Gen Mohale said that women have a negative habit of complaining. She urged the women to voice their inputs instead. “Even when it comes to buying battle equipment, women should suggest that their anatomy be taken into consideration because they are physically different from men. So the Defence regalia and equipment should show this.” She challenged the women in the room to define their presence in the SA Air Force and told them to look at each other and declare that starting on this Women’s Day they were going to speak up in Defence. Brig Gen Mohale added: “Women have been behind men in the development of the country for years; it is time they come forward to advance themselves individually.”

In one of the discussions it was pointed out that the Defence Review made gender mainstreaming an obligatory tool to equalise men and women in the Department of Defence. Brig Gen Mohale stressed that this, however, did not suggest simply shifting men to accommodate women in top positions without the necessary skills, but instead to improve the gender balance from ground level. SA Air Force women called on the SANDF to be stricter when recruiting by increasing the intake of women who have maths and science as a means of boosting the number of women, some of whom might later assume bigger roles in the Department.
C
elevating 20 Years of the SA Navy that Remains Unchallenged at Sea by being Inspired and Empowered to Enhance and Advocate Change in the DOD was the theme of this year’s SA Navy Youth and Gender Seminar in Cape Town. Flag Officer Fleet, R Adm Bravo Mhlana, welcomed everyone who attended the seminar.

Speaking to the attendees, the Chief of the SA Navy, V Adm Mosiwa Hlongwane, said: “We acknowledge that both genders have to exist side by side in order to ensure the success of the SA Navy and of humanity at large. We condemn the perpetuation of discriminatory attitudes that are manifested by certain members based on gender bias. South African men and women should take seriously their role in building families, societies, work environments and the nation where peace reigns forever.”

Director Naval Transformation, R Adm (JG) Emily Masanabo, introduced and explained the purpose of the seminar to the members of the SA Navy and distinguished guests as follows: “The seminar has always been held for the SA Navy members to appreciate the strides that have been taken in pushing the transformation agenda in the SA Navy and that it guarantees the principle of transparency for our membership, clients and stakeholders. It is the manifestation of the Chief of the SA Navy and the entire SA Navy leadership’s commitment to Gender Mainstreaming, Equity Management, Diversity Management and Change Management”.

The SA Navy and Old Mutual worked closely together and both contributed to the outcome of the seminar. Old Mutual Account Executive, Mr Darlington Ntuli, was given an opportunity to inform members of the SA Navy about financial matters, planning and investment. Deputy Director Transformation Evaluation, Ms Hermien Fourie, presented equity status in the DOD and stressed youth rejuvenation, representivity, mainstreaming, as well as rights and freedom versus responsibility and dignity.

There were presentations by other speakers on matters of importance to the SA Navy by the SA Maritime Safety Authority, Ms Sindiswa Nhlumayo, Defence Corporate Communications, Lt (SAN) Tieho Mabina, Cape Town Municipality, Ms Nombeko Mpongo, Naval Station Durban, Chaplain Kirun Satgoor.

The seminar ended with awards given to members who took part in the competitions.
Celebrating the pillars of society

By Cpl Ally Rakoma

The saying goes: “Wa thinta Abafazi Wa thinta Imbokodo” meaning “You strike a woman, you strike a rock”. That is one phrase that comes to mind in describing and celebrating the courage and strength of South African women.

During Women’s Month women of DOD HQ Unit celebrated Women’s Day with the theme: “Women’s courage and strength: advancing women’s agenda” at the Armscor Sports Ground in Pretoria.

The main objective of the occasion was to embrace femininity and pay homage to the brave women of 1956 who marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to petition against the pass laws.

Capt Thandi Ngwenya, who acted as the Programme Director, welcomed the attendees, after which the proceedings were opened with Scripture reading and prayer by Chaplain Mantsha Ndukula.

Maj Dawn Feltman, SO2 Systems Support at Directorate Human Resources Service Systems, touched on the matter of gender-based violence. She said that women were often subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuse, adding that any of these abuses impact severely and can leave deep psychological scars.

Brig Gen Debbie Molefe, the Director Defence Reserves, was the keynote speaker. She said that we are commemorating this day to pay tribute to those brave women who took a determined stand by challenging the government of the day. They raised their voices to say no to all discriminatory laws on the basis of their colour and race. She said: “I am thankful and grateful to the women of yesteryear; the women of 1956 made us the women of today and this will define our destiny as the women we will become tomorrow.”

Col Mpho Pheko, SSO Communication Information at Defence Corporate Communication, and Brig Gen Debbie Molefe, Director Defence Reserves.

ABOVE: Women of DOD HQ Unit Choir entertaining the guests.

Focus on gender and transformation issues

During Women’s Month men and women of the SA Army Intelligence Formation attended a conference at the School of Tactical Intelligence in Potchefstroom where various gender and transformation issues were discussed. The theme of the conference was looking at how we can inspire and enhance change, and in this regard the most apt quote of the day was: “The deployment of women is not a numbers game – but what benefits the SANDF.”

The first speaker of the day was Col Gwendolyn Khumalo, SSO Transformation at Directorate Human Resources at the SA Army Headquarters, who addressed the importance of going “back to basics” and that our morality can improve when women become prayer warriors. She also said that “society expects of soldiers to be disciplined” and that each one of us has the ability to make a difference.

Brig Gen Thandi Mohale, Director Equity Strategic Direction at Chief Directorate Transformation Management, said that all members must remember that “the instructors do not work in Human Resources, and therefore cannot give you a contract” and that no members must be allowed to misuse their rank or status. She also emphasised that we must strive to reach transformation targets and not to chase them, which would result in an SANDF that is disciplined and professional with a military culture which is value driven by capable, trained members serving national security and regional stability as well as contributing to democracy.

She also focused on sexual harassment and emphasised that it affected both genders. She said we must ask the question why women allow it to happen. She encouraged all affected members to confront the harasser, to document each incident closely and report it. She also reminded commanders not to ignore the matter and to investigate any report of sexual harassment.

Col Laetitia Olivier, Project Officer at the Directorate Strategic Direction, delivered an address on “gender in peacekeeping”. She emphasised that we must not only look at numerical changes as this was not necessarily substantive. The question is asked: “If women are making a unique contribution to peacekeeping operations, are they agents of change?”

We must accept the fact that women are different, which has an impact on the logistical requirements that must be provided when women are deployed. There is also the tendency for men to feel they need to protect the women and this creates a security risk. Col Olivier then focused on opportunities when women are deployed and said that research needs to be done on how the SANDF can benefit when women are deployed. The importance is that the deployment of women must not only be a numbers game, but of benefit to the SANDF.

Mr Kwazi Gombela, Deputy Director Disability at Chief Directorate Transformation Management, talked about “Getting to know people with disabilities” and he emphasised that any one of us can be disabled. He said that “we must not view people with disabilities as not equal citizens”. He also encouraged all units to be accessible to members with disabilities and that we should treat them the way we want to be treated.

Col Danie Labuschagne, the Acting General Officer Commanding of the SA Army Intelligence Formation, closed the conference with some wise words and said that the focus should be on communicating, arresting the decline and ensuring that the right person is appointed to the right post. He said that every year long discussions took place on transformation and gender issues, but we actually needed to have a debate on the “what must be the end state of transformation?” We also need to determine what we expect of our women in uniform. Do we expect them to deploy for seven days at a surveillance post or do we use them in specialised squadrons.

Above: Fltr: Col Gwendolyn Khumalo (SSO Transformation), Lt Col Petro Hartsief (SO1 Transformation), Brig Gen Thandi Mohale (Director Equity Strategic Direction), Mr Kwazi Gombela (Deputy Director Disability), Lt Col Chumisa Makama, (SO1 Human Resources SA Army Intelligence Formation) Col Eric Boihang (Officer Commanding School of Tactical Intelligence), Lt Col Fix Konjiwayo (Officer Commanding 1 Tactical Intelligence Regiment) and Col Danie Labuschagne (Acting General Officer Commanding SA Army Intelligence Formation).
Working together for the advancement of women’s economic empowerment

Article and photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhahole

During Women’s Month the Department of Military Veterans (DMV) in conjunction with other military veterans’ organisations hosted the DMV Gender Workshop at the Protea Hotel in Bloemfontein. The workshop was held with the theme “Together we move South Africa forward through Women’s Empowerment”.

The conference took place against the backdrop of the country’s celebration of 20 years of freedom. These 20 years remind us as a nation that freedom would not have come about had it not been for the bravery, courage and sacrifices made in the liberation struggle by military veterans. The country is here today because of the individual and collective contribution of military veterans across the spectrum to reconciliation, peace and nation building.

The aim of the workshop was to celebrate Women’s Month and to unite and work together to advance women military veterans’ economic empowerment and social upliftment. The workshop was used as a platform to reflect on progress made, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of the country and community.

This was a historic and defining moment in the history of military veterans in general and the DMV in particular. The establishment of the Women’s Military Veterans Association is a testament to the fact that the women military veterans’ community and the DMV have now reached the crossroads, a qualitatively new era for both the country and the women military veterans.

The delegates and bona fide women military veterans who represented various military veterans’ formations during the conference declared that they were committed to working together in close partnership with the DMV, the SA National Military Veterans Association (SANMVA), the Government and all sectors of society to ensure that women military veterans are given priority in accessing economic opportunities within the Department of Defence.

They further committed themselves to conducting their business in a fair, transparent, accountable and inclusive manner. They resolved to mobilise all military veterans to work together to contribute towards deepening social transformation, building peace and stability and enhancing sustainable economic development.

During the workshop they also resolved to work towards strengthening the capacity of the SANMVA and DMV to ensure the accelerated delivery of the services and benefits outlined in the Military Veterans Act for military veterans and their dependants, to enhance the development of a common and shared vision among military veterans and other stakeholders as well as to play an important role in enhancing social cohesion, reconciliation and nation building.

Addressing the delegates, the Deputy Mayor of the City of Mangaung, Ms Constance Rampai, said that it stood to reason therefore that our freedom and democracy would remain meaningless if it did not give effect to addressing the political, social and economic needs of the women military veterans in a decisive, meaningful and sustained manner.

Ms Rampai hoped that the Women’s Military Veterans Association would become a vibrant, democratic, legitimate and representative voice and an accountable parliament of women military veterans in which women could have unwavering trust and confidence at all times.
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Beating breast cancer
is early detection

By Ms Patience Moyo, Martina Nicholson Associates Newsdesk

The most common form of cancer in South African women is breast cancer, as 1 in 27 women in our country will be diagnosed with this disease in their lifetime. It is therefore highly likely that you know someone who has or will have breast cancer and it could be someone very close to you, like your mother, your sister or your best friend. So it is important that you know the facts about breast cancer, the warning signs and risk factors.

Possible signs of breast cancer

The first breast cancer symptom to look out for is a lump or an area of thickened tissue in the breast, but it’s also important to remember that the majority of lumps are not cancerous. However, because the key to beating breast cancer is early detection, it is always advisable to be examined by your doctor.

The National Health Service in the United Kingdom gives some additional signs to look out for:

- A pain in the armpits or breast
- A swelling in one of the armpits
- A change in the size or shape of the breast
- The skin of the breast is red or pitted
- The skin of the breast or nipple is flaking or peeling
- A rash around or on one of the nipples
- Discharge from one nipple
- A change in the appearance of the nipple

When you are at risk

Experts are unsure what causes breast cancer, but they have identified certain risk factors for this disease. It is still not clear, however, why some people who have no risk factors develop cancer, yet others with risk factors never do.

Some of the risk factors for developing breast cancer include:

- Being female. Although males do get breast cancer, the overwhelming majority of individuals who get this disease are females.
- Age - the older you are, the higher your risk of developing breast cancer. More than 80% of female breast cancers occur after the age of 50.
- Family history - if a close family member like your sister or mother has or has had breast cancer, you are more likely to develop the disease. However, it must be noted that the majority of breast cancers are not hereditary.
- Personal history - if you have had breast cancer before, you are likely to get it again.
- Genes - if you carry the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes, you have a much higher risk of developing breast cancer.
- Benign breast lumps - if you have had benign (non-cancerous) breast lumps, you are more likely to develop cancer later on.
- Oestrogen exposure - if you started your periods earlier (before 12), or entered menopause later, you could be more at risk. This is because you have been exposed to the hormone oestrogen for longer.
- Hormone replacement therapy - being on HRT slightly increases your chances of having breast cancer.
- Radiation exposure - if you received radiation treatments to your chest as a child or young adult, your breast cancer risk is enhanced.
- Having your first child at an older age - if you gave birth to your first child after the age of 35 you are more likely to develop breast cancer.
- Having never been pregnant - if you have never been pregnant you are more at risk than women who have had one or more pregnancies.
- Obesity - being overweight increases your risk of breast cancer.
- Drinking alcohol - the more alcohol you regularly drink, the higher your risk of developing breast cancer.

Lowering your risk

Although there are many risk factors which you cannot change, there are certain lifestyle choices you can make to reduce your risk of developing breast cancer. These include:

- Ensuring you get regular exercise
• Maintaining a healthy weight
• Eating nutritious food
• Limiting alcohol
• Not smoking

It is also important that every woman conducts a monthly breast self-examination. You should become familiar with how your breasts feel so that if there is a change, you can detect it immediately and consult your doctor. Early detection is vital in winning the battle against breast cancer.

Mammograms (x-ray images of the breast) are also an essential tool in detecting lumps even before they can be felt. Most doctors recommend that women go for annual mammograms from the age of 40.

Male breast cancer: Many people believe that men cannot get breast cancer, as they have significantly less breast tissue than women. However, male breast cancer is indeed a reality, and accounts for about 1% of cancer cases in the United States.

Demystifying endometriosis

By Martina Nicholson Associates Newsdesk

A round one in ten women will develop endometriosis and a staggering 90 million women are estimated to be suffering from this disease worldwide. Despite its prevalence, endometriosis is widely misunderstood and many myths about this condition persist.

What is endometriosis?
Endometriosis is a condition that involves a piece of the endometrium, the inner lining of the uterus, growing outside of the uterus and attaching itself to pelvic organs such as the ovaries, bladder and pelvic ligaments. This displaced endometrial tissue then continues to survive and behaves as it normally would, by thickening, breaking down and bleeding during each menstrual cycle. However, because this tissue has no way of exiting the body, it becomes trapped and forms patterns of tissue called endometriosis. Depending on the location of the tissues, the depth to which they penetrate, their positioning in relation to other organs and tissues, and their size, these pieces of tissue can have completely different effects on different patients.

What are the symptoms of endometriosis?
The most common symptom of endometriosis is a constant, aching pain that spreads to the abdomen, the pelvic region, the lower back and buttocks. Even the smallest growth can cause severe pain if it comes into contact with a nerve.

Other symptoms include heavy periods, painful sexual intercourse, severe menstrual pain, cramps, infertility and bowel and bladder problems. However, not all women suffer from regular symptoms meaning that many of them do not even realise they have the disease.

Can endometriosis cause fertility issues?
Approximately 30% to 40% of patients with endometriosis experience difficulties related to fertility. The disease decreases a woman's chances of falling pregnant by between 12% and 36%, depending on the progression of the disease, its location and the age of the patient.

When should you see a doctor or gynaecologist?
In general, women should see a gynaecologist once a year for a check-up, but more visits are recommended should you be diagnosed with endometriosis. If a woman's pain increases dramatically in a short period of time, or she develops unexpected symptoms associated with menstruation or sexual activity, it is important to consult a medical professional as soon as possible. If the pain is so severe that it affects a woman's daily life, then she should definitely go and see a gynaecologist.

Endometriosis can never be completely cured, but the good news is that the progress of the disease can be arrested and the symptoms treated. Treatment depends on how advanced the disease is, whether or not the sufferer wishes to have children, the severity of symptoms and the age of the patient.

If the disease is not causing any problems, the doctor may want to adopt a “wait and see” strategy, leaving it to see if this condition will stay subdued. Alternatively painkillers, hormonal treatments, surgical treatments or a combination of therapies may be used. Surgery is aimed at removing the endometrium pieces, cysts and adhesions as well as repair damage that may have been caused by the disease.

*Ms Patience Moyo is a contributor to SA Soldier.

*Ms Martina Nicholson is a contributor to SA Soldier.
Enhancing our asset management proficiency to sustain DOD military capabilities

By Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photos: Pte Jonathan Magana

The Department of Defence (DOD) Logistics Division is well placed to assisting the DOD in achieving its goal of a clean audit and so to prevent the necessity of audit qualifications.

The DOD Logistics Division recently convened its first Asset Management Conference for 2014 at Air Force Base Swartkop in Valhalla. The theme of the conference was: “Enhancing our asset management proficiency to sustain DOD military capabilities”.

The primary focus of the conference was to create awareness of asset management and to provide much needed insight into and understanding into the management of assets within the Department. Approximately 80 delegates drawn from the various Services and Divisions participate in the conference.

In welcoming the participants, Col Kantha Boer, SSO Supply Support Resources Management, on behalf of the Chief of Logistics, Lt Gen Bongani Mbatha, said that in the pursuit of service delivery objectives and the global move towards the improvement in public sector accounting, good asset management was required. She added that asset management involves the
balancing of cost, opportunities and risk against the desired performance of assets to achieve organisational objectives.

Ms Sithuthukile Mkhwanazi, the Director Asset Management, pointed out that good practice in organisational development required that the organisational structure of a department should be aligned with its strategic objectives. She said that in order to avoid possible future audit qualifications, we need to strengthen the DOD’s internal controls in the various resource areas.

She emphasised that units must have Asset Registers as a management key enabler to manage the assets of the DOD on their unit account. She also gave a presentation on asset life cycle, logistics functional concept, asset life cycle management key performance areas, asset management efficiency and the benefits of asset management.

Ms Mkhwanazi explained the principles of asset management and said that the life of an asset comprised key stages, namely planning to determine asset requirements based on service delivery needs, acquisition and procurement of assets to meet identified service need, including assessment of procurement options, operations and maintenance and the disposal and treatment of an asset that has reached the end of its useful life.

In closing the conference, the Deputy Chief of Logistics, Maj Gen Morris Moadira, expressed his excitement about the discussions and said he was hopeful that the conference would lead to tangible benefits in achieving organisational objectives. He said that the process of establishing an asset management approach in the DOD was exciting as it opened windows of opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills that would ultimately enhance our management proficiency.

He pointed out that the Asset Management Conference marked one of many initiatives of the DOD Logistics Division to demonstrate its commitment towards establishing asset life cycle management as a DOD strategic imperative. He added that the DOD must manage itself out of the necessity of having audit qualifications.
Women’s Month kicked off with a bang when the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Football Association hosted a women only football championships recently at Air Force Base Ysterplaat in Cape Town.

Women football development remains critical in the SANDF and there is an increased emphasis on the upliftment and nurturing of women’s football talent. Women footballers from the nine provinces made a big impression with their soccer skills during their action-packed round of matches, fighting tooth-and-nail to make it to the finals.

At the opening ceremony of the SANDF Women’s Football Championships, the President of the SANDF Football Association, Chaplain Elbie Vinqi, said that the Executive Committee members and the entire SANDF Football Association National Executive Committee need to commit themselves to make a difference in the lives of all those that are involved in football (players, referees, coaches, members of the SANDF and those doubting their ability to lead football).

Chaplain Vinqi said: “The call from the South African Football Association (SAFA) and the Ministry of Sport for football development is directed to us as well. As an associate member of the SAFA we are expected to participate in all the SAFA Programmes and as such we must take the call for football development seriously, hence we have in our Executive Committee a Development Officer. All our Regions and Service structures must also have Development Officers. Development should focus on grass roots and women’s football.”

Lt Col Ncedile Sinuka, the Public Relations Officer of the SANDF

Article compiled by Lt Col Ncedile Sinuka, PRO of SANDF Football Association, and Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photos: AB Kedibone Marema and AB Tembalihle Zekevu

ABOVE: A clash between Western Province (blue/red) and Eastern Cape (black/white).

ABOVE: A clash between Free State (black/orange) and Eastern Cape (yellow/red).
Football Association, said that the landscape of sport in our country had changed in line with the commitment of the Department of Sport and Recreation and the Directorate Physical Training, Sport and Recreation to sport and the development of football.

The championships provided a platform for talent to be identified, harnessed and nurtured for women’s football. He added that it also encouraged positive competition among participants and created a sense of belonging.

Lt Col Sinuka said: “It was a week of football thrills and women are making a big impression. It was encouraging and the level of competition was excellent.”

He also expressed his gratitude for the continued support of Old Mutual which was the main sponsor of the championships, senior leadership of the Department of Defence, Services and Divisions, Officers Commanding of Units, Military Sports Club Western Province and Air Force Base Ysterplaat.

 Winners INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

**Best Referee of the Tournament:**
L Cpl Desmond Johann (Eastern Cape) received R200.00

**Best Coach of the Tournament:**
WO2 Molefi Melamu (Gauteng) received R200.00

**Best Assistant Referee of the Tournament:**
L Cpl Simon Maphakanae (Limpopo) received R200.00

**Best Team Manager of the Tournament:**
Pte Simphiwe Damane (Eastern Cape) received R200.00

Best Player of the Tournament:
Gnr Thobile Shandu (Northern Cape) received R200.00

Best Goalkeeper of the Tournament:
Cpl Siphokazi Vukuthi (Gauteng) received R200.00

Top Goals Scorer of the Tournament:
Sgt Martha Molao (Northern Cape) received R200.00

TEAM AWARDS

Winners of the Tournament:
Gauteng (received R3 500.00)

Runners-up: Northern Cape (received R2 500.00)

Third Position:
Free State (received R1 000.00)
An avid Fauresmith Endurance Rider

By Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela

Photo: Courtesy of Col Rinie White

questrian sport was once prominent in the military, but the Fauresmith Endurance Ride remains a feature that captures the interest of uniformed members. Col Rinie White, SSO Cluster Management from Directorate Military Strategy, a well decorated rider and an organiser of the SA National Endurance Ride Championships, shared her insight into the sport.

The event started in 1974 as a long-distance endurance ride. The length of the Fauresmith Endurance Ride is 201km, a distance which is covered over a period of three days. Riders must qualify by completing with three 80km rides or longer distances once a year for the National Endurance Championship. Col White said: “You have only got one horse that you can use to qualify for the National Endurance Championship. You need to qualify during the year before the commencement of the national championship. The horse must be fit and needs to go through rigorous fitness and veterinary checks to qualify.” Camp is set up at Fauresmith, where horses are stabled and a base is built. From the base, riders go for the first 25km to get to a checkpoint, and then another 25km is allowed after a veterinary check. Riders need to do about 75km per day over the three days.

On completion of the 201km, the fastest rider in each category wins the competition. There are different categories in which riders participate: Heavyweight from 94 kg, Standard weight (73 – 93kg), Lightweight (up to 72kg), Junior/Young riders to the age of 21 and Children (10 to 14 years).

Col White said: “It can take from 5 to 7 hours to complete the first day: it’s tough and you ride in the roughest terrain. Fauresmith is one of the most difficult races in the world. It takes place on farms in the district, so farmers and locals are involved and time management has to be adhered to.”

She added: “You need to set up camp for 2 000 and more people and to make sure that they have water and food available, and traffic and security personnel over and above all other administration arrangements for participation have to be organised. People come from all over the country to participate in the event. Also participating are countries such as Botswana, Namibia, the United Kingdom, America, Australia, France, and this year the event was also attended by riders from the Czech Republic and Lesotho.”

Her involvement in the Fauresmith event started in the 1980’s when she first came into the defence force. She took part in equestrian sport and endurance riding. In 1983, she was one of the top 10 riders, which was quite an achievement at the time.

Col White said: “I discovered the Fauresmith Endurance Ride through the military.” She has been involved over the last 15 years as an official at Fauresmith, over and above her participation as a rider for the last 34 years. Between 2005 and 2013 she was the National Director of the SA National Endurance Riding Championships. She was appointed Team Manager and groom for the Czech Republic Team 2014 at the SA National Endurance Ride Championships at Fauresmith.

Speaking of her experience in the sport, she said: “I took part in different disciplines in equestrian sport, including competitive showjumping, dressage and showing. I was taught how to play polo cross and polo, but only on a friendly basis. My main concern was endurance riding. I was even an amateur jockey in the early 1980’s. I then started endurance riding and continued to participate in the national championships. I was the Vice President of the old Transvaal Union, then Gauteng and the Mpumalanga Endurance Union, Club Chairperson of Pretoria Military Equestrian Club, a member of the Endurance Riding Association of the SA Council, Director of the National Championship, Provincial Selector and Chair of the Selection Committee, Secretary and Acting Chairperson of the SANDF Equestrian Sport Head Committee and Director of the SA Endurance Riding National Championships.

She said the military had the best prepared horses and stringent rules for participation, and had invested a lot in the sport. She indicated that the Arabian horse had brought success to a lot of riders.

Col White said that various top riders came through the military through her years in the sport. A rider like Lt Col Jaco Ferreira from Military Intelligence was a record holder for many years in the Heavy Weight category at Fauresmith and he is still involved. WO1 Annemarie van Zyl from the Lohatla Signal Unit is a qualified four-star judge at international level and she judges endurance riding all over the world. A former member who left the SANDF, WO1 Rassie Erasmus, previously from SA Army Battle School in Lohatla, who achieved his National Colours for several years in a row, represented South Africa in many competitions. Lt Col Romy Odendaal from Army Headquarters is also still quite involved in showjumping and three phase, which came from the old Equestrian Centre days in Potchefstroom. He is qualified in various equestrian levels. Col GT Gowar (Ret) is a top official in the sport and still very dedicated to endurance riding. Other top riders in South Africa that came through the equestrian classical disciplines are Jeremy Clarke, Gary Taylor, Paul Hart and Greg Scott, former national servicemen.

ABOVE: Col Rinie White and her horse, Zamar Lazzaro, participating in an endurance ride.
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After leading her team to victory for the fifth year in a row at the SA Air Force Women’s Soccer Championship, Air Force Base (AFB) Waterkloof has recognised Sgt Mafunwa Surprise Mudzanani’s accomplishment by naming the AFB Waterkloof Sporting Code of the Year (soccer) Floating Trophy after her. The trophy was donated by ASSUPOL and is awarded to the sporting code that has excelled throughout the year, namely soccer.

Sgt Mudzanani began her soccer career during her varsity days at the University of Venda where she studied Geology in 2004. In 2006 she joined the SA Air Force as an aircraft mechanic and started playing soccer while she was doing “Basics”, continuing with it at 68 Air School, 21 Squadron and 41 Squadron. In 2007 she started playing for the Gauteng Team, and was selected for the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Team in 2009. In 2010 Sgt Mudzanani remustered as a draftsman and began working at 5 Air Supply Unit. It was during this time that she became the Captain of the AFB Waterkloof Women’s Soccer Team.

Some of Sgt Mudzanani’s achievements over the past five years include:
- 2010 SA Air Force Player of the Tournament
- 2010 SA Air Force Sportswoman of the Year
- 2010-2012 Waterkloof Sportswoman of the Year
- 2012 SA Air Force Player of the Tournament
- 2012 SANDF Goalkeeper of the Tournament
- 2013 SA Air Force Top Goal Scorer
- 2014 SA Air Force Player of the Tournament

In 2010 the AFB Waterkloof Women’s Soccer Team also received a new coach, Lt Col Carl Moatshe, and since then the team has won...
Every SA Air Force Championship to date.

Under the leadership of Lt Col Moatshe and Sgt Mudzanani the AFB Waterkloof Women’s Soccer Team has won the following:
- 2010-2014 Player of the Tournament
- 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2014 Goalkeeper of the Tournament

During the 2014 SA Air Force Championship the team scored 19 goals, conceding none, and in the past five years only two goals were scored against them during the championship.

SANDF women golfers did us proud

**Article and photo by Lt Col Ilze du Toit, SANDF Golf Corporate Communication**

The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Golf Team participated in the annual Inter-force Tournament in Selborne, KwaZulu-Natal, last month.

Golf players from the SANDF, the SA Police Service (SAPS) and the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) participated in this two-day golf tournament.

The tournament started on the Wednesday with two rounds of golf (36 holes). The first day consisted of better-ball match play and foursomes: 18 holes were played in the form of singles.

The annual Inter-force Tournament ended on the Thursday and thanks are due to the SAPS who were the organisers for 2014.

During the prize-giving function the SANDF women were announced the winners in the women’s category, while the DSC Team was announced as the best men’s team.
Cross-country athletes from all over South Africa descended on Army Support Base (ASB) Bloemfontein for the SANDF Cross Country Championships last month. In attendance were 87 male and female athletes, officials and Executive Committee members representing territorial teams from the Free State, Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West and Northern Cape. The Bloemfontein Military Athletic Club, in association with ASB Bloemfontein, hosted the event.

Entries were finalised at the team managers’ meeting held at 1 Special Service Battalion. The Officer Commanding 1 Special Service Battalion, Lt Col Fanus Buys, welcomed the Executive Members of the SANDF Athletics Committee. Thereafter Chaplain Isaac Tau opened the meeting with a prayer.

The Chairperson Athletics SANDF, Lt Col Chris Steyn, officially declared the SANDF Cross Country Championships open. The Chairperson Pretoria Military Marathon Club, Chaplain Jan Esua, opened the proceedings with Scripture reading and prayer.

On arrival, the Acting General Officer Commanding ASB Bloemfontein, Col John Malepe, welcomed all the athletes and officials participating in the SANDF Cross Country Championships. He wished all participants the very best and said all athletes were already winners by just qualifying to be at the championships and representing their different provinces.

The SANDF Cross Country Championships were presented within the secure boundaries of the University of the Free State on a very challenging cross-country course.

The Championships included individual and team competitions in the following categories and distances according to Athletics South Africa (ASA) Regulations:

- Senior Men (18-34) over 12km
- Sub Veteran Men (35-39) over 8km
- Veteran Men (40-49) over 8km
- Master (50-59) over 8km
- Woman all ages over 4km

The winners

Senior Woman over 4km: L Cpl Theodorah Moaneno (Free State) in a time of 16 minutes and 11 seconds. Winning Team: Free State

Sub Veteran Woman (35-39) over 4km: Sgt Dipuo Moniccah Mogatle (Combined Gauteng) in a time of 19 minutes and 36 seconds.

Veteran Men (40-49) over 8km: Sgt Samson Mkhize (Free State) in a time of 27 minutes and 44 seconds. Winning Team: Free State

Master (Men (50-59) over 8km: S Sgt Pele Sindana (Gauteng) in a time of 30 minutes and 40 seconds. Winning Team: Gauteng

Sub Veteran Men (35-39) over 8km: S Sgt Koos Aphone (Gauteng) in a time of 30 minutes and 54 seconds. Winning Team: Gauteng

Senior Men (18-34) over 12km: Tp Mohapi Lebusho (Free State) in a time of 39 minutes and 26 seconds. Winning Team: Combined Gauteng

During the prize-giving ceremony held at 1 Special Service Battalion the Regional Chairperson Free State, WO1 Wilson Jafta, announced the results while Lt Col Steyn presented the medals to the winners.

Lt Col Steyn congratulated all the athletes that participated, especially those who received medals. He also indicated that a team would be selected to represent the SANDF at the SA Championships to take place in George the following month.
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Forgiveness is from God … (Matthew 6:12-15)

By Chaplain (Rev) Fundiswa Veronica Mnyanda, Chaplain SA Army Artillery Formation HQ

The Bible speaks of forgiveness as the central aspect of our salvation. Salvation and forgiveness cannot be separated. In order to have a good and intimate relationship with God, we need to realise that we were born sinners, and that God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to die for each one of us. His blood was shed on the cross for our iniquities and transgressions. This was to save all those who believe in Him from perishing. Following that we need to confess our sins to receive God’s forgiveness.

I want to address the issue of forgiveness in three categories:

1. God’s forgiveness.
2. Forgiveness within myself.
3. Forgiveness between myself and others.

God’s forgiveness

We receive forgiveness for our sins from God. The Bible says: “Forgive us the wrongs we have done …”

God’s forgiveness is the foundation of all forgiveness. God forgives us in order to live according to His expectations, according to His will. God’s forgiveness is accompanied by divine love. He forgives us when we sincerely confess our sins and are ready to become new creatures, when we are ready to accept a change. He welcomes us with love and adopts us as His children.

1 John 1:9 says: “But if we confess our sins to God, He will keep his promise and do what is right: He will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing.” Let us meet the requirements of God by confessing our sins, receiving His forgiveness and living accordingly. This leads us to have good relationship with God. When we have a good relationship with God, He uses us as a means to build His Kingdom. We become a blessing to people around us, but of greatest importance is that we have eternal life.

Forgiveness within myself

Most people live with guilt of some kind and carry this guilt in their hearts, wherever they are. It becomes much harder to forgive yourself than to forgive other people. It is definitely not good to carry the blame of something that you did in the past. You need to forgive yourself and turn over a new page. Forgiving yourself is an important act and a step taken to move forward and release yourself from the past.

If you do not forgive yourself, it also affects your health.

It is very important to practise self-acceptance, deal with the past, and leave it in the hands of God. God forgives us, and we must also forgive ourselves. It is very important to forgive yourself, otherwise it affects your relationship with God. You are living with anger, fear and anxiety in your heart; you do not have a peaceful heart. You do not experience the joy of the Lord.

Take your emotions to God and ask Him to forgive you for not forgiving yourself. Not forgiving yourself is punishing yourself unnecessarily. “The joy of the Lord is our strength” (Nehemiah 8:10), therefore we must rejoice in the Lord always.

Forgiveness between myself and others

The spirit of unforgiveness is like a cancer in the body, it is like a slow poison in the body that bites you day by day. “Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.” We expect God to forgive us but we are not prepared to forgive our brothers and sisters when they sin against us. The Bible says if we forgive others, God will forgive us, but if we do not forgive, He will not forgive us. Let us therefore live according to the Word of God. Unforgiveness hinders our faith in serving God faithfully. It takes away our joy and peace. If we read Genesis 45:15 and Genesis 50:15-21 we find that Joseph forgave his brothers who plotted evil against him. Let us learn to forgive, look around and see how many people to whom you owe forgiveness. Let us forgive so that we may have peace with everyone. Forgiveness leads to holiness and without holiness no one will see God.

May the good Lord help us as we humble ourselves in asking Him to forgive us. We must forgive ourselves and forgive those who sin against us.
The SANDF comes out on top against Valke

This year the SANDF Rugby Week took place in Potchefstroom, after which three practice groups were selected, namely a Senior Team, a President’s Team and a Women’s Team.

A short while after the completion of Rugby Week 2014, the SANDF Rugby Association (SANDFRA) received an invitation from the Valke Rugby Union for the three teams to compete against three Valke teams at the Barnard Stadium in Kempton Park.

Authority was obtained from Directorate Physical Training, Sport and Recreation for the three SANDF teams to prepare for the forthcoming competitions at a training camp at 4 Artillery Regiment in Potchefstroom.

The results of the matches were as follows:
- SANDF Senior Team beat Valke Amateur A Team (62 vs 31)
- SANDF President’s Team beat Valke Amateur B Team (13 vs 7)
- SANDF Women’s Team beat Valke Women’s Team (39 vs 34)

The three SANDF teams would not have succeeded without the loyal support and positive attitude of the various role-players.
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