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Formeset Print (Pty) Ltd
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email: formeset@formeset.co.za

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

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor: Ms Nelda Pienaar
Deputy Editor: Mr Lufuno Netshirembe
Editorial Staff: S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole
Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Cpl Ally Rakoma

Translation Consultant: Directorate Language Services
Distribution: Mr Jim Tshabalala
Tel: (012) 355 6341
Layout & Design: Mr Werner van der Westhuizen

TELEPHONE
Tel: (012) 355 6341
Fax: (012) 355 6399
email:sasoldier@mil.za
website: www.dod.mil.za
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FRONT COVER: President Jacob Zuma, the President of the RSA, presented a medal to Cpl Thando Mangxangaza, who drove the hearse transporting Madiba's mortal remains, at the Mandela Commemorative Medal Parade held at Air Force Base Waterkloof.

(Photo by S Sgt Lebogang Thaole)
The SA Soldier Editorial team would like to wish our readers a prosperous 2015. May we persevere until we conquer our challenges and rise above them this year.

Regrettably SA Soldier had to begin the new year without two of our devoted stalwarts, Sgt Elias Mahuma (photographer) and Mr Eugene Muller (text editor). The SA Soldier Editorial team would like to thank them for their valuable contribution towards SA Soldier over the years. Their inputs will be dearly missed. (Sgt Mahuma was transferred and Mr Muller retired.)

In this edition we feature two prominent medal parades of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) – considering that medals reflect the bearer’s history of gallantry, loyalty and merit.

In commemoration of the first anniversary of the death of the late Mr Nelson Mandela – Madiba – the first Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF and the founding President of a democratic South Africa, the SANDF held a Mandela Commemorative Medal Parade at Air Force Base Waterkloof in Pretoria.

The President of the Republic of South Africa and Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, Mr Jacob Zuma, was the main functionary at the medal parade where he awarded the medals to deserving SANDF members and civilians (read pages 12-14).

During the second medal parade the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, acknowledged and commended 70 deserving men and women of the SANDF for rendering first-class service to the SANDF and our country during the Chief of the SANDF Medal Parade held at Army Support Base Potchefstroom (read pages 16-17).

A reminder that the third Armed Forces Day celebrations will be held on 21 February in Potchefstroom, Tlokwe Municipality (North West Province). President Zuma will be the main functionary at the event.

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, and the Deputy Minister, Mr Kebby Maphatsoe, will also attend the celebrations.

In 2012 President Zuma proclaimed that the day of the sinking of the SS Mendi be commemorated annually as Armed Forces Day. The first Armed Forces Day was held on 21 February 2013 at the Lucas Masterpieces Moripe Stadium in Atteridgeville, Pretoria (Gauteng Province), while the second one was held on 21 February 2014 at Air Force Base Bloemspot, Mangaung (Free State Province).

Nelda Pienaar
Editor SA Soldier
The SA National Defence College (SANDC) held a ceremony to mark the end of an era for the Executive National Security Programme (ENSP).

The occasion provided an opportunity for guests to reminisce on the ENSP experience and its historical impact and to reflect on the symbolic relationship between the ENSP and Security and Defence Studies Programme (SDSP) in the development of strategic leaders.

The SANDC presented 30 ENSPs over the period January 2000 to December 2014 which was attended by senior officers and officials from the Department of Defence, other government departments, parastatals and members of the armed forces of other countries.

The College prides itself on having made a significant contribution towards the education of senior leaders. In this context, the College paid tribute to guest speakers, former Commandants, Regimental Sergeant Majors, Senior Directing Staff, staff members and Regals for their loyalty, dedication and commitment during this period.

In line with the recommendations of the SA Defence Review 2014, the SANDC started to present the first Security and Defence Studies Programme (SDSP) as the replacement programme for the ENSP in January 2015. The programme will be presented in conjunction with the Military Academy and the University of Stellenbosch and will consist of a Masters of Philosophy in Security Management and Certificate in Security Management.

It is worth noting that the SDSP is accredited and carries forward ENSP best practices. The programme has been compared with international equivalents and is found to be on equal footing. The SDSP is one of the first steps of implementing the SA Defence Review 2014.

The competencies obtained through this programme will empower middle and top-level officials to manage national and regional defence and security challenges effectively. This will enable such officials to be able to make significant contribution towards the development of a national security strategy, contribute to the establishment of national and regional platforms conducive to the promotion of peace and stability on the African continent, and so to achieve optimal socio-economic development. During the ceremony the National Flag was lowered with the sounding of the Last Tattoo to symbolise the closure of a remarkable chapter.

End of an era for the Executive National Security Programme

Article and photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

ABOVE: The Regals of the Executive National Security Programme presented at the SA National Defence College over the years.

NEVER PLAN YOUR FINANCES ON THE BASIS OF MONEY THAT MAY NEVER COME!

Never budget on money you don’t have
Never spend money you don’t have
Don’t take any credit with the anticipation of incentive allowance
Never borrow money hoping to pay back when you get paid
Always remember that with incentive allowance, things don’t always go as planned

It’s best not to plan your finances on money that may not come
Some soldiers are privileged to receive this money,
Use it to pay off some of your debts and improve your financial health
It’s your money, enjoy it, but use it wisely
Incentive allowances should not be a weapon of division among us

If you are not lucky, don’t be demoralised or blame it on your supervisor
Keep on being diligent, determined to succeed and devoted to your work
Delay is not in denial, your time will come. Pte Victoria Mthibela, 7 SA Infantry Battalion (currently at Pontdrift OPS Base)

CHILD MAINTENANCE IS A CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT OF THE CHILD AND A PARENTAL LEGAL DUTY

It is unfortunate that some parents, whether married or not, tend to use maintenance proceedings as a way of punishment or of inflicting pain or settling scores against each other when their relationships or marriages face crises and conflicts. Such that the main reason for child maintenance is often lost in the midst of such conflicts. There are neither winners nor losers when it comes to child maintenance court proceedings. If ever there is a winner or loser, whichever the case may be, it will be the child only.

A child means a person under the age of 18 years. A child’s best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child. Every child has the right to family care or parental care. For the purposes of maintenance, even if the child reach the age of majority, maintenance may still continue provided the child cannot support him or herself and is still a student.

Child maintenance is governed by the Maintenance Act 99 of 1998 the preamble to which is as follows: “...to recognise the right of every child to a standard of living which is adequate for

ITS THE DUTY OF PARENTS TO SUPPORT THEIR CHILDREN

A maintenance order for the maintenance of a child is directed at the enforcement of the common law duty of the child’s parents to support that child, as the duty in question exists at the time of the issue of the maintenance order and is expected to continue.

When the maintenance court determines the amount to be paid as maintenance in respect of a child, the following factors will be considered: that the duty of supporting a child is an obligation which the parents have incurred jointly; that the parents’ respective shares or obligations are apportioned between them according to their respective means; and that the duty exists, irrespective of whether a child is born in or out of wedlock or is born of a first or subsequent marriage.

Any amount so determined shall be such as the maintenance court may consider fair in all circumstances of the case. Failure to pay such an amount as per court order without just cause or reasonable defence in law is a criminal offence which is subject to litigation and punishable (upon conviction) by law.


Capt Tivoneleni Lubisi (MLP), Legsato Sub-office Thohoyandou (15 SAI Bn)
TUG OF WAR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Tug of war is a sport that not so many take seriously and it is a sport that is not well known to some individuals. This sport is, however, taken very seriously here in the SA Army Technical Training Centre. This unit strives to achieve excellence in many fields and it has encouraged and motivated its members to believe in themselves, even when nobody else seems to believe in them. This is why this unit has many achievements in the field of sport.

In tug of war two of the unit members involved in the sport have been chosen to represent the Republic of South Africa in the Tug of War World Championships in Madison, Wisconsin, in the United States last year. These members showed nothing but dedication, valour and belief in themselves and thus it is only fitting that they be given the support needed. The SA Army Technical Training Centre would like therefore to congratulate WO2 Doepie du Plessis and S Sgt Pottie Potgieter on a job well done and may they be an inspiration to many more.

Capt Ephraim Makola, SA Army Technical Training Centre

FOCUS ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Tlokwe Municipality of Potchefstroom in North West Province recently held an awareness day for Persons with Disabilities.

The aim of the day was to highlight challenges being experienced by persons with disabilities in exercising their rights as equal citizens in South Africa.

17 Maintenance Unit members helped to transport people to the event and erected tents. The Executive Mayor of Tlokwe Municipality, Councillor Kgotso Khumalo, and the speaker, Ms Baret Segotso-Mosiane, were among the invited guests of honour.

The sponsor, Old Mutual, gave attendees T-shirts and food parcels, while wheelchairs were given to deserving members by other non-governmental organisations (NGOs). During the day different games were played.

The SA Constitution recognises the rights of persons with disability as equal citizens of the country, and prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.

Addressing the attendees the Executive Mayor highlighted some mechanisms that they have in place to assist persons with disabilities, such as:

• Devices for the deaf in their houses
• Sunscreen for albinos
• Signs for the blind on the roads
• Wheelchairs and walking aids where needed

But persons with disabilities continue to experience barriers to participation in all aspects of society. People with disabilities do not have equal access to society or services, including education, employment, health care, transport, political participation or justice. Evidence and experience show that when barriers to their inclusion are removed and persons with disabilities are empowered to participate fully in societal life, their entire community benefits. Barriers faced by persons with disabilities are, therefore, detrimental to society as a whole, and accessibility is necessary to achieve progress and development for all.

Capt Ephraim Makola, SA Army Technical Training Centre

ABOVE: The Tlokwe Municipality Ward Councillors.

Cpl Ditebogo Mosupa, email
Area Military Health Unit Gauteng (AMHU-GT) Prestige Awards ceremony and end-year function was held at the Pretoria Zoo to recognise the hard work of employees in varying fields of work within the unit.

Addressing the members, the Officer Commanding AMHU-GT, Col Cleopatra Mkhulise, said that she was pleased to see new faces at the event. Those who had never won before made sure they were present at this year’s prestige ceremony. Col Mkhulise urged the awardees to display their awards to show their hard work. Maj Hendrick Mohlala, a member of the Prestige Awards Committee, encouraged the members of AMHU-GT to commit themselves wholeheartedly to their work. He said: “Work at your best so that you can expect the best. Press on for greater achievements for the future. I promise you that if you apply this in your life, then you will be a winner.”

Some of the individual awards presented included Best Pharmacist, Best Senior Officer and Best Pharmacy Assistant, Best Enrolled Nurse, Best Senior Officer and Best Warrant Officer. There were also group awards, including Best Pharmacy in which Thaba Tshwane Dental Facility won gold. The Best Military Medical Clinic was Armscor Sickbay at Defence Headquarters. The Armscor Sickbay staff members won a trip to Banana Beach Holiday Resort in KwaZulu-Natal holiday for a week. (This win came after numerous close calls, the clinic having won silver then bronze two and three years ago.) The Nurse in Charge of Armscor Sickbay, Sister Vuyi Makalima, said: “I am very grateful to see how the team spirit among the staff has grown. We all work well together.” She said that the hard work resulted from the staff coming together regularly to solve problems and finding feasible methods to improve the sickbay. She said that although the sickbay was understaffed, the staff members were supportive. Sister Makalima promised to incorporate more team-building measures to ensure continuing of hard work at the clinic.

Sister Marthie Pretorius added to the community by providing tea and treats to approximately 300 guests. Planning had already started a month before and it was decided that over and above the tea and treats, gifts would be presented to each person. It was also decided that there would be a lucky draw. For this purpose various small gifts were collected by members of DAA and 130 parcels were made up. More than 3 000 biscuits were baked by DAA members, wrapped and decorated in small gift parcels with hand-drawn Christmas cards designed by staff members’ children and friends.

Members of Directorate Army Acquisition (DAA) decided that for their 2014 End year function they would reach out to the community by bringing joy, hope and excitement to the people of the Ruimte Service Centre in Pretoria North by organising an early Christmas party for them. The Centre provides care for the elderly, social services and outreach programmes to the community of Pretoria North, Soshanguve and Hammanskraal. DAA, with the support of the Ruimte Service Centre personnel, presented this event in the form of a fun day to the community by providing tea and treats to approximately 300 guests. Planning had already started a month before and it was decided that over and above the tea and treats, gifts would be presented to each person. It was also decided that there would be a lucky draw. For this purpose various small gifts were collected by members of DAA and 130 parcels were made up. More than 3 000 biscuits were baked by DAA members, wrapped and decorated in small gift parcels with hand-drawn Christmas cards designed by staff members’ children and friends.

Afrikaans

Air Force Base (AFB) Waterkloof celebrated Cultural Day to celebrate and embrace the diverse cultures of the members on the base. The Officer Commanding AFB Waterkloof, Brig Gen Mbulelo Mcolywa, welcomed all members to the Cultural Day. He thanked the members for the success of the Africa Aerospace and Defence AAD Expo 2014. One of the sponsors of AAD 2014, Nissan, celebrated the event with AFB Waterkloof. The aim of the Cultural Day was to encourage members to celebrate their heritage and the great diversity of cultures, beliefs and traditions that make up the South Africa nation. Different cultures were displayed by the members in the various forms such as art, food, attire and dance. Cultures that were celebrated included isiXhosa, isiSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, the Coloureds, English, Afrikaners, Sepedi, Tswana, Sotho and Zulu. The AFB Waterkloof Cultural Day was a great success and was enjoyed by all. The members agreed that they were looking forward to future events like this that brings people together. SA Air Force supports cultural heritage, taking into consideration the people it employs from diverse backgrounds.

Sgt Donald Nyalungu, Air Force Base Waterkloof
JOINT SUPPORT BASE GARRISON MEDAL PARADE

Joint Support Base (JSB) Garrison recently held a Medal Parade for deserving members of the unit. The parade was conducted in combination with a review and medal parade. The parade consisted of members of 2 SA Infantry Battalion and Johannesburg Regiment. These members had only two days to master the difficult drill movements. On the morning of the parade, the guard of honour was inspected by the Parade Commander and Parade Warrant Officer to ensure that the participants were correctly dressed and to give final instructions. At exactly 10:00 the guard of honour was formed up by the Parade Commander, Maj Donovan Solomons, accompanied by the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) Band. All members were briefed by one of the instructors in Bloemfontein, where the students were introduced to the customs and traditions of the unit. Then the Military Academy group set off on the long journey to Bredasdorp. There they paid a visit to Air Force Base Overberg where they received an informative briefing and visited the aircraft hangars where the students were able to get up close to a Gripen, Cheetah, Oryx and A109 aircraft. The students were also shown the simulation centre of the unit. On the last morning of the reintegration exercise the students and instructors departed for Simon’s Town Naval Base. Upon their arrival, an interesting presentation awaited them on the functioning and role of the SA Navy, with special attention paid to the SA Navy’s role in fighting piracy and on the Maritime Reaction Force. The students were then treated to a visit aboard one of the SA Navy’s frigates, SAS ISANDLWANA. The reintegration exercise was concluded with a relatively short drive to the Military Academy in Saldanha. The students would like to thank the instructors who accompanied them as well as all the units that hosted them during the exercise. The exercise definitely equipped them with a thorough understanding of the organisation in which they will soon serve.

Capt Reginald Dirkse, email

MILITARY ACADEMY REINTEGRATION EXERCISE

The third-year students of the Military Academy accompanied by instructors, Maj Morné Booijens and Capt Reginald Dirkse, recently visited military units in Bloemfontein, Bredasdorp and Simon’s Town in order to gain a better understanding of the functioning and capabilities of the SANDF before the students were transferred to their permanent units after graduation. The first stop of the reintegration exercise was at 44 Parachute Battalion in Bloemfontein, where the students were briefed by one of the instructors and were treated to a demonstration of the training procedures and drills. After lunch at the School of Armour, the students continued with their reintegration by visiting 1 SA Infantry Battalion. They received an interesting presentation and were then shown the different types of vehicles used by mechanised infantry units. The next day began with a visit to the Mobilisation Centre just outside Bloemfontein where the students were taken on a tour of the facilities of the unit. The amount of equipment and the sheer size of the unit were very impressive. The afternoon saw the students attending a briefing at the School of Armour presented by Col Henro Grobler on the strategic vision of the SANDF for 2020. This was followed by a briefing on the role and functioning of the School of Armour as well as an exciting visit to the tank simulators. The day was concluded with a braai hosted by the School of Armour for the students and instructors.

Drills were executed excellently with precision and one could hear the soft whispers and shuffling of spectators as the members on parade marched with chests out, stomachs in, necks against the collar, chin up and arms parallel to the ground. The guard of honour and the SAMHS Band were inspected by the General Officer Commanding Joint Support Base Garrison, Brig Gen John Kobbie, after the guard of honour marched past in columns. After receiving the general salute, the recipients were marched on and the members were awarded different medals. After the guard of honour gave three cheers they marched to a loud and long standing ovation by the dignitaries and spectators. The parade brought back reminiscences of days gone by and instilled a new feeling of soldiering, pride of command and esprit de corps, not only among the Permanent Force members on parade, but among the Reserves of Johannesburg Regiment.

A big word of appreciation to all the members involved and gratitude are due to all the members involved in planning and executing this excellent parade. It is very important to have such events in the unit in order to encourage and motivate members to enjoy and work hard in order and subsequently be awarded with the medals in recognition of their hard work. This will also promote soldiering as members are motivated to participate in such events.

Maj Donovan Solomons, Company Commander Protection Services

Reserves of Johannesburg Regiment.
news from abroad

South Africa assists the Mozambique Government during the floods

By Lt Col Piet Paxton, SO1 Operational Communication Joint Operational Headquarters, and Capt Sello Segone, Editor Milmed
Photos by Capt Sello Segone

The South African Government received a request from the Mozambique Government to assist in the flood stricken areas in the Zambezia province.

The initial planning and assessment took place over the period 14 and 15 January 2015 and the main force consisting of three helicopters, one SA Navy diving team and an SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) team arrived in Quelimane on 16 January 2015.

The two and half hour flight from South Africa to Mozambique accorded an opportunity to see the damage caused by the floods. Zambezia is a province approximately 1600 kilometres from Maputo and Quelimane, the capital city in the province, was chosen as the centre of operations as it was within reasonable distance of the most affected areas and has an airport. This was also an ideal location from where the ground crew as well as logistical and technical staff could support the operation.

Amidst the humid and scorching temperatures the Operation, codenamed LOAPI, kicked up one gear on 17 January 2015 and was fully operational the following morning.

The daily operations under operational command of Lt Col Eddie Rieger proved to be very effective from...
the word go. Good cooperation between all the role-players was evident during the daily briefings at the local emergency centre. Members from the INGC (Mozambique Disaster Management Organization), non-governmental organisations, the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and Mozambique Air Force coordinated the delivery of aid, food, shelter and medical supplies, donated from all over the world, from the airport in Quelimane.

Taskings were then coordinated and aircraft continued with secondary tasks normally associated with floods. Daily tasks included the distribution of food and other aid from the various distribution points in the area as well as medical evacuations. Thereafter the focus was on delivering food and critical medical supplies to areas and small communities all over the Zambezia province.

On Friday, 23 January, a medical team was sent out to Ile district to evacuate a woman in distress. The 38-year-old woman was in the early stage of pregnancy and experienced complications. The team, from the Institute for Aviation Medicine, headed by Lt Col (Dr) Charl Wynbergen was airlifted to the position of the patient and as soon as they got there they took care of the situation with such precision much to the appreciation of the local population.

Dr Chazelle Esterhuizen, Capt Susan Pretorius (a nurse from the Institute for Aviation Medicine), Corporals Benjamin Mothulwe and Tshepo Mashishi (7 Medical Battalion Group: Search and Rescue Team) all executed their duties within 30 minutes and the Oryx helicopter was back in Quelimane Airport and the patient transported to the local hospital by ambulance.

Capt Lucky Mthini, an Operational Medic from 7 Medical Battalion Group, described this humanitarian operation as heart breaking because in as much as he was medically tasked it was sad to see the suffering and distress the disaster has caused to families especially children.

In between the landing and taking off of the aircraft one was afforded the opportunity to mingle with the local population. This was an opportunity to learn Portuguese in order to sustain oneself as there are few people who speak English. During these sessions one had the opportunity to witness how the locals appreciated efforts by SANDF members to alleviate their plight. The aircrew flew under extreme and difficult conditions to deliver much needed aid - humidity being the biggest challenge.

A total of 70 tons of food and medical supplies were delivered to communities in dire need. Ten MEDIVAC flights were executed to assist patients in need of medical care. Most cases were pregnancy related and no casualties were registered. A huge amount of shelter material was distributed to those people who were displaced during the floods.

The SANDF as an instrument of Government once again played a major role in the execution of the South African Government’s imperatives in terms of its mandate as contained in the Constitution.
It has been a year since the passing of the founding President of a democratic South Africa, the first Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, the late Mr Nelson Mandela.

In line with our country’s activities to commemorate the first anniversary of Tata Mandela’s death, the SANDF held a Mandela Commemorative Medal Parade at Air Force Base Waterkloof in Pretoria last month.

President Jacob Zuma, the President of South Africa and Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, was the main functionary at the medal parade. He awarded gold medals to SANDF men and women for their role in taking care of our statesman during the period when he was ill, his funeral, the mourning period arrangements, the lying-in-state at the Union Buildings and leading the state funeral at Qunu.

President Zuma expressed his gratitude and admiration to the SANDF for carrying out its duties towards its first Commander-in-Chief. President Zuma said: “I can say with pride that the planning, execution and precision with which the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) performed its duties left no one in doubt about the capability of our armed forces.”

He also thanked the international community for standing by South Africa as the world mourned the former statesman’s death on 5 December 2013. President Zuma said: “We remain grateful for this support.

ABOVE: Fltr: Mr Siphiwe Dlamini, Head of Communication, Prof Edna van Harte, the Chairperson of the Defence Force Service Commission, Adv George Bizos, Veteran Human Rights Lawyer and Madiba’s close friend, Justice Dikgang Moseneke, the Deputy Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa, Dr Sam Gulube, Secretary for Defence, and Mr Kebby Maphatsoe, the Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, at the Mandela Commemoration Medal Parade.
and, as we are healed, we continue to reflect on the many lessons that his life has presented to us. One year after his departure, we remember Madiba as our liberator who led our nation from bondage to peace and a new society.”

President Zuma extended his gratitude to the families of the recipients who endured long days of being away from their family members while they were taking care of Madiba right up to his last day.

The President conferred medals on 84 recipients, including Mandela’s funeral hearse driver, Cpl Thando Mangxangaza, and Lt Gen Vejaynand Ramlakan, who was Mandela’s physician, and members of Nelson Mandela’s medical task team, which included both military and civilian medical doctors.

Shortly after the parade, the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, spoke to members of the media. She pointed out that the SANDF had been equipped to deal
events

with its primary role and numerous other tasks assigned to it. She said that she was proud of the work done by the SANDF and praised its members who gave up the personal comforts of family life to look after Madiba. She said: “These men and women worked hard, spent time away from their families and were there until the end.”

An Operational Medical Orderly, Cpl Mangxangaza, who was the driver of the hearse transporting Madiba’s mortal remains from 1 Military Hospital into the streets of Pretoria to the Union Buildings, said that he had met Madiba three years before on 5 December and he could not believe he died on the date on which they met. He said that it was a humbling task to be part of the team that took care of him during his final years. Cpl Mangxangaza added that during the funeral he had mixed emotions, but he had to compose himself and do what was expected and required of him.

Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) Juan Wiese, one of the DOD Ceremonial Warrant Officers, said that the ceremonial display of the SANDF to bid farewell to Madiba, the planning of the revered statesman’s lying-in-state and the planning and execution of a state funeral befitting his stature had been a huge task and very time-consuming.

ABOVE: President Jacob Zuma, the President of South Africa, presented a medal to Cpl Thando Mangxangaza who drove the hearse transporting Madiba’s mortal remains from 1 Military Hospital to the Union Buildings.

ABOVE: The Acting Chief of the SANDF, Lt Gen Bongani Mkhize, the Chief of Logistics, presented a gift to the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula.
A delegation from Umbufto Swaziland Defence Force visited Chief of Logistics

By Cpl Mzontsundu Mdolomba

A delegation from the Umbufto Swaziland Defence Force (USDF) recently paid a courtesy visit to the Chief of Logistics, Lt Gen Bongani Mbatha, in Pretoria to benchmark the concept of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) of a fully-fledged self-sustainable military village.

The delegation headed by the Deputy Commander USDF, Maj Gen Sipho Tshabalala, consisted of nine members, including the USDF Chief of Logistics, Col Mduduzi Sibandze.

As the most developed country in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, South Africa is an excellent example for other member states to learn from.

The USDF had been given a piece of land by their government to develop the military village, it was for this reason that they USDF decided to visit South Africa for their project since this was new to them. Both Generals discussed matters regarding mutual cooperation between the two forces. This was followed by presentations at the Logistic Formation Headquarters in Thaba Tshwane, after which a tour of the Thaba Tshwane military village took place. All of these should assist them in setting up a military village in Swaziland.

The first presentation by Brig Gen Gertrude Mngadi, Director Facilities, focused on the concept of a military village. She stressed the importance of a military village structure and its maintenance, and singled out Thaba Tshwane as an example. She pointed out that a fully-fledged self-sustainable military village has a large number of establishments. It must have a health care centre, offices, living quarters, schools, places of worship as well as recreational facilities.

Brig Gen Hoepfner Wiese, Director Defence Staff Support Services, gave a presentation on the Defence Works Formation. He discussed its background, vision, mission, mandate, structure, hierarchy, strategy and the management of its life cycle.

Maj Gen Morris Moadira, Deputy Chief of Logistics, presented gifts to the USDF delegation, after which a tour of the Thaba Tshwane military village took place.

Vietnamese People’s Army Institute of Military Logistics visited South Africa

By Cpl Mzontsundu Mdolomba

Photo by Pte Jonathan Mogano

A delegation of the Vietnamese People’s Army Institute of Military Logistics (VPA) recently visited the Chief of Logistics in Pretoria to strengthen relationships and cooperation between the Logistics Divisions of the two Armed Forces.

The VPA delegation consisted of ten logistical specialists headed by Maj Gen Dang Nam Dien. Lt Gen Bongani Mbatha, the Chief of Logistics, welcomed the visitors and praised the pivotal role played by Vietnam and Cuba in the birth of the democracy of South Africa.

The two delegations deliberated on a variety of military issues. Lt Gen Mbatha briefed his counterpart on the many achievements of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) since its inception in 1994. Lt Gen Mbatha said: “We are a young country with a young defence force but we have achieved a lot.”

Lt Gen Mbatha briefed Gen Dang Nam Dien on the SANDF’s role in Africa. He said: “We had and we are still participating in many peace operations throughout the African continent. We have a battalion currently deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and a battalion in the Sudan. We also deployed a battalion in the Central African Republic (CAR), which unfortunately sustained casualties. But it was not a fighting battalion; they were deployed for retraining CAR forces.”

Gen Dang Nam Dien presented a token of appreciation and a book by the famous Vo Nguyen Giap to Lt Gen Mbatha, while Lt Gen Mbatha presented some African gifts to his counterpart. Lt Gen Mbatha said: “I officially give these to you as symbols of power. In Africa we use drums to communicate, whether we are happy or sad.”

After a warm welcome the VPA visitors met the SANDF members, who specialise in logistical matters, in the conference room to exchange MOU information.

Col Remsis Mfana Nkosi, the Acting Director Logistic Management, gave a presentation on the training process, content and programme for logistic officers on the different levels. The second presentation was on organisation, planning, arrangement and deployment of logistics personnel. The third presentation was fostering virtue in young officers. The fourth presentation was on outsourcing some military logistics functions to private companies. The concluding presentation was on the deployment of logistics personnel on peacekeeping missions.
The Chief of the SANDF bestows medals for first-class service to the SANDF

By Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photos by Sgt Elias Mahuma and Pte Jonathan Mogano

The Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, acknowledged and commended 70 deserving men and women of the SANDF for their first-class service to the SANDF and our country at an indoor medal parade held recently at Army Support Base Potchefstroom.

Addressing the members attending the parade Gen Shoke said that the event tallied well with the SANDF’s attempts to recognise and reward members for giving their all and for having distinguished themselves by long and efficient service to the SANDF with loyalty, pride, gallantry, devotion to duty, integrity, dignity and honour.

ABOVE: The Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, presented the Medalje Vir Troupe Dienis and Bar, 40 Years, to Brig Gen (Ret) John Bayne, former SA Air Force Director Combat Systems.

General Shoke said that members of the SANDF must be worthy of the trust of the people they served and should rise above themselves. He emphasised that there was no equivalent to being a soldier and that we should not equate soldiering with any other job. He said: “These soldiers were prepared to pay the ultimate price by sacrificing their own lives for the sake of their comrades and fellow South Africans.”

The Chief of the SANDF challenged us not to tolerate ill-discipline and misconduct. Gen Shoke said: “We live by command and operate in a disciplined environment.”
Let us rekindle our love of this country and ensure the SANDF has the right human assets to withstand any hazard.”

Medals reflect the bearer’s history of gallantry, loyalty and merit. Medals awarded during the parade included the Collective Citation: Medalje Vir Troue Diens and Bar, 40 Years, Medalje Vir Troue Diens and Bar, 30 Years, Medalje Vir Troue Diens and Bar, 30 Years Posthumous, and Bar to the Medalje Vir Troue Diens, 30 Years.

Speaking to SA Soldier, Cpl Kagiso Korolosi (58) who joined the military in 1980 from 2 SA Infantry Battalion, was awarded the 30 Years Good Service Medal. He said it was always an honour to be appreciated. Cpl Korolosi said: “As a soldier I have learnt that at all times one should not surrender, but try to make a difference. I see duty as an obligation. In my military career I braved the odds, so much happened, but certain events were more special than others.”

He added that being honoured and thanked by the Chief of the SANDF and by the country as well as being appreciated in the form of medals was a huge motivation.
The National Civic Remembrance Sunday and Wreath-laying ceremony

By Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photos by Sgt Elias Mahuma

A National Civic Remembrance Service and a wreath-laying ceremony were held at the Cenotaph in Harrison Street, Johannesburg to pay tribute to and commemorate the South African soldiers who perished during World War I. The theme was: “Unification and Nation Building”.

The 2014 Commemoration marked the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I (1914-1918), the war that claimed the lives of 12 452 South African soldiers. The commemoration in Johannesburg is the largest of its kind in South Africa, and links with Remembrance Day events held in many cities around the world. It is held annually on the Sunday nearest to 11 November (Armistice Day).

The Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg, Councillor Parks Tau, accompanied by senior SANDF
events

ABOVE: Sounding of the last post.

ABOVE: Maj Gen Lindile Yam, the General Officer Commanding SA Army Infantry Formation, paying a compliment in honour of the fallen.

ABOVE: Members of the SANDF in the background, flagman and sentries lined up remembering the unselfishness of the great sacrifice.

officers, officiated at the service and led the wreath-laying ceremony. Addressing the gathering, Councillor Tau said that each year a different theme is highlighted for the National Remembrance Sunday. He pointed out that in support of the overall message of unification and nation-building the event honours all South Africans who made the supreme sacrifice for their country in all wars and conflicts, including the struggle for democracy.

He added that our countrymen who enlisted for service in World War I, the biggest since the Napoleonic Wars of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, came from a cross-section of our society. They joined hands in what they understood, or hoped, was a struggle for world peace and democracy. They fought and died and were buried side by side wherever they were posted, be it South West Africa, France, East Africa or Palestine.

Councillor Tau said: “We honour them through this National Remembrance Sunday Service in the spirit of nation building, reconciliation and national healing. We gather here today, as do others in different parts of the world, in remembrance of the fallen heroes of World War I, and we send a message to humanity that never again should the world go through such dreadful trials as World War I and the appalling World War II that followed it in the years 1939-1945.”
SA Army observes the 96th anniversary of Armistice Day

By CO Marumo Machete, SO3 External Communication
SA Army
Photos by Lance Bombardier Refilwe Sebopa

Memories of Armistice Day of 96 years ago were relived at the SA Army Headquarters in Pretoria as the Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, led the SA Army in marking International Remembrance Day.

Continuing a commemorative tradition that spans more than nine decades, a salvo from the Artillery’s G1 gun opened the proceedings with a deafening bang for the sombre remembrance of the survivors and those that laid down their lives during the war that lasted four years from 1914 until the armistice in 1918.

A two-minute silence was observed, a minute for the survivors of the carnage of World War I and another for those who paid the ultimate sacrifice and perished during the war. This culminated in the last salvo fired by the G1 gun.

The Chief of the SA Army laid a wreath at the memorial on the lawns of the SA Army Headquarters complex before delivering his tribute.

Addressing the Army Council and the Generals and spectators in attendance, Lt Gen Masondo urged those in attendance never to take for granted the selfless sacrifices made by those who were involved in the war.

Lt Gen Masondo said: “As the SA Army marches into its third decade of defending our democracy, let us join the world as it pauses to reflect and remember the warriors of the Great War.”

He continued: “Let us honour their sacrifice and strive for a peaceful world where no innocent blood will have to be spilled, as there are so many forms of recourse to avert war and prevent conflict from escalating.” He also paid homage to the South African soldiers who died pursuing peace and stability on the African continent following the country’s post-1994 readmission to the international community.

In assessing the salient issues facing our country, the Chief of the SA Army took the opportunity to acknowledge the great contribution...
that Africans made towards the war effort against the Germans during World War I, at a time when their input was being played down.

Lt Gen Masondo reflected on our painful past that some preferred to obscure from public knowledge when he decried the harsh conditions that many African servicemen were exposed to by their white counterparts in the battles of the Great War.

He struck a raw nerve with proponents of the dominant narrative that seek to downplay the immense contribution that servicemen of African descent made towards the war effort on the side of the Allies of World War I against the German onslaught.

As a unifying gesture Lt Gen Masondo reminded those in attendance “that South Africans of all races were involved during this war”.

The Chief of the SA Army indicated however, that “those of African descent, who served as the South African Native Labour Contingent, (were) exposed to the harshest conditions by their fellow white compatriots even in the midst of battle”. He decried the closed compound system that discriminated against native South Africans even at the height of the war against Germany.

Lt Gen Masondo said: “They bore the brunt of the German onslaught while serving alongside the troops of Great Britain and the Empire and their efforts did not receive the required appreciation from the South African High Command at the time, which was hell-bent on pursuing policies of racial segregation.”

The Chief of the SA Army honoured all South Africans of various backgrounds who were engaged in the war effort during the Great War, after which he focussed on the future of the younger generation that continue to live the legacy of their forebears.

Lt Gen Masondo said: “Today, as we honour the memory of the fallen, we also remember them and commit ourselves to the future of the living. This living generation is tasked with carrying our aspirations for the future as we continue redefining ourselves as the noble Africans in total control of our destiny, without foreign coercion and racial segregation.”

This year marks the 96th anniversary of the end of World War I which is commemorated the world over as International Remembrance Day, Armistice Day or Poppy Day, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of November - the month, day and hour when World War I came to an end with the signing of the armistice by Germany and the Western Allies at Compiegne in France.
The SA Army Armour Formation presented a Future Armour Capability Conference recently at the Military Health Training Formation in Thaba Tshwane.

Addressing the attendees the General Officer Commanding SA Army Armour Formation, Brig Gen André Retief, emphasised that the aim was to debate and determine what the future armour capabilities of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) should be.

The focus was on the following aspects:
- The Defence Review.
- The Department of Defence (DOD) Force Employment Strategy.
- The SA Army Strategy.
- The Future Army Force Design.

The first speaker, Col Henro Grobler, SSO Army Strategy, gave a detailed presentation on Future Army Force Design. He outlined the difference between the Force Design, Force Structure, Force Structure elements and indicated the Macro Force Structure of the Future SA Army Force Design and explained the groupings of Armour within the organisational design.

To take the argument further, Mr Helmoed-Römer Heitman, a defence analyst, gave a brief summary of the Defence Review Milestone 4 and beyond. According to Mr Heitman, Milestone 4 represented the “final end state” of the Defence Review, and envisaged “a sustainable Defence Force that will meet South Africa’s strategic requirements and that can meet South Africa’s regional responsibilities”. This implied that the Defence Force must be able to

- demonstrate a deterrent capability within a short period of time;
- protect the vital national interest of South Africa beyond its borders;
- safeguard the borders and critical infrastructure;
- sustain three Joint Combat Groups outside South Africa; and
- Conduct a Joint Brigade-Strength Intervention Operation.

Mr Heitman further explained the implications of the above concerning tanks, heavy, infantry combat vehicles (ICVs) and light armour. In order to safeguard South Africa’s borders, patrolling must be shared among light armour in open terrain, mobile infantry with protected vehicles in bush terrain and foot or mounted infantry in close terrain. Mr Heitman suggested that the point of Armour elements was to bring an armour patrolling and reconnaissance mind-set to this task. For him, armour does not have to use standard armoured vehicles, although the vehicles must have basic protection and armament that will outmatch the weaponry of likely illegal elements.

He showed how fast armaments, technology and sophistication of such illegal elements could change over a very short space of time. Mr Heitman emphasised that the tyranny of distance would impact any operation on the African continent and suggested obtaining the following capability packages (enablers) which must be analysed for successful deployment of armour:

- Airlift, sealift, rail transport and road transport.
- Early entry forces.
- Rapid deployment follow-on forces,
- Rapid deployment main forces.

The uncertainty regarding distant operations and the risk of sudden changes in their intensity and the nature of the opposing forces demand a balanced and integrated force. There will be no time to group or regroup for phases of the operation within the theatre, let alone from outside. This is the era of combat group, perhaps even the combat team or company group permanently combining armour, infantry, artillery and engineers.
ABOVE: Col Henro Grobler, SSO Army Strategy from Directorate Strategic Direction, gave a detailed presentation on Future Army Force Design.

There will, however, be a need for medium armour as the primary manoeuvre element of the deterrent/war fighting force. This is the Rooikat/Rooikat replacement, but one needs to think about employment. This future medium armour will need a companion ICV and other supporting vehicles with the same mobility and armour.

Despite the feasibility of deploying medium armour, there is a clear requirement for light armour. As in the case of medium armour, this should take the form of an integrated family of vehicles to allow for standardisation on a single combat platform at battalion level.

The third speaker at the conference, Col Anton Grundling, SSO Operational Planning from the Joint Operations Division, presented a brief on the Joint Force Employment requirements. He indicated that if one knew where one was going, one should know what concepts, doctrine and tactics to apply and with what capabilities. He explained that times had changed and the increasing complexities of operations versus the decline of the defence budget posed a serious challenge. Col Grundling provided the conference with information regarding the required operational responsibilities and he touched on current SANDF operations (internal and external) and various peace support operations (PSO) and requirements.

He explained that a multidimensional SANDF reaction capability consisting of land, air, maritime, military health, special forces and support elements capable of being deployed internally and externally in a wide range of missions at short notice must be maintained. The employment thereof could be contingency based or unanticipated and would require a well-trained, rehearsed and equipped force.

According to Col Grundling the Joint Operations Division expected the SA Army to be the lead role-player in the landward domain, and to be able to understand the changing nature of war and be flexible in order to adapt to different profiles in short time spans. The landward domain should be able to adapt to mission specific requirements, which means adapting Force Structure elements according to the mission requirements and providing total integrated capability at the highest levels.

The second last speaker, Col Andries van Wyk (Ret) from the Defence Decision Support Institute (DDSI) presented a paper on the changing nature of conflict. His aim was to provide a possible framework for considering the required future identity of joint armour in the SANDF.

Col Van Wyk argued that some strong trends in the nature of conflict had come to the fore in the post Cold War era. The boundaries between standing forces and “asymmetric” guerrillas or terrorists were easy to define. However, recent developments in the nature of conflict were blurring these boundaries.

He explained to the audience the lessons learned over the past 13 years of war in Africa and Afghanistan. The timeline indicated a decline in the number of conflicts, but an increase in irregular warfare and in the number of interventions. In Africa, conflicts occur between armed groups and not states. Africa’s transition to democracy has resulted in an increase in low intensity armed conflict between armed groups, hence an increase in peace mission interventions and global mechanisms based on improved awareness and evidence, social media and satellite surveillance. In summary, Col Van Wyk pointed out that the SA Army had ample data available to present an updated opposing forces (OPFOR) and to develop modern doctrine and train its personnel accordingly.

The last speaker, Col Perie Franken (Ret) from the Defence Decision Support Institute (DDSI) presented a brief on foreseen armour requirements. Col Franken provided an insight into the required defence capabilities as prescribed in the Defence Review. He also addressed the impact this would have on strategic airlift decisions and road movement.

In closing, Brig Gen Retief congratulated and thanked all the speakers for their excellent and thought-provoking presentations. However, he stated that this conference was but one of many opportunities to determine future requirements. According to Brig Gen Retief, the conference was only the end of the beginning of deliberations on the Required Future Armour Capabilities. For him firepower, mobility, protection, situational awareness and multi-role capabilities were very important, while the ability to deploy rapidly should receive more attention in future discussions.
**Training Command bids farewell to its General Officer Commanding**

By Cpl Mzontsundu Mdolomba  
Photo by Pte Jonathan Mogano

The Training Command recently officially bade farewell to its retiring General Officer Commanding, Maj Gen Manfred Mabuza.  
Maj Gen Mabuza was born in Alexandra Township on 20 December 1954. He started his primary schooling at Ekujabuleni Lower Primary School in Waterval Boven and matriculated at Elukhanyisweni Secondary School in 1974.  
The then local government regulations and the influence of his teachers at Elukhanyisweni High School saw him fleeing the country for his initial exile in Botswana. Maj Gen Mabuza said: “In January 1976 my friend, Sidney Silolo, and I voluntarily left the country as “Amadelakufa” and joined the Bokwe Mafuna Group at the Pheli Ndaba residence. The Bokwe Mafuna Group trained me in surveillance and counter-surveillance.”  
Maj Gen Mabuza said he was sent to Cuba for intelligence training and operated in the Intelligence outfit until the unbanning of the liberation forces. He served under the likes of the then Minister of Defence, Mr Ronnie Kasrils, Maj Gen (Ret) Keith Mokoape, Raymond Lalla, Gen (Ret) Sphiwe Nyanda and Gen Solly Shoke, to mention some of them.  
To prepare themselves for integration into the SANDF, he and other ex-freedom fighters, including Gen Shoke, Lt Gen (Ret) Ramano, Lt Gen (late) Tshali, Maj Gen Phako and Maj Gen Hlatshwayo were sent to the Zimbabwe Defence Force (ZDF). Maj Gen Mabuza said: “When I was integrated Umkhonto we Sizwe conferred on me the rank of Colonel, but I was demoted to a Major. I appealed in vain. I then progressed within the ranks to Major General, my retirement rank.”  
After training at Tlokwe, the former Potchefstroom, he served at Defence Intelligence (DI) until his appointment to the rank of Brigadier General. His tour of duty at DI was as follows: Int Processing, SO2 Desk Officer, CDI, SO1 Integration and Dissemination. In addition he successfully completed the Army Junior Command and Staff Course, the Air Force Junior Command and Staff Course and the Navy Senior Command and Staff Programme. These courses earned him the rank of Colonel and as such continued to serve at the Integration and Dissemination Section.  
On 17 September 2001 he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General and appointed the Director Overt Collection. He was then transferred to Defence Headquarters to be the PSO to Gen (Ret) Nyanda. Maj Gen Mabuza said: “Here I felt like a celebrity travelling the length and breadth of this country and the world.” And back at DI he was appointed Director Intelligence for Operations.  
On 1 October 2009 he was promoted to the rank of Major General and appointed to Human Resources as the General Officer Commanding Training Command responsible for ten colleges and schools, including civilian training. In his new appointment he worked under the various Chief Human Resources: Lt Gen Derick Mgwebi, Lt Gen Themba Nkabinde and Lt Gen Norman Yengeni.  
Maj Gen Mabuza thanked all those who shaped his career, for example his first secretary, his first PSO, VIP Protectors and the rest of staff of Training Command Headquarters. His long list included Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Secretaries for Defence and the current Chief of the SANDF. He said: “Let my departure open other avenues of life. To those of you remaining, I ask that you pledge yourselves to ‘Serve with pride’ and adhere strictly to the SANDF Code of Conduct. Make it your lifestyle and you will never go wrong.”
After a gruelling 44-week long programme at the SA National War College 81 officers, including five International Fellows, received their certificates after successfully completing the Joint Senior Command and Staff Programme.

Addressing the graduates, Lt Gen Derick Mgwebi, Chief Joint Operations, said: “I was informed that you excelled during the academic year. I trust that all of you have been empowered with the necessary knowledge to make a significant difference wherever your career paths may lead you in future.” He urged the officers to continue to pursue the culture of lifelong learning.

Lt Gen Mgwebi added: “Today’s graduates will receive the Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority (SASSETA) qualification, National Diploma in Joint and Multi-National Operations as well as the Joint Senior Command and Staff Programme (JSCSP) qualification.”

Among them were students who were awarded for their exceptional performance during the course of the year. They were honoured in accordance with the Services to which they belonged.

Some of the officers who obtained high academic achievements during the course were Lt Col Pelo Letebele from the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) for best academic results, and Lt Col Solly Lechoenyo from the SA Army for overall best student and Lt Col Oscar Nkoana from the SAMHS who obtained an award for best improved learner.

Commander Cara Pratten from the SA Navy received an award for the best written Commandant Research Paper and Lt Col Aamir Mukhtar, an International Fellow from Pakistan, received an award for best Commandant Research Paper. These members were acknowledged for their achievements and applauded for their excellent performance.

Another of the graduates to receive an award was Lt Col Lauryn Khan as the best commander in joint operations in the SA Army. She said that the programme had broadened their skills in applying strategic guidelines at the operational level. She added: “The JSCSP was a year of knowledge empowerment. It sharpened individuals to handle aspects of command and control and the submission of subordinate guidelines. This programme also developed officers into staff officers or commanders.”

The graduates were excited at finally returning home after the lengthy programme, but Lt Gen Mgwebi cautioned the officers and said: “Do not impetuously take back leadership in your homes, but take into consideration that your spouses and partners were in charge on the home front for a very long time while you were attending courses. So instead take back leadership slowly”.

The JSCSP, the most senior military development programme, is aimed at providing an opportunity for selected commanders and staff officers to be developed for deployment at the operational level and military strategic level of war in the National Defence Force.
The Chief Human Resources, Lt Gen Norman Yengeni, recently held his Medal Parade in which he awarded deserving members of the Human Resources Division for rendering outstanding and loyal service.

Altogether 118 medals and certificates were awarded to both the uniformed and civilian members of the Human Resources Division at the medal parade held at the Personnel Services School in Thaba Tshwane.

Lt Gen Yengeni conferred nine different awards, namely the Tshumelo Ikatelaho, followed by the Good Service Medal Silver (20 Years), the Bar to the Medalje vir Troue Diens - 20 Years (After 27 April 2003), the Bar to the Medalje vir Troue Diens (20 Years), the Good Service Medal Bronze (10 Years), the Faithful Service Medal (Transkei: 10 Years), the MK (10 Years), the Medalje vir Troue Diens (10 Years) and certificates (30 Years) for civilian personnel. Lt Gen Yengeni said that it was military tradition to honour those members who had excelled in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) through outstanding acts of valour.

Congratulating the recipients, Lt Gen Yengeni said: “Each medal and certificate tells a story of its own. It is a narrative of dedication and sacrifice granting the bearer recognition and value for their service. You deserve these medals! Wear them with pride! Your determination to make a difference has paid off.”

He also extended his salutations to the partners and families of the awarded recipients. The Chief of Human Resources also highlighted the
Lt Gen Yengeni said some courses and workshops were continuing. These included the 180 officers commanding and line managers who attended six labour relations workshops in the Department of Defence (DOD), training for the Human Resources’ planners, the School of Military Justices’ first Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) Trainer of Trainers’ Course and the two-stream qualification of M Phil in Security and Defence Studies Programme.

The Chief Human Resources alerted the DOD members about the salary adjustment of 1.5 per cent. He also said that a new concept model was under way; this model will address the redeployment and employment of SANDF members who have reached the brink of their careers.

He added that the coordination of the Auditor-General’s queries was progressing fairly well as 90 per cent of the information had already been submitted to the Auditors.

Lt Gen Yengeni congratulated Chief Directorate Transformation Management on hosting a successful 2014 Casual Day event in which R72 000 was raised. These funds will be utilised by Curamus to cater for the special needs of soldiers living with disabilities.

The Chief Human Resources vowed to stay on top of further progress and its implementation during the course of the 2015/2016 Financial Year. He said: “The Department will move with speed in the second quarter to ensure the full implementation of these resolutions.”
The seventh group of learners, who passed the Joint Warrant Officers Programme since 2006, were awarded for their achievements at the Certificate Ceremony Parade recently held at Wonderboom Military Base in Pretoria. Seventeen learners passed the gruelling ten-month programme, and SWO Isaac James Fredericks of the SA Naval College was awarded the Best Learner Trophy.

Highlights during the ten-month programme included a group-forming session, a battlefield visit, a visit to Botswana and capability visits as part of the operational planning process.

Brig Gen Mlindeni Sibango, Chief of Staff Training Command, addressed the learners and said: “As the alumni of this academy, be always there to shine the star of the academy so that others can see the good quality work you are doing”. He also thanked both the Warrant Officers’ Academy for their excellent work and the families of the learners for their love and support.

**Historical background**

The Education, Training and Development (ETD) First Report of 1997 led to the initiation of Project LOYAL on 19 March 2001 under the auspices of Joint Training Command. Its purpose was to address the shortfall in the SANDF military professional development of Non-commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers, which entailed the development of a comprehensive learning pathway and associated learning opportunities for the optimal development of Non-commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers.

The project team compiled the ETD Appreciation which was presented to the Military Council on 2 December 2002. The Directorate Integrated Management System (DIMI) Report followed in October 2003. In September 2004 the critical posts were staffed to establish the Warrant Officers’ Academy at Military Base Wonderboom, home to the SA Army Signal Formation.

The qualification, a National Certificate: Multi-national Safety and Security Operations Management at National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level 5, was registered with the SA Qualifications Authority in April 2005.

The pilot Joint Warrant Officers Programme started on 6 September 2006 and ended on 28 September 2007. The Warrant Officers’ Academy was officially inaugurated by Chief of the SANDF on 6 October 2006 and it achieved full accreditation status on 19 December 2006.

The Warrant Officers’ Academy was established for Non-commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).
Military Academy awards its students for exceptional performance

By Maj Engela Meintjes, Military Academy Communication Officer
Photos by Sgt Debbie Guthry

The Military Academy hosted the annual Passing-out Parade for the third year group. The Passing-out Parade is the zenith of the Military Academy’s activities and symbolises excellence in terms of the institution’s core business.

This was followed by the prestigious annual Awards Evening at the Military Academy Combined Club in Saldanha. The students who excelled in their studies received certificates, gifts and trophies as a token of recognition for their hard work during the academic year 2014. In addition to the students being acknowledged, the members of the Faculty of Military Science who excelled in their academic and professional development were also awarded.

The best candidates in the various Services were awarded Service Trophies, and the overall best candidate, combining both military prowess and academic work, was presented with the Sword of Honour. Again Capt Badenhorst was the star of the day. She received the Sword of Honour as well as the trophy for Best SA Air Force student. The other trophy winners were Lt Kenosi Nakedi (Best SA Army student), Lt (SAN) Doctor Andries Mothoa (Best SA Navy student) and Lt Andisa Teka (Best SA Military Health Service student). The parade was concluded with an air display by Air Force Base Langebaanweg with the Silver Falcons entertaining the crowd.
Mitchells Plain Festival

Mitchells Plain Festival is an annual spectacular fun-filled family event where the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) gets an opportunity to display its hardware and inform the public about its mandate.

This annual event was packed with a wide variety of activities for the whole family, including food stalls and information centres. The first day took off with military displays by 9 SA Infantry Battalion (SA Army) demonstrating counter-attack tactics with smoke grenades and rifle shooting to the amazement of the learners from the surrounding primary schools.

Members of the SA Navy Dog Unit displayed the agility and tactics of their well trained dogs while the SA Navy Precision Drill Squad captivated the public with their quick moves. The Lynx helicopter of the SA Navy on display was a show stopper - a definite favourite for many curious families. The public was amazed by the fire power of the SA Army, which had weapons and tanks on display.

Most young people and parents were interested in the SIYANDIZA Programme of the SA Air Force. SIYANDIZA aims to develop learners through the orientation programmes of the SA Air Force and draws special attention to possible careers in aviation.

The Human Resources Section offered information on careers in the SANDF which included specialised avionics, combat, engineering, maritime, technical, military health occupations and electronics. Informative materials were on display as part of the recruitment drive that aimed to rejuvenate the organisation with educated and fit young patriots.

One of the parents at the Mitchells Plain Festival, Ms Melisa Sengrys, said: “I had so much fun today, my boys loved all the military vehicles and the air show was my favourite. Thank you so much for an awesome vibe. It was my first time and I will definitely not miss it ever again.”
Medicinal myths and a lack of care for our natural environment will be the forces behind the extinction of this magnificent animal.

The South African National Defence Force is a pillar in the reactive physical campaign being fought against poaching on the ground and in the skies. We also engage in proactive educational campaigns to spread awareness about the intrinsic value of this magnificent animal.

www.dod.mil.za
The motto “Honour and Skill” of the South African Sea Cadets is proudly displayed under their badge. These words embody the core values of the Corps which are: Integrity, excellence and service, which are instilled in the Sea Cadets via their training and interaction with competent instructors. These three words embody the cardinal points of a Sea Cadet’s compass of life and include: Honesty, morality, loyalty, responsibility, discipline, accountability, self-respect and obedience.

The Sea Cadets also teach the necessary knowledge and provides practical skills underwritten by accredited courses necessary for those who wish to follow a career at sea within the maritime industry.

The Sea Cadet in South Africa movement traces its origins back to the first South African Training Ship (TS), located on Woodstock beach Cape Town, TS Woltemade was opened on 8 June 1905. The movement spread throughout South Africa and currently there are 15 training ships, nine are active and developing those values and skills required to ensure that the maritime industry is provided with recruits who have a passion for the sea.

Who are the Sea Cadets?

Sea Cadets are school going boys and girls from Grade 6 to Grade 12 who enjoy having “serious fun” while learning leadership, self-discipline and maritime orientated skills as a voluntary extra mural activity. Any youngster irrespective of race, gender or religion is welcome.

Where and when does the training take place?

The land based training ships located around the country provide a safe space with competent instructors at which training can take place. Training takes place on Fridays or Saturdays or Sundays depending on the training ship involved, with leadership camps scheduled during the school holidays. The highlight of the year is the annual camp hosted by the SA Navy in Simon’s Town.
What is the training philosophy of the Sea Cadets?

“Action Centred Learning” allied to a practical “Outcome Based Competency Assessment” is the approach which the instructors follow. This ensures that Sea Cadets are able not only skilled to “Do” but also to know “Why” they do it and how to “Use” available resources.

What do Sea Cadets learn?

Sea Cadets are taught and assessed on practical skills including:

- Seamanship
- Communications
- Engineering
- Catering
- First Aid
- Survival at sea
- Fire Fighting
- Restricted Maritime Radio
- Welding

Several of the courses are certified and accredited via national bodies providing the Sea Cadets with the necessary certification towards their chosen career.

While undergoing the training they also develop their leadership, team building and self-discipline under the watchful eye of experienced instructors.

Who provides the training?

Each training ship is staffed by competent volunteers, many of whom are themselves ex Sea Cadets or parents of Cadets, others who have followed careers within the maritime industry, the SA Navy or have the skills that are needed to be imparted practically.

Who supports the Sea Cadets?

The South African Sea Cadet Association is a:

- Non Profit Company (Company Registration Number: 2025/026649/08)
- Non-Profit Organisation (057-289-NPO)
- Public Benefit Organisation (including Section 18A status) [9753846147/930039234]

It is staffed by volunteers who have a passion for things nautical. They are supported by local communities, parents, the maritime industry, LOTTO and the SA Navy.

Opportunities are also provided by the maritime industry and SA Navy for Sea Cadets to experience life at sea.

Funding is raised via the Sea Cadets annual fees and camp fees as well as via bequeaths pledges and donations. Funding is required in order to support Sea Cadets whose families may not be in a position to fully fund their activities.

Should you wish to contribute either funding or materially to the South Africa Sea Cadets please contact the National Treasurer, Mr Deon Lincoln, on 082 821 9361 or deon.lincoln2@gmail.com or PO Box 7681, Newton Park, Port Elizabeth, 6055.

Anyone wishing to join or assist in Sea Cadet training should contact the Commanding Officer of the unit within their area for more details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAINING SHIP</th>
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<tr>
<td>TS Woltemade</td>
<td>Cape Town</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>Lt P. Jacobs - 083 674 1024 - <a href="mailto:pauljacobs15@gmail.com">pauljacobs15@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>TS Springs</td>
<td>Springs</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Sub Lt V. Cooper - 082 833 9421 - <a href="mailto:tssprings@vodamail.co.za">tssprings@vodamail.co.za</a></td>
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<td>TS Tiburon</td>
<td>Durban</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Lt Cdr J. Young - 083 680 6512 - <a href="mailto:tisan@polka.co.za">tisan@polka.co.za</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>TS Lanherne</td>
<td>Port Elizabeth</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Lt Cdr G. Daniels - 083 627 4696 - <a href="mailto:lanherne@telkomsa.net">lanherne@telkomsa.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TS Arethusa</td>
<td>Hartbeespoort Dam</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Weekend facility - Lt Cdr N. Fray - 082 415 4483 - <a href="mailto:mwshaugh@mweb.co.za">mwshaugh@mweb.co.za</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>TS Quteniqua</td>
<td>Mossel Bay</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Paul Vieira - 044 690 4201 - <a href="mailto:pvieira@samsa.org.za">pvieira@samsa.org.za</a></td>
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<td>TS Fearless</td>
<td>Centurion</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Lt Cdr N. Fray - 082 415 4483</td>
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<td>TS Knysna</td>
<td>Knysna</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Lt Cdr S. Eriksen - 083 653 7060 - <a href="mailto:seacadet@seanet.co.za">seacadet@seanet.co.za</a></td>
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<td>TS Kromme</td>
<td>St Francis Bay</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Maj Gen O. Holmes - 082 480 0458 - <a href="mailto:oholmes@telkomsa.net">oholmes@telkomsa.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Officer Sea Cadets</td>
<td>Capt (SCC) Ian Loubser</td>
<td>082 461 6085 - <a href="mailto:ian1@pixie.co.za">ian1@pixie.co.za</a></td>
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A visit to Air Force Base Ysterplaat Museum

A visit to a museum is an opportunity to learn about history and the impact it has in our lives today. It is even more enriching if you are guided through by some knowledgeable person. Mr Chris Teale, a qualified museologist at Air Force Base (AFB) Ysterplaat Museum in Cape Town is one such person.

He said: “My job is to develop, design and manage the museum. To work here, you need to have a touch of the Fine Arts.”

Mr Teale indicated that the museum was number one out of 80 top public destinations in Cape Town and number two among top cultural and historical destinations in Cape Town.

He said: “We make every effort to engage with the visitors. The visitors’ book gives us feedback on visitors’ opinions, which enables us to improve the quality of our exhibits.”

AFB Ysterplaat Museum works closely with Cape Town Castle, the SA Navy Museum and Robben Island in terms of restoration of historic and military exhibits.

Mr Teale said: “The way we designed the museum was based on the testimonies of ordinary people. We write these testimonies from the perspective of a survivor, irrespective of the side they fought on.”

The museum’s collection consists of sections such as the Jan Smuts Gallery and the World War II room, which is named after a women pilot, Ursula Smith. Mr Teale said that they control all the museum’s historic assets and the restoration centre.

He said: “We have got some of the rarest objects, eg the architect of air power excellence of the Royal Air Force, Jan Smuts, or the first Chief of the SA Air Force, Sir Pierre van Ryneveld.”

Mr Teale said the museum is dedicated to the people of the Western Cape, particularly Cape Town. He mentioned that the very ground on which the AFB Ysterplaat is built was actually where the SA Airways started when the place was still called Brooklyn.

Asked about future plans for the expansion of museum, he said: “We will accommodate all items brought to the museum. We constantly record things that are happening.”
The Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) has very strict rules about the benefits it must pay to its members, pensioners and beneficiaries. These rules are set out in legislation (an Act of Parliament, approved and signed into law by the President) called the Government Employees Pension (or GEP) Law and Regulations as negotiated in the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) for post-retirement medical benefits. This law and its rules explain how the GEPF must collect money from contributing members and employers, how this money must be invested and how it must be paid out to those who are eligible for benefits.

The GEPF is a defined benefit fund and your benefits are guaranteed.

The GEPF is a defined benefit fund. This type of pension fund is different from the pension funds offered in most of the private sector (you can choose to belong to a defined benefit fund in the private sector as well, but it is not the norm). In the GEPF, the type of benefit you will receive is not based on how much money you and your employer contribute, with interest, and then when the money is finished there is nothing left for you. Instead, in the GEPF your benefit is calculated based on formulas specified in the rules, and the benefit is determined on the basis of an exit factor, the number of service years you have, and your final average salary over the last two years of your employment.

Resignation rather than retirement – WHAT YOU CAN LOSE

The GEPF has different benefits if you resign from government service than if you retiring. If you have more than 10 years of service and you decide to resign rather than retire, you will lose the following benefits offered by the GEPF:

Monthly pension

You will only receive a once-off lump sum payment, called a gratuity, rather than receiving your lump sum and monthly pension, called an annuity (which is for life). Your spouse or life partner will also not receive anything from the GEPF after you die, whereas they would have received 50% or 75% of your monthly pension, based on your choice on retirement, for as long as they live.

Medical aid subsidy

You will not receive any contribution towards your medical aid from the state if you resign. If you have 15 or more years of service, you may have been eligible to receive a government subsidy towards your monthly medical aid membership for the rest of your life if you had chosen to retire as per the conditions set out in the PSCBC resolutions. If you have less than 15 years’ service, you may have received a once-off medical benefit (the amount payable depends on whether you have less than five years’ service, less than 10 years’ service or less than 15 years’ service). These all fall away when you resign.
Funeral benefit

The GEPF pays a funeral benefit to help its members and pensioners pay the funeral costs when a GEPF member or pensioner dies. These benefits are also paid out on the death of the spouse, life partner or eligible child of a member or pensioner. This benefit consists of R7 500 for the funeral of a member or pensioner. The same amount is also payable in the case of a funeral of a member or pensioner’s spouse or life partner. For the funeral of an eligible child of a member or pensioner, the benefit is R3 000. This benefit is not paid if you resign.

The choice is yours, but think and be informed

Before you resign rather than choosing to retire with the GEPF think about all of the options that you have and the benefits that you will lose. As a GEPF member, whether an active member or pensioner member, you will never receive less than the benefits that you qualify for according to the law and the rules.

Payment of pension benefits in 2015

An unfounded rumour is spreading regarding the GEPF pension payment. It is important for all GEPF members and pensioners to know that the GEPF will continue to pay all the benefits that are due to members who leave, according to the rules.

Pension reform is in the pipeline which will entail limiting the amount members of private sector provident funds may withdraw from a fund on exit. THIS WILL NOT AFFECT THE GEPF, AS THE GEP LAW WILL NOT CHANGE AT THIS STAGE. The change will affect all funds administered in terms of the Pension Funds Act.

Don’t let anyone fool you about your benefits: be informed. If you are not sure about something, contact the GEPF directly on 0800 117 669 or visit your nearest Regional Office.

CONTACT DETAILS

Toll free number: 0800 117 669
Fax number: (012) 326 2507
Website: www.gepf.co.za/www.gepf.gov.za
Email: enquiries@gepf.co.za
Postal address: GEPF Private Bag X63 Pretoria 0001
www.twitter.com: @GEPF_SA

PROVINCIAL OFFICES

Gauteng: Ground floor, Kingsley Centre, corner Steve Biko and Stanza Bopape Streets, Arcadia, Pretoria
Eastern Cape: No. 12, Global Life Office Centre, Circular Drive, Bhisho
Free State: No. 2 President Brand Street, Bloemfontein
KwaZulu-Natal: Third floor, Brasfort House, 262 Langalibalele Street, Pietermaritzburg
Limpopo: 87(a) Bok Street, Polokwane
Mpumalanga: 19 Hope Street, Ciliati Building, Block A, ground floor, Mbombela
North West: Mmabatho Mega City, Office No. 4/17, ground floor, Entrance 4, Mahikeng
Northern Cape: 11 Old Main Road, Kimberley
Western Cape: 21st floor, No. 1 Thibault Square, Standard Bank Building, Long Street, Cape Town

SATELLITE OFFICES

Johannesburg: Second floor, Lunga House, 124 Marshall Street, (Corner Marshall and Eloff – Gandhi Square Precinct), Marshalltown
Port Elizabeth: Ground floor, Kwantu Towers, Sivuyile Mini-Square, next to City Hall
Mthatha: Second floor, PRD Building, Sutherland Street
Durban: Eighth floor, Salmon Grove Chambers, 407 Anton Lembede Street
The SA Army Support Formation integrating into the 21st Century

Article and photo by S Sgt Thabiso Macana-Shologu, SA Army Support Formation Corporate Communication Clerk

The SA Army Support Formation recently unveiled its one of a kind boardroom. On arrival of Maj Gen Stephen Marumo, General Officer Commanding of the SA Army Support Formation, the doors to the new conference facility of the SA Army Support Formation - the only boardroom of its kind in the whole SA Army - were unlocked to welcome the members.

After the renovations and upgrading that took place, the anticipation of seeing what all the fuss was about had come to an end. When the members were invited to the boardroom for the very first time they were blown away, not only by the level of technology that was in the boardroom, but also by the look and feel of the boardroom.

Upon entrance one is welcomed by computer screens and air conditioners that should encourage a level of tranquillity during any presentation, including various flags (National, SA Army and SA Army Support Formation) as well as the official photographs of the Chief of the SANDF and the Chief of the SA Army.

This state of the art boardroom is fully equipped with the latest technologies. It has a capacity for 66 delegates though it has currently a 43 seating capacity. It is also equipped with a presentation broadcast to 33 19” LED screens, a 32 taiden delegate system and a four speaker system with an amplifier enhancement for playback and taiden sound reinforcement.

It also boasts a whiteboard with an internal broadcast system (for interaction purposes), which seems to be the favourite given the technology of today, since we have touch screens in everything why not in the boardroom …

The boardroom features a 2 to 1 conference unit, a control unit with IR emitters for air conditioner units and a control PC which is situated at the back of the room and a wireless presenter. It is further equipped with a surge protection in cases of lightning and a two-hour standby uninterrupted power supply (UPS) in cases of electricity failure caused by load shedding or any other type of power cuts. The wall control unit can switch between wireless presentation and PCs, as well as turn air conditioners on and off.

The wireless presenter can accommodate up to four devices simultaneously. The boardroom also features a recording capability voice, the best antivirus protection, a control PC with Org Plus, MS Visio, MS Access and MS Office including whiteboard and presentation annotations. With this top of the range boardroom/conference facility there are terms and conditions that apply including the “No Food and Beverages” Policy in the boardroom due to the state of the art equipment that the Formation has invested on it.

The conference facility was declared by Maj Gen Marumo to be the only conference facility for all the formation’s conferences as from then on. Considering the level of technology and security that this boardroom has, one can understand why there is such an emphasis on this declaration.

This boardroom is designed to support the “Go Green Initiative” that was introduced by the environmentalist to further integrate eco-friendly thinking, in the fact that it is so technologically advanced.

The efforts of Brig Gen Ian Johnson (the outgoing Chief of Staff), Lt Col Andreas van Dyk (SO1 Plan and Control) and Maj Neo Gaomphe (SO2 Signal) who worked tirelessly on this project have transcended our expectations and their endeavours have ensured that we not only have a conference facility that we are proud of, but have indeed integrated the SA Army Support Formation into the 21st Century. Indeed we have arrived.
Johannesburg Regiments Association exercises its Freedom of Entry in Soweto

By Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photos by Pte Jonathan Mogano

The Speaker of the Council in the City of Johannesburg, Councillor Conny Bapela, recently hosted the Freedom of Entry Parade at Braamfischerville in Soweto. The city had also requested a static display of military hardware from the SANDF and a career exhibition.

The career exhibition provided an opportunity to enhance the corporate image of the SANDF and also focus on the social responsibility programmes. Services and Divisions of the SANDF opened a window of opportunity to scores of youth who strolled inquisitively around the stalls.

Regular and Reserve units that took part in the Freedom of Entry Parade included the Transvaal Scottish, the Witwatersrand Rifles, the Rand Light Infantry, Light Horse Regiment, Transvaal Horse Artillery, SA Irish Regiment, Regiment President Kruger, Johannesburg Regiment, 2 Squadron (SA Air Force), 21 SA Infantry Battalion, Area Military Health Unit Gauteng and 6 Light Anti-aircraft Regiment. (These units all form part of the Freedom of the City of Johannesburg Regiments Association [FRA], which was established as a voluntary association in July 1986.)

The Freedom of Entry to the city of Johannesburg is only granted to military units that have served the city well in the past and whose members are local citizens. The Johannesburg Regiments Association comprises of three Regular and nine Reserve units that were conferred Freedom of Entry by the City Council of Johannesburg.

Councillor Bapela said it was an honour for her to represent the city of Johannesburg at an event that reaffirms the city and the SANDF’s relationship, and further allowing the military units to exercise their Freedom of Entry to the city.

She added: “Freedom of Entry to the city is awarded in acknowledgement of the service that the military units have provided to the city. It is not only applicable to the city of Johannesburg but the country at large.”

Councillor Bapela continued: “These military units have served the country and protected our borders in support of internal crime prevention operations. They have also participated in peacekeeping operations abroad in countries such as the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi.” She said that it is wonderful to know that the city of Johannesburg and the country can always rely on the SANDF’s dedication and commitment. She admitted that the interaction with the SANDF units has improved relations in most levels over the years.

Councillor Bapela thanked everyone on behalf of the city and wished everyone well into the future. She said: “You may now exercise your Right of Freedom of Entry to the city with colours flying and bands playing.”

ABOVE: The SA Irish Regiment formed part of the military units that participated in the Freedom of Entry Parade at Braamfischerville in Soweto.

RIGHT: The Speaker of the Council in the city of Johannesburg, Councillor Conny Bapela, says the city enjoys the support of the SANDF units. She is flanked by Maj Gen Lindile Yam, the General Officer Commanding SA Army Infantry Formation.
By Ms Thuli Ntuli, Intern
SA Soldier
Photos by Ms Nozipho Zondo
and Mr Themba Mntyali

The Chief of the SA National Defence Force, Lt Gen Solly Shoke, recently officially opened the Chief of the SANDF Prestige Week at the Thaba Tshwane Military Sports Grounds. He said that the sports day would play an important role in facilitating social change. Lt Gen Shoke said: “It promotes a sense of belonging through play while at the same time breaking racial boundaries, fostering social cohesion and healthy living.”

During the week-long sporting competition the SA Army, the SA Air Force, the SA Navy and the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) went head to head in various sports. The SANDF women faced each other in netball and volleyball while the men challenged each other in rugby and soccer.

At the close of the Prestige Week, the Surgeon General, Lt Gen Aubrey Sedibe, offered his thoughts on behalf of the Chief of the SANDF. He said: “We congratulate the winners on a job well done.” He also encouraged the teams that did not win to try again, saying: “In sport, practice makes perfect”.

At the end of the Prestige Week, the SA Army won gold medals in soccer, netball and volleyball. The SA Army women’s team took gold medals in both volleyball and netball. The SA Army men were not so lucky, coming second to the SA Air Force in rugby. But the SA Army soccer team managed to win gold.

The event also afforded the members of the SANDF an opportunity to enjoy healthy living. Members of the SAMHS provided general health screening and health education for the people who attended. The fun-filled day also gave members of the SANDF time to interact and network.

The following evening the Chief of the SANDF hosted a gala dinner and an award ceremony to reward all the teams for their outstanding performances.

But before conferring the awards, he encouraged the members to engage in sport. He outlined the need to identify sporting talent and exceptional athletes to represent the SANDF at professional federations.

In conclusion he thanked the SANDF sporting fraternity, distinguished guests and friends of the SANDF for gracing the occasion and for their support of this essential national and regional asset which serves the Republic of South Africa and its nation.
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Diseases of lifestyle pose a considerable threat to the development of SA

By Martina Nicholson Associates
Newsdesk on behalf of Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS)
Photo by Ms Nozipho Zondo

Unhealthy lifestyles and poor diets are making more and more South Africans ill, and it is a problem that requires urgent addressing if we are to prevent it from undermining the development and sustainability of the country.

This was the view expressed by the Chairperson of the Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) Board of Trustees, Mr Zava Colbert Rikhotso, during his opening address at the 7th annual GEMS Symposium. Mr Rikhotso warned that the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases are responsible for more deaths globally than infectious diseases. Their impact on the South African society, economy and health system is staggering and continues to grow at an alarming rate, he observed.

Mr Rikhotso noted: “The World Health Organization has indicated that NCDs are increasing in prevalence most rapidly in Sub-Saharan Africa.” This is of great concern particularly as a Statistics South Africa report published in 2013 had already revealed that NCDs were also among the leading causes of mortality in South Africa, accounting for 40% of all deaths.

He pointed out that NCDs had a significant impact on the economy and healthcare industry itself. Mr Rikhotso added: “The Council for Medical Schemes has estimated that roughly R8 billion will be spent on treating lifestyle related diseases in South Africa every year.”

Obesity, which is associated with an increased risk of developing NCDs is also on the rise in South Africa. Indeed, recent research has indicated that 25% of adults over the age of 15, and 20% of children under the age of six years are classified as being overweight, while 20% of adults are obese.

Mr Rikhotso said: “Besides the obvious threat of premature death and an increase in the mortality rate, the cost to the economy in terms of productivity loss is significant. Obese adult workers have been found to take 2.4 times more long-term sick leave, up to 2.8 times higher disability pensions and a loss of productivity amounting to 7% more than their healthier counterparts.”

Mr Rikhotso observed that a healthy diet and physical activity are major factors in reducing the risk of developing many NCDs. The Medical Research Council’s Chronic Diseases of Lifestyle and the Burden of Disease Research Units have found that, on average, South Africans eat only half the World Health Organization’s recommended daily allowance of 400g of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Mr Rikhotso added: “Combine that with the rapid rise in the consumption of fast and convenience food high in sugar and salt and the increasingly sedentary lifestyles of people, particularly in urban areas, and you have a bleak outlook for health in South Africa.”

So how do we turn the tide against these alarming trends that threaten to undermine the development of the country? Mr Rikhotso says that it is important that the threat posed by NCDs first be fully understood by both policy makers and the wider public. This is one of the goals of the GEMS Symposium, which is exploring effective, proven ways of achieving the objective of affordable healthcare and improved health outcomes through the adoption of a healthy lifestyle.

He continued: “As a Scheme that covers 1.8 million lives, more than 300 000 of which are currently enrolled in disease management programmes, GEMS has chosen to take an increasingly proactive route in dealing with diseases of lifestyle.”

Mr Rikhotso concluded: “GEMS is realigning its products, services and benefits to emphasise preventative over curative interventions to reduce the risks to its members. An aggressive drive to promote preventative benefits, such as screening tests and a workplace exercise and lifestyle programme, will be rolled out in 2015.”

*Ms Martina Nicholson is a contributor to SA Soldier*
“Disabled people must not focus on what they have lost, but rather on what they have.” This striking point was made by Ms Grace Maleka, a Senior Operator at the Gauteng Signal Office at the SA Army Gymnasium. She was expressing her gratitude for being welcomed as a guest speaker at the commemoration of International Day for Persons with Disabilities.

As a woman living with a disability, Ms Maleka felt it more than appropriate to disclose some of the problems she witnessed in the SA National Defence Force. Her powerful speech received applause from the guests who attended the celebration for International Day for Persons with Disabilities at the Non-commissioned Officers’ Mess at the SA Military Health Service Training Formation in Thaba Tshwane.

The guests were given a crash course to educate them on the ordeals that affect persons with disabilities. Sign language course practitioners were also there to teach guests about the basics of signing. The attendants also participated in group work to learn more about the language of the deaf and the partially deaf. Three learners from the Prinshof School for the Blind entertained the guests with some soothing music.

Col Sarah Morufe Phasha, Acting Chief Director Transformation Management, handed out certificates for completion of courses and commendation certificates to all those who were involved in working to aid people living with disabilities. She said: “This day is about sharing experiences to improve the way we perceive disabilities.”

She said that transformation with regard to disability was moving slowly: “We still see people with disabilities using back doors because they cannot enter through the front doors. However, this day will draw people of all different regions to react and socialise.” Col Phasha also called on all people with disabilities to take up leading roles and not sit back.

The idea of people with disabilities taking up leading roles was backed up Ms Maleka. She said that it was already challenging being a person with a disability: “It causes us to perform less than our best.”

Ms Maleka said this struggle was made worse by able-bodied people in the workplace. She said: “Abled people feel that they have to take decisions on our behalf. I always say our disability does not disable us. Our colleagues do so. We have a slogan that reads nothing about us without us. Our colleagues should be more understanding and accommodating.”

Another guest speaker was S Sgt Seautlweng John Mokotedi, Company Quartermaster at 10 SA Infantry Battalion in Mahikeng, who is partially deaf. He admitted to witnessing such an event for the first time. He said that people with disabilities were often ignored owing to the negative perception about disability.

S Sgt Mokotedi encouraged other people with disabilities like himself to have a positive mind-set, regardless of the severity of their disability. He said: “We all have hidden talents. I am a parachute instructor, but because of my injury I am grounded. I cannot jump anymore or be exposed to loud noises. But I have opted to take another direction. I studied foreign languages so that I could be an interpreter, and in time I will interpret.”

LEFT: The Acting Chief Director Transformation Management, Col Sarah Morufe Phasha, presents an award to Lt Col Edwin Williams, SO1 Disability, from the Disability Committee for walking the extra mile for people with disabilities.

ABOVE: Learners from the Prinshof School for the Blind, fltr: Gift Rasesepa, Rochelle Jordaan and Mamoraka Mojapelo, entertain the guests at the commemoration.
Chief of the SANDF
Charity Golf Day

By Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

The Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, hosted his Charity Golf Day at the Services Golf Club in Thaba Tshwane. This prestigious event is a charity fundraising project whose proceeds or funds are ploughed back into the defence community.

The former Chief of the SANDF, Gen Siphiwe Nyanda (Ret), the former Chaplain Gen of the SANDF, Maj Gen (Rev) Fumanekile Gqiba (Ret), the former Chief of Human Resources, Lt Gen Themba Nkabinde (Ret), the Minister of Public Service and Administration, Mr Collins Chabane, and a struggle stalwart, Mr Andrew Mlangeni, attended the Chief of the SANDF Charity Golf Day.

The day offered the Chief of the SANDF an informal opportunity for engagement with the SANDF’s friends, stakeholders and captains of industry.

After a great day of golf, Gen Shoke hosted a gala dinner that was also used as a prize-giving ceremony to thank all those who played a major role in the success of the Charity Golf Day, including sponsors, stakeholders and captains of industry. He said that without their generous support and contributions over the years this charity initiative would not have been achieved. There is no truer reflection of the spirit of UBUNTU than a nation that takes care of its children. Under the professional eye of the Programme Director, Ms Bongi Mokaba, guests were guided through an evening filled with fun. She mentioned that golf, a game with wide fairways, was a different game, amateurs behaved differently from the professionals. She echoed the view that the day was a symbolic testimony of UBUNTU, which means: “I am because you are”.

Gen Shoke said that the SANDF appreciated stakeholder support, adding that it continued to grow by leaps and bounds. He said that the SANDF had identified two homes in Bloemfontein to cater for the children of deceased soldiers. He pointed out that the two homes would cater for male and female orphans.

He added that as soon as the legal requirements and the necessary processes for the two homes were complete the children should begin to occupy the homes and their educational development should start in earnest.

The Chief of the SANDF said: “Our sponsors and donors and your pledges go a long way towards alleviating the plight of the children of our deceased soldiers. We value your friendship.

Many thanks for your willingness to get involved in this special way.”

In conclusion, he expressed his gratitude to all the players. Gen Shoke said: “You are all winners. You have distinguished yourselves as the best players, well done.”
Belonging to a MUTUAL is belonging to a family, and family comes first. ALWAYS.

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*Funeral benefits only apply if AVBOB Funeral Service conducts the funeral. AVBOB is a level 2 B-BBEE contributor.
devotion

Flourish in 2015

By Chaplain Col (Past) Hein Kotzé, SSO Education, Training and Development: Chaplain Service

What do you expect from the New Year? Do you anticipate exciting things or foresee the same old repetition of work, eat, sleep, play and more work? Are you flourishing or merely pushing yourself to function from day to day? Perhaps some are suffering and have lost all hope for the future. I plan to present at least seven life-changing courses in the Chaplain Service to help chaplains serve soldiers better this year. I also want to achieve personal goals in terms of physical training, sports and recreation (PTSR), intellectual development and relationships. But most of all, I want to flourish spiritually. It is of course important to live well balanced, in social, physical and intellectual dimensions. But we are spirit too, and this is the part of us that connect with God. I believe that the spiritual dimension is an integral part of life, although many people, including some soldiers, often underrate it. I am convinced that if we would consider connecting to our Creator, we will begin to flourish, grow and expand vigorously in all areas of our life. We are after all holistic beings, and all four dimensions are closely linked.

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We read in Joel 2:32, “But everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved …” We do not need to understand ancient languages to know what “everyone” means. This is an extensive promise, given to all people, at all times, everywhere. We also do not need to know exactly who affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone (2 Pet 1:5-8). It implies that we must not only start our journey of faith by turning to God, but should to go on and change for the better, and flourish.

May I ask once more: are you flourishing? If nothing goes right in your life, maybe you should go left. If we keep on doing the same things, we will get the same results. Maybe the time has come for us to do things differently. I read a startling thought a year or two ago: If you are generally unhappy in your life, work, career or spiritual life, remember, you are not a tree. A tree must grow where it sprouted; it has no other choice. It cannot even turn or move to a more advantageous spot. It must simply stay put until it dies. But we are human beings, we were given free choice and we can change, move, or try something new. Perhaps we will flourish if we return to the God of our fathers and grandmothers. Who knows what will happen if we decide to make 2015 a year of spiritual formation and growth, and not only try to lower the golf handicap or lose a few stubborn kilograms.

Let us turn to God this day, this week and year and ask Him to be the north, south, east and west of our life, like the words in a Barbara Streisand song (What are you doing the rest of your life). Let us ask him to be the Lord of all our seasons, the Lord of our waking, sleeping, working, playing and praying. Have this one request, that whatever we may encounter this year that He would help us to flourish.

The start of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign for No Violence against Women and Children coincides with the United Nations’ International Day for the elimination of violence against women. Each year from 25 November to 10 December our country marks the 16 Days of Activism Campaign. Last year’s theme was “Count me in: Together moving a Non-violent South Africa Forward”.

As one of the intervention strategies towards promoting a collective responsibility in the fight to eradicate violence against women and children, the Department of Defence (DOD) took a stand against gender based violence and child abuse by observing the 16 Days of Activism Campaign.

The Chief Director Transformation Management, Maj Gen Olga Nodola, convened a DOD seminar on 16 Days for No Violence Against Women and Children at Air Force Base Swartkop in Pretoria. The theme of the seminar was: “Nothing succeeds like success of the mind”.

Dialogue during the seminar provided the opportunity to unpack issues and build on what is in place, with additions and improvements developed by participants.

Invited guest speakers encouraged those at the seminar to take a stand against the abuse of women and children and emphasised the fact that the solution lies with all of us.

Ms Minah Sindane-Bloem, a Life Coach, pointed out that the cycle of violence occurred in most relationships where underlying control issues play their part and, as the relationship progresses, the inevitable explosion is usually more severe and the abuse more frequent. She said that women must reach out to their men and sons, not because they are abusive, but because excluding them from participating actively would be a serious shortcoming. She said that women and children who are victims of abuse must speak out, even if the perpetrator is a close family member.

Capt Khanyisile Manzini, a psychologist at Air Force Base Waterkloof Sickbay, said that no man is an island; an individual, family and society, all these works together. She said that we must unite against irresponsible social behaviour practices and that it was important to know the “self” because it is the beginning of understanding when the “self” is violated. She said that violence takes many forms, eg physical violence, assault, sexual harassment, emotional abuse, humiliation and degradation, rape, domestic violence and other cultural practices that are harmful to women and children.

She added that violence causes grave physical, psychological and health problems. She encouraged women to seek help if they are emotionally, physically or sexually abused.

Speaking to SA Soldier Maj Gen Nodola said that as the DOD we want to highlight all the forms of abuse and violence suffered by vulnerable groups such as women and children and to say enough is enough. She said that the DOD supported national government programmes and encouraged its members to make a commitment to fight this scourge and be united by the objective of building safer communities free of violence for women and children.

Maj Gen Nodola mentioned that the problems that are hidden always came out eventually. She said that the attendees made a pledge which was going to be signed by everybody in the DOD and in 2015 the Chief Directorate Transformation Management had planned a moral regeneration programme to address gender based violence, sexual harassment and exploitation. It would be a symposium for men with the theme: “Men as Active Partners”.

She said that the 2014 seminar was the first step leading to a society free from gender based violence, and above all to obtain the support needed from all levels of administration and leadership.

ABOVE: UNITED BY THE OBJECTIVE OF BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN Fltr: Capt Ellen Mmisapitso (SA Army), Maj Mokgadi Mokasha (SA Air Force), CPO Azwindini Magano (SA Navy), Lt Nkhensani Nkuna (SA Military Health Service) and Ms Babalwa Dada (Public Service Act Personnel).
ARMED FORCES DAY
21 FEBRUARY 2015