Military Music Festival on Africa Day
From the Editor’s desk

Letters to the editor

Building a better Africa and a better world

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2005 - Winner of the Government Communicator of the Year Award (GCIS).
2005 - Winner of the National Ubungcweti Award (GCIS).
Key factors for a good Comrades Marathon run

Let the chains fall and empower women

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FRONT COVER: Sgt Marlene Ntshenkeng from the National Ceremonial Guard Band playing the clarinet. (The SA National Defence Force celebrated Africa Day with a military music festival) (Photo by WO2 David Nomtshongwana)

For the latest news on defence matters in South Africa, visit our website at: www.dod.mil.za
In this edition of SA Soldier we enlighten our readers on how the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) celebrated Africa Day with a splendid military music festival (see pages 12 and 13).

Everyday we, as Africans, should embrace and celebrate our cultural diversity as we belong to one of the most ethnically diverse continents. Let us be willing to tolerate and respect our brothers’ and sisters’ cultural diversity.

The SANDF makes it easier for us to put our diverse views and cultures aside because as members of the SANDF we have agreed to adhere to the military culture with its set values and morals. Let us uphold these and move in unison.

It is every person’s yearning to live in harmony with one’s colleagues and neighbours. Civil discussions to negotiate settlements might take time, but the outcome for all parties to understand one another and to find solutions to challenges is more likely. This is so necessary for a harmonious working environment and the general prosperity of the SANDF and the continent.

Our cultural diversity should not lead to animosity, but should rather be viewed as an opportunity to act in unison. Therefore, the military culture is the most suitable for our working environment. Showing solidarity with our brothers and sisters in our organisation and on the continent should assist us to work towards a peaceful, integrated and prosperous Africa. (In this connection, be sure to read the article “Embrace diversity – a necessary feature in the global village” on pages 34 and 35.)

Let us remind ourselves that although we are different culturally and otherwise we should always accommodate and embrace our cultural diversity. As members of the SANDF we must accept and respect the military culture and act in unison.

Viva solidarity! Viva!

Nelda Pienaar
Editor SA Soldier
Described by many colleagues, family and friends from the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) fraternity, as a man of wisdom, great calibre and a visionary who was mostly respected for his kindness and generosity, a valiant soldier with a high degree of military discipline. On 17 October 2015 hundreds of SANDF members and the local community gathered at Pabalelo community hall in Upington in the Northern Cape to bid farewell to the late Private Toto Tom “Lunchboy” Malashe who was buried with full military honours.

Private Malashe was deployed to the Darfur Region in the Sudan, under the auspices of the United Nations – African Union Mission in the Sudan (UNAMIS), Operation CORDITE XX, when he died after displaying unflinching gallantry when members of the SANDF repelled a deadly ambush by the heavily armed rebels in the Sudan on Sunday morning of 27 September 2015.

He joined the SANDF in January 2005 and did his basic military training at 3 SA Infantry Battalion in Kimberley. Thereafter he went to do Infantry Corps courses at 1 SA Infantry Battalion, home of mechanised units. He was then transferred to 8 SA Infantry Battalion in Upington.

Private Malashe was a Mechanic by profession in the SANDF when he met his untimely death.

The General Officer Commanding of the SA Army Infantry Formation, Maj Gen Lindile Yam on behalf of the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, while delivering his eulogy at the funeral service, said: “It is with heart wrenching sorrow that I pay tribute to one of my infanteers who courage and assist my comrades in arms, even at the risk of my own life”, Private Malashe did exactly that.

The Acting Officer Commanding 8 SA Infantry Battalion, Maj Mahломola Motaung, said: “We have adopted the family of Private Malashe to be part of the 8 SA Infantry Battalion family. The memories we have shared with Private Malashe will be cherished and remembered. He will forever live in our hearts. Pte Malashe was known as a disciplinarian who was committed to a disciplined SANDF guided by strict military discipline.”

Private Malashe is survived by his wife, Ms Florence Malashe, daughter Busisiwe Malashe, three sons: Kamvalethu, Thembisile and Lungelo, as well as his four sisters and three brothers.

Lalangoxolo Toto Tom “Lunchboy” Sanaki Malashe, Mngoxongo, Hala, Sophitsho, Ngqolo-Msila, vulaBambhentsele ZondwaZintshaba (traditional praise of the Malashe family).
THATO - OUR LITTLE SOLDIER

Thato Mmetle is an 8-year-old boy, born a soldier and born to fight. He has been fighting since the day he was born. He is a true fighter. Thato was born in Limpopo at Ga-Sekororo Jickylene. He is the only child of Ms Mmapitsi Mmetle (31). He came to this world battling heart problems and liver cirrhosis.

He was born with this chronic condition and he has been fighting ever since. This condition had not been much of a problem to the little soldier before 2011. That’s when the condition became worse for Thato, but he fought as little as he was and that’s when he started taking medication. Last year in mid-January the condition worsened. His entire body was affected and he became very ill.

He could not walk or talk, so he was then taken to a local hospital. Because of the seriousness of his condition he was then taken to Polokwane Hospital. Thato was then transferred to Steve Biko Academic Hospital in Pretoria. Our little fighter has been getting stronger ever since his admission to the hospital. At this hospital, Thato became part of a non-profit organisation called the Reach for a Dream Foundation.

This is the organisation that helps children with life threatening illnesses in South Africa to fulfil their dreams. Its mission is to encourage the children to use their dreams to fight life threatening illnesses. Thato has a dream and his dream is to become a doctor. His second choice (dream) is to become a soldier. He wants to protect his country and help heal the sick.

The Reach for a Dream Foundation came through for Thato and took him to 43 SA Brigade Headquarters at Wallmannsthal. The aim was to orientate Thato regarding his dream of becoming a soldier. The brigade welcomed Thato and they dedicated the entire day to the little soldier. He sure felt like a true soldier.

On his arrival at the brigade he was welcomed by Officer Commanding Headquarters Unit, Lt Col Albert Collet, and his Second-in-Command, Maj Owen Mogale. The fighter that he was, he showed no weakness. He looked very healthy when he stepped fearlessly out of the vehicle. His mother took him by the hand along the red carpet as cameras flashed. One could see that the little boy was truly inspired by the effort taken to make his dream come true.

The event started with the presentation of the defence capability. He enjoyed watching videos, but he wanted to be physically in the vehicles. He was then dressed in camos for his dream ride. He jumped onto a gecko passenger seat with Cpl Bongani Zungu as his driver - his dream was coming true. Afterwards Thato was happy and still happier when he was given a new bicycle and lots of gifts from Beeld newspaper and the Brigade.

Let us pray for Thato, our little fighter, and think of his family. But more importantly let us appreciate the people we have in our lives and love them unconditionally because tomorrow is not promised.

Pte Kwena Ngeqetjana,
43 SA Brigade Headquarters
The Officer Commanding (OC) 3 Air Servicing Unit (3 ASU), Col Moses Njomo, thanked the Regional Works Unit Limpopo (RWU LP) for their support in promoting the good image of Air Force Base (AFB) Makhado, in particular Roodewal Bombing Range. Col Njomo was speaking during the handing over ceremony of Project No: RWU LP/DFL P00113/P001/15 by OC Regional Works Unit Limpopo, Col Tebogo Mohitlhi.

The signing of the document signalled the handing over of the facility. Col Njomo urged RWU LP to continue supporting the base in all tasks that required its facilities. He commended the good job done by the unit.

Col Mohitlhi, accompanied by a team of experts, told the delegates present that no future risks were expected regarding the facilities. He said: “Register any future projects with RWU LP in order to receive excellent service.” The project involved the building of the transport park, the erecting of the palisade fencing and the building of the double story house.

At least 40 members were involved in this project, including artisans who were electricians, and experts in bricklaying, tiling, welding, plumbing, painting, building, carpentry and plastering. The project started in 2013 and was recently completed.

According to the Project Officer, Capt Pheladi Mthani, the project was expected to be completed in just four months in 2013, but owing to the shortage of building materials they could not make it. Capt Mthani confirmed that R12 117.50 was used to purchase materials for the project and 99 per cent of the materials were bought by AFB Makhado. The following challenges delayed the project: the normal turnaround time of the procurement process and the unavailability of scaffolding and a lack of other materials.

The Facility Project Planner, Maj Lesiba Kekana, was satisfied with the work done by the team. Lt Thomas Mulaudzi, Air Force Base Makhado

A SENIOR OFFICER WHO DIGS IN RUBBISH BINS

People always throw away old equipment that they do not use anymore and there are those that will always go and dig in the rubbish bins for something that can be brought back to life and be a treasure.

While young people in South Africa are struggling to find jobs and are complaining that the government is not providing them with job opportunities, Lt Col Siphiwo Gerald Mphahlwa uses his art skills to recycle and make good furniture out of old bicycles, metal drums, tyres, plastic bottles, crates, etc.

Lt Col Mphahlwa works at Defence Works Formation Headquarters as the Career Manager under the command of Maj Gen Joseph Ledwaba. He started recycling way back when he had visitors at home and did not have enough chairs for them. He would take old tyres and pack them nicely together to use as chairs, but as time went by, he made use of his art skills to make the tyres more comfortable to sit on in his backyard.

He makes sofas, bar chairs, coffee tables, wall clocks, lamps, jewellery and many other things using old stuff that people do not use anymore. His work is displayed in a few art galleries and is also exported to other countries.

He is a career man, a family man and a student at Tshwane South College under the Defence Works Training School, where he is a boilermaker, having been encouraged to enter this field by his General Officer Commanding, Maj Gen Ledwaba, after he saw the magnificent art work. Maj Gen Ledwaba is a leader that is fond of education. He always encourages people to study and empower themselves.

Lt Col Mphahlwa’s vision is to train more young people and to impart his knowledge so that they can do their own thing. The SANDF has a lot of people with different skills apart from what they do on a daily basis: they just need to be recognised and encouraged to practise them like Lt Col Mphahlwa. The Department of Defence (DOD) is also a platform where people can showcase their skills that are catered for by the various corps. This can be of advantage to the DOD such that it will not have to buy art work or hire external companies to do simple jobs like renovating the troops’ bar.

Young people in the SA National Defence Force ought to learn from this senior officer who does not mind digging in rubbish bins and dirtying his hands in his busy schedule just to fulfil his art ambitions. Make use of your God-given talent: you will never know, someone might recognise your talent. 

L Cpl Ntökoto Anele Baloyi, 7 SA Infantry Battalion

ABOVE: Lt Col Siphiwo Gerald Mphahlwa made these chairs from vehicle tyres.

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NEGATIVE PERCEPTION ABOUT THE RESERVE FORCE

The importance of a Reserve Force should be noted by Permanent Force members:

In a country like ours with a very complex past, we find ourselves confronted with challenges that continue to defeat us - one such major challenge being unemployment.

Because of unemployment we have a lot of people that solely rely on the Reserve Force call-up for the survival of their families. As a result, this has harmed the image of the Reserve Force internally. Permanent Force members tend to view Reserve Force members as lesser members of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

It is even worse if you were once in the Permanent Force and then resigned. When you are seen wearing the uniform again you automatically become a laughing stock as it is assumed that you failed outside of the SANDF. It is never assumed that you might just want to contribute to the SANDF. This is highly unfortunate as some of the policies are not suitable for Reserve Force members because of an assumption that we are all unemployed and that we are in the Reserves because we are desperate. Some courses are scheduled in such a way that it is difficult for Reserve Force members such as myself to pass and you end up not being promoted.

An effort must be made to create awareness about the importance of the Reserve Force. Policies must be drafted in such a way that they are applicable to the busy schedules of some Reserve Force members. Hopefully these will be drafted by Reserve Force members who understand the space and challenges.

Capt Given Shingange, Regiment President Steyn

CONDUCTING AN AIR TO AIR TRAINING CAMP IN SUPPORT OF MISSION READINESS

The annual air to air training camp was conducted recently at Air Force Base (AFB) Overberg, formerly the Test Flight Development Centre, in support of mission readiness. The community of Bredasdorp was surprised by the sound of jets, some above 30 000ft.

AFB Overberg is situated in the Western Cape, some 25km from Bredasdorp which is approximately 200km south east of Cape Town. According to the Camp Commander, Capt Geoffrey Cooper, the purpose of the camp was to test the competency of the pilots (new and experienced) in order to qualify them as air to air gunners. He mentioned that apart from shooting the target, they focussed on general flying, navigation and battle formation.

In addition, he said that it was important for both 2 Squadron and 85 Combat Flying School to renew their competency levels annually by conducting such an event as it impacted positively on the mission readiness of the SA Air Force. Four sorties of either the Hawks or the Gripens were flown each day for about an hour according to the flying programme which started at 08:30 and ended at 18:00.

The Hawk aircraft from 85 Combat Flying School flew the flag that was used as a target for the pilots.

At least six Gripens and five Hawks were utilised for the duration of the camp. The area between Arniston and Infanta were used as the firing range for the camp. Capt Cooper mentioned that out of 70 hours budgeted for 2 Squadron, a total of 69.4 hours were flown by the Gripens, while 69.39 hours were recorded for the Hawks from 85 Combat Flying School.

Capt Cooper said that although a few challenges were experienced, they managed to achieve their objectives. Any mission or training camp would not be successful without support from the approach controllers, air traffic controllers, mission controllers, technicians, ground crew, fire-fighters, media liaison officers, medical services, chaplain services, human resource and protection personnel.

Maj Unathi Makoba was detached to AFB Overberg as an approach controller. He, together with other mission controllers, were tasked to render services in support of the training camp. According to Maj Makoba, the services rendered were much broader in scope than in the normal working environment in bases or units. He normally had to attend to civilian aircraft like the Bell 206, besides the Oryx, Astra, jets, etc.

He mentioned that he also enjoyed handling civilian customers who visited the base for missile testing, flare testing, fire-fighting, as well as environmentalists and Chinese students who were also being trained to fly. To get the aircraft serviceable and to enhance the skills of pilots sufficient funding should be budgeted for the training camps which will in turn benefit the entire organisation.

Maj Makoba suggested that the training camp take place twice a year which would not only boost the morale and confidence of pilots, air traffic controllers, mission controllers and technicians, but would also require them to work long to ensure hours the aircraft were available for any mission.

There should also be a rotation system for members to give them a fair chance to acquire skills. The Acting Officer Commanding 2 Squadron, Lt Col Mark Wilson, thanked the Camp Commander for successfully coordinating the entire camp, as well as the ATC, ground crew and technicians for the role they played, and 85 Combat Flying School for their contribution, in particular the leadership of AFB Overberg for their support which contributed to the success of the training camp.

Lt Thomas Mulauldi, Air Force Base Makhado

THANK YOU

Thank you for providing copies of your excellent magazine. These acted as “bedtime reading” on the recently hosted annual Sea Cadet Camp by the SA Navy in Simon’s Town.

The naval and maritime articles were of special interest and the article on the SA Navy (SAN) divers was useful to those who were interested in following this as a career.

I understand that SAN TV is developing a DVD on naval careers. This will go a long way to exposing these choices to the youth who are eager to follow a naval or maritime career.

Keep up the good work!

Yours aye. Lt Cdr Glenn von Zeil, email
THE MILITARY OMBUD AND THE PUBLIC PROTECTOR SOUTH AFRICA SIGN MOU

The Office of the South African Military Ombud and the Public Protector South Africa have entered into a five-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) to provide a framework for cooperation and collaboration between the parties with a view to sharing information and enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the two institutions.

The Military Ombud is an institution that was established in terms of the Military Ombud Act, Act 4 of 2012 to investigate complaints lodged in writing by a member and former members of South African National Defence Force (SANDF) regarding their conditions of service.

The Office also investigates complaints brought by members of the public against an SANDF member’s personal conduct in public. The idea to establish a Military Ombud was partly triggered by the Public Protector South Africa in 2010 after military personnel inundated the office with complaints that brought to the fore the plight of retired soldiers and military veterans.

The grievances highlighted the need for a faster mechanism with the necessary expertise to resolve such complaints expeditiously. Part of the agreement is that “where a Party receives a complaint, which falls within purview of the other party’s mandate, the receiving Party shall refer the complaint to the other Party for consideration or may refer the complainant to the said Party for further assistance”.

Where the allegations which form the subject matter of the complaint have partial application to the mandate of either party, the Parties shall decide in the interest of proper and effective investigation of the complaint, the party that can best investigate the complaint or to conduct a joint investigation, as the case may be.

The Military Ombud, Lt Gen (Ret) Temba Matanzima, said the agreement was important for his Office as they strive to be among the best institutions in the country. “The Public Protector is a strategic partner and I am optimistic that this agreement will benefit the soldiers who are our important stakeholders,” said Lt Gen Matanzima.

Lt Gen (Ret) Matanzima commended the Public Protector Office for the good work they did in resolving cases of soldiers who approached her Office before the establishment of the Military Ombud Office. He said: “A number of soldiers got assistance from the Public Protector Office as there was no Military Ombud institution in the country prior to 2012.”

The Public Protector said her office looked forward to cooperative relations with the Ombud. The South African Military Ombud, email

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BUILDING A BETTER AFRICA AND A BETTER WORLD

By AB Samuel Ramonyai, trainee at SA Soldier
Photos by L Cpl Jonathan Mogano

On International United Nations (UN) Peacekeepers Day a Commemoration Service was held to pay tribute to all the men and women who had served and continue to serve in UN peacekeeping operations and to honour the memory of all those who had lost their lives in the quest for peace.

The Chaplain General, Brig Gen (Rev) Andrew Jamangile, and his team of Chaplains led the Commemoration Service held at Air Force Base Waterkloof in Pretoria. A candle lighting ceremony was also held in remembrance of those who had perished. The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Choir enriched the Commemoration Service with their fine voices. The master of ceremonies was Col (Rev) Arthur Makalima.

The singing of the hymn: “How great thou art” was sung by the SANDF Choir as the Chief of Staff of the SANDF, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, approached the podium Addressing the attendees, Lt Gen Masondo mentioned that the gathering was in compliance with a decision of the UN General Assembly to recognise 29 May as International UN Peacekeepers Day.

Lt Gen Masondo added that in March this year the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping recommended the establishment of a memorial wall at the UN Peacekeepers Memorial at its Headquarters in New York, where the names of those who made the supreme sacrifice would be recorded.

He added: “The Commemoration Service today therefore covers all SANDF peacekeepers that served under the flags of the UN, the African Union and the South African Development Community (SADC): our fallen comrades made the ultimate sacrifice for peace in countries they had never been to. They deserve a permanent place in our memories and we are here to pay our respects.”

Lt Gen Masondo said the UN peacekeeping mission began in 1948. The first mission was in the Middle East to observe and maintain the ceasefire during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Since then UN peacekeepers have taken part in a total of 63 missions around the globe, some of which continue today.

He remarked: “The success of peacekeeping has led to high...
The deployment to a country that is not economically vibrant, such as Burundi, is an eye-opener to a South African soldier. Brushing shoulders with ex-soldiers from former rebel movements was very emotional, yet what comes to mind is that a clever man will always correct his mistakes through somebody else’s mistake.

The ravages of war have a lasting effect on the lives of citizens and that is why many nations that were once involved in conflict easily slide back into civil war. Driving around Bujumbura, Bubanza, and the road from Ngozi to Rwindi, especially in 2009, was like old times. The local drivers would say in Swahili: “Endesha polepole, Kuko pindi lahatari” (meaning: drive slowly, there is a dangerous curve).

Members of rural communities occasionally wept as they so much appreciated our presence. This was very touching. I met my namesake in Ngozi, who said: “Uyu mugaboni bazina banjye” (meaning in Kirundi language: we share the name David).

SA National Defence Force (SANDF) VIP protection members would sometimes meet child ex-soldiers, which was a heart-breaking experience. The pain of seeing our young sons in uniform was unbearable considering that among us were mothers. We nevertheless carried on, as we had a task on hand.

VIP protection in a country recovering from war is very difficult but thanks to the members, especially of 13 Provost Unit, the SA Army was leading from the front.

CONTINGENT OWNED EQUIPMENT

The Military Police Division has four sectors of United Nations (UN) Military Police deployed as part of the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in the Congo (MONUSCO), the 4th Sector of which is in Entebbe (Uganda). The sector is under the Command and Control of Capt Maropeng Thobakgale as the Detachment Commander of all the UN Military Police in Entebbe.

On a monthly basis a Contingent Owned Equipment Inspection is conducted as part of combat-readiness to ensure that all members are still in possession of their own equipment.

This inspection is held quarterly by the UN while Sector Commanders hold it on a monthly basis to ensure that the rectification plan is in place for the next UN quarterly inspection. Capt Maropeng Thobakgale, SO3 General Police Investigation, 1 Provost Regiment.

VIP PROTECTION IN A COUNTRY RECOVERING FROM WAR IS DEMANDING

Lt Gen Masondo added: “We are here to pray for peace in our country, and for all those who serve or have served in peacekeeping missions abroad and for the families whose loved ones have paid the ultimate price so that others may live in peace.”

The Chaplain General gave the blessing after his sermon which followed the address. Brig Gen (Rev) Jamangile said: “This morning we are in a church service. This will be a church service where everyone will be comfortable to praise God.”

Brig Gen (Rev) Jamangile declared peace and healing upon all who attended the service. He highlighted that those who have fallen in the line of duty will be remembered like the flowers at their walls of remembrance.


LEFT: The master of ceremonies was Col (Rev) Arthur Makalima.

The deployment to a country that is not economically vibrant, such as Burundi, is an eye-opener to a South African soldier. Brushing shoulders with ex-soldiers from former rebel movements was very emotional, yet what comes to mind is that a clever man will always correct his mistakes through somebody else’s mistake. The ravages of war have a lasting effect on the lives of citizens and that is why many nations that were once involved in conflict easily slide back into civil war. Driving around Bujumbura, Bubanza, and the road from Ngozi to Rwindi, especially in 2009, was like old times. The local drivers would say in Swahili: “Endesha polepole, Kuko pindi lahatari” (meaning: drive slowly, there is a dangerous curve).

Members of rural communities occasionally wept as they so much appreciated our presence. This was very touching. I met my namesake in Ngozi, who said: “Uyu mugaboni bazina banjye” (meaning in Kirundi language: we share the name David).

SA National Defence Force (SANDF) VIP protection members would sometimes meet child ex-soldiers, which was a heart-breaking experience. The pain of seeing our young sons in uniform was unbearable considering that among us were mothers. We nevertheless carried on, as we had a task on hand.

VIP protection in a country recovering from war is very difficult but thanks to the members, especially of 13 Provost Unit, the SA Army was leading from the front.

S Sgt Tebogo Mokoena, email...
The SA National Defence Force celebrates Africa Day with a military music festival

By Sgt Ally Rakoma
Photos by AB Samuel Ramonyai and Pte Paul Mpangala

A distinguishing mark of South Africa’s foreign policy is to champion Africa’s development and create a vision of a better Africa and a better world, while strengthening the African Agenda.

The celebration of Africa Day on 25 May across Africa marks the formation of the African Union, formerly known as the Organisation of African Unity, which was established on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

To celebrate this important milestone in the history of the continent, the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) hosted an impressive military music festival with the theme “There shall be peace and friendship” at the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) Training Formation in Thaba Tshwane this year.

After a hearty welcome from the programme director, Brig Gen Xolani Mabanga, Director Defence Corporate Communication (DDCC), the African Union (AU) and the South African Anthems were played. Addressing the guests, Brig Gen Mabanga said that Africa Day was celebrated annually as a day of African independence.

He explained that when the African founding fathers formed the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now the AU, they gave the people of this continent hope in their quest for democracy and development as a continent free of wars, social ills, poverty and underdevelopment.

The Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube, who conducted the opening ceremony, said that Africa was the Government’s priority in terms of foreign policy and focused on development, eradicating conflict, enhancing continental interconnectivity and promoting prosperity, peace and stability.

Dr Gulube mentioned that as we celebrated this day, we remember our African heroes and heroines, such as our former President Nelson Mandela, the former President of Ghana, Mr Kwame Nkruma, the former President of Tanzania, Mr Julius Nyerere, Queen Anna Ndzinga of Angola, Mbuya Nehanda of Zimbabwe and many others who spent their lives fighting for the liberation of all citizens on the African continent.

He said: “Africa Day also presents an opportunity for us to reconnect
and recommit ourselves to support all government interventions to develop a better Africa and a better world.” Dr Gulube added that since the advent of democracy in our land, South Africa has been an integral part of the continent and has played a leading role in regional and continental efforts to maintain and uphold the rule of law and is today regarded by the international community as an honest and reliable peace broker.

He said that as the SANDF we shall continue to work with the AU and the United Nations (UN) in the pursuit of peace and stability. He added that the AU declaration was part of the AU’s Agenda 2063 that envisions an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa driven by its own citizens.

Showing solidarity with the rest of the continent, a message by Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, was played. In her message she said that as the continent commemorated Africa Day, it was a time for reflection about the achievements and challenges which still face Africans. Dr Dlamini-Zuma said that part of the AU’s Agenda 2063 envisioned an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa aimed at silencing the guns of war by 2020. She added that Africa needed to speak with one voice as well as to act in unison.
Chief of the SANDF recalls soldiers on special leave

By Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photo by L Cpl Jonathan Mogano

The Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), Gen Solly Shoke, announced at a recently held media briefing his intention of recalling SANDF members who were placed on special leave after the march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria in August 2009.

On 26 August 2009 some members of the SANDF embarked on a march despite the City of Tshwane withdrawing their permission for a march. The affected members were issued with notices of intended provisional dismissal and were subsequently placed on special leave.

However, the administrative processes that the SANDF instituted against these members were challenged in civil courts and by means of interdicts. The matter has dragged on for some time without any resolution.

The Chief of the SANDF said: “You will recall that over 500 members of the SANDF have been placed on special leave after their march to the Union Buildings. And that led to an ugly confrontation with members of the South African Police Service members and the public.”

Gen Shoke added: “We felt that their conduct was unbecoming and damaging to the image of the SANDF, which is supposed to be a spear and a shield for the people of South Africa. Subsequent to that, when we wanted to discipline them, they sought legal means to get an interdict.”

In regard to this matter there are three categories of affected members. These include members who made representations in 2009 and as a result were recalled to resume their duties.

There were also members who adhered to the Chief of the SANDF’s Instruction of 2012 to report back to their units for military disciplinary processes to take place. Members resumed their duties after the conclusion of the process.

The last category is of members who disobeyed the instruction when it was issued and failed to report to their units.

The Chief of the SANDF said the matter had been dragged through the courts, but recently the SANDF had tried to bring the matter to a conclusion through external means. However, he was surprised to learn that the members claimed the institutions lacked jurisdiction over them, which was a matter of dispute.

Gen Shoke said: “I consulted with the Military Command and legal advisers and we came to the conclusion that I recalled them. I expect them to report as individuals to a place and at a time to be determined by us.”

He said that this development has led to the SANDF deciding that those members who had failed to turn up when they were called initially, should be recalled. Gen Shoke said that as members of the SANDF they are subject to the codes that are applicable to the military and he expects them to comply.

Gen Shoke said these soldiers are governed by the Defence Act and the Military Disciplinary Codes. He said that the SANDF respects the decisions that are taken by the courts, but each time an attempt is made to resolve the matter the SANDF is prevented from action by court interdicts.

The Chief of the SANDF said: “On that note we will be approaching the courts and will attempt to address the boundary issue when we take disciplinary measures. We have reason to believe that it impacts on discipline because when we attempt to resolve military issues internally, they find the means to go to court.”

Gen Shoke added: “The SANDF is uncomfortable with having to continue to pay members who are simply sitting at home. For that reason the Military Command, with Legal Advice, has decided the members on special leave must be recalled. This will be done in accordance with the terms and conditions as provided for in Defence Act 42 of 2002 and other applicable policy documents.”
South Africa’s membership of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has various objectives, e.g. to strengthen diplomatic engagements, promote regional integration, attract investment, boost regional and economic trade, social cooperation and skills development. It is also evident that forging fruitful partnerships and stronger relations require practical and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Recently South Africa convened a three-day SADC Human Resources Working Group Extraordinary Technical Committee Meeting at the Premier Hotel in Pretoria. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the proposed SADC Compensation Policy which will benefit soldiers who have either been injured or killed on regional peacekeeping exercises and deployment missions. SADC Secretariat and legal representatives attended the meeting to submit their inputs and legal contributions towards the proposed policy document.

The Chairperson, Maj Gen Olga Nodola, Chief Director Transformation Management (SA National Defence Force) led the meeting which was facilitated by Col Lazarus Mokobake, Senior Staff Officer Ethics: Chief Directorate Transformation Management.

On the last day of the meeting, after long and thoughtful contributions and deliberations, Maj Gen Nodola expressed her gratitude to the delegates for their time and valuable contributions in compiling the draft Compensation Policy.

She reiterated that it was important for all member states to work together to ensure the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive and beneficial Compensation Policy. Maj Gen Nodola indicated that this Policy would provide for compensation to deployed or participating personnel in terms of injuries, disability, impairments, illnesses and death incurred during SADC peace support operations, humanitarian assistance, training exercises and SADC deployment missions.

She emphasised that this meeting strengthened the relationship and friendship between the defence forces of the SADC member states and afforded them a firm base to build on for the future of Africa, and in particular the Southern African region.

The meeting was attended by the following member states, namely Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

ABOVE: The Chairperson of the SADC Inter-state Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) Human Resources Working Group, Maj Gen Olga Nodola (front row, third from left) with SADC member state delegates in Pretoria.
Military Information and Communications Symposium of SA

By Sgt Ally Rakoma
Photo by Pte Paul Mpangala

The Department of Defence (DOD) Command and Management Information Systems Division led by Maj Gen Happy Bhembe together with Armscor, the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) recently hosted the 7th Military Information and Communications Symposium of South Africa (MICSSA) at the CSIR International Convention Centre in Pretoria.

The theme for this year’s symposium was: “Gaining the Edge Through ICT Modernisation”. ICT Modernisation addresses the migration to new hard and software, including the integration of new functionality to provide the latest functions for the DOD. Modernisation options include re-platforming, re-hosting, recoding, re-architecting, re-engineering, interoperability, replacement and retirement, as well as changes to the application and technology architecture.

MICSSA is a bi-annual symposium aimed at promoting Information, Technology and Communications developments to stakeholders in the Southern African defence environment, national and international defence related industries, experts, opinion formers, academia and technology developers. Garsfontein Hoërskool, Glen High and Empro Academy were invited on board to share views and plans to improve ICT. It is an ideal opportunity to promote new technologies, trends and policy issues and to exhibit wares demonstrating the fore-front of technology.

With the broad view of putting in place measures to boost state capacity for the implementation of ICT, innovation enhancements of internal systems across a broad spectrum of capability management on ICT, cyber warfare, cyber crime, cyber security, threat intelligence, vulnerability, e-government, tactical data links, and African Battle space topics were presented by subject experts in the field. Brig Gen Simphiwe Sipika, the Director Divisional Staff, Command and Management Information Systems (CMIS) Division gave a presentation on MICSSA in Perspective.

Maj Gen Bhembe highlighted the importance of the MICSSA Symposium to SA Soldier and said that challenges faced by developed countries and the global community are similar to those faced by developing countries such as South Africa, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region and continent. He indicated that the DOD/SA National Defence Force (SANDF) work closely with Armscor, SITA, CSIR, key stakeholders in the ICT sector, organs of state, enterprises, private entities and the SADC region allies to ensure a common understanding and approach to ICT and cyber security activities, including programmes of technology and innovation.

He added that the defence environment is evolving and innovative technology solutions are to be developed in finding security solutions. While representatives from SITA and CSIR pointed out that organs of state needed to fast-track development better and more effectively in various areas such as human resources infrastructure, financial services, supply chain management, procurement and other services in the ICT environment to optimise positive developmental impacts, including increasing exploration activities by the State, such as geo-scientific information, enhanced research, development, innovation and holistic modernisation.

During the last day of the symposium, Dr Setumo Mohapi, the Chief Executive Officer SITA, pointed out that the theme for MICSSA 2016 was not only important but of particular relevance to our country going forward. He added that it was a prime platform of unequalled knowledge sharing, learning and growth through intellectually stimulating engagements by experts, and the showcasing of the best in military ICT developments.

Fltr: Dr Irene Moetsana-Moeng from the State Security Agency, Maj Gen Happy Bhembe, Chief of Command Management Information System, Dr Setumo Mohapi, Chief Executive Officer of the State Information Technology Agency (SITA), and Mr Alan Baker, Programme Manager SITA.
Military Ombud articulates its processes to stakeholders

Article and photo by
S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

The Military Ombud Office recently hosted a symposium at the CSIR in Pretoria to heighten awareness about its services, role and functions to its stakeholders under the theme “Relationship between the Ombud and civil society in democratic oversight of Armed Forces”.

Furthermore the Military Ombud Symposium afforded its Office an opportunity to increase cooperation between the Military Ombud and its stakeholders’ perceptions about the Office and to identify gaps in the services of the office and timely service delivery and how these could be improved. The symposium was also useful in affording stakeholders to communicate the challenges they experienced during their interactions with the Military Ombud.

The Military Ombud was also able to articulate its processes and applicable prescripts to stakeholders to improve business relations within the context of the Regulatory Framework. During the symposium the Military Ombud imparted information relating to the Military Ombud Act and Bill and explained their crucial role in ensuring that the armed forces operate with integrity and in a manner which is both accountable and transparent.

Addressing the stakeholders, the Military Ombud, Lt Gen (Ret) Temba Matanzima, said that by handling complaints, as well as exploring thematic and cross-cutting issues the Ombud institutions helps to prevent human rights abuses, eliminate waste and malpractice, offer recourse in cases of internal military grievances and contribute to the overall good governance of the armed forces.

Lt Gen (Ret) Matanzima said that the office renders an independent, impartial and expeditious investigation and resolution process for complaints in respect of conditions of service for members and former members of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and to investigate complaints by members of the public regarding the official conduct of a member of the SANDF.

He said: “The office of the Military Ombud complement, rather than compete with existing internal redress procedures within the SANDF, through this office our soldiers are guaranteed humane treatment and quality of life which all our citizens deserve as an alienable right bequeathed to them by the Constitution.”

The Military Ombud added that it was equally important to emphasise that the Office of the Military Ombud does not attend to matters that are strictly under the purview of the Military Command Council, these are matters of principle such as leadership in the military. The Military Ombud said that through the existence of the Office they hoped to harmonise the confluence between military discipline and recourse avenues for complaints and grievances in a manner that is consistent with the democratic establishment.

Lt Gen (Ret) Matanzima said: “The Military Ombud is a soldier’s appeal office to internal military grievance management processes. It is therefore an essential ingredient in the pursuit of a systematic approach to a democratic rights based military culture.”

The panel of experts, which included Dr Michelle Nel, Prof Dirk Kotze and Mr Helmoed Heitman, were requested to analyse and discuss the theme of the symposium. Mr Heitman emphasised that the institution is a correctly considered extension of well-established conventional frontiers of military culture in a democracy, consistent with contemporary demands for due process.

Mr Heitman further said that the patriotic inclination to head the call to participate in the defence of one’s country, to defend our democratic values, is a courageous act. He added: “It is therefore our moral obligation as a nation to treat with dignity all those citizens who give their lives to the lofty cause of defending our democracy.”

The panel of experts, fltr: Dr Michelle Nel, Lt Gen (Ret) Temba Matanzima (the Military Ombud), Prof Dirk Kotzé and Mr Helmoëd Heitman.
The SA Army fire power projection

By Sgt Ally Rakoma
Photos by Pte Paul Mpangala

The SA Army recently conducted a star-studded landward fire power projection termed the SA Army Capability Demonstration to demonstrate its state of readiness at the General De Wet Training Area at De Brug near Bloemfontein.

The capability demonstration was meant to show that the SA Army was combat-ready and deployable. It projected the multi-role landward and airborne capabilities of the different components complemented by the SA Air Force as a force multiplier.

An excellent combination of high mobility, fire power, combat agility and manoeuvring capability in executing the phases of war during a battle scenario were demonstrated. The sound of light machine guns, heavy artillery, mortars, R4-rifles, precision strikes, smoke grenades and light thunder flares was heard from various directions on the range. The armoured vehicles on the move displayed the concept of mobile attack and mobile defence.

To fulfil the essential tasks of landward power, the SA Army is able to conduct large scale and high tempo operations in a changing battlefield environment that combines reconnaissance, survival capabilities and can satisfy various combat modes, including long-range battle, precision and mobile strikes.

Addressing guests and members of the media, the Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Lindile Yam, deliberated on the state of our country’s largest landward force component in relation to its commitments.

He said that the SA Army demonstrated its capabilities that open a wide array of employment possibilities on the domestic as well as continental front in pursuance of stability, peace, security and working together with our African brothers and sisters and other partners from across the world.

He added that the SA Army as a force had the manpower, hardware and combat capability to cover a
The Rooivalk attack helicopter detecting air and surface threats.

Lt Gen Yam emphasised that the SA Army stood by the Constitutional principals in government whose orders they execute to make our continent a better place for all to live in. He said: “We are determined even in the economic condition our country finds itself in to never turn our backs on our fellow African brothers and sisters, and our friends from across the world who share common interests with us in as far as continental peace and security is concerned.”

He highlighted that the SANDF shared the commitment of the Minister of Defence and

In conclusion he affirmed that the SA Army was ready and willing to be deployed in domestic and continental duties to advance the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and work towards a peaceful, prosperous and integrated Africa.

Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, as expressed in her budget vote in Parliament when she emphasised the need to build the SANDF as a national asset and the pride of the nation, one capable of defending our democracy and its gains.

Armoured vehicles displayed the concept of mobile attack and mobile defence.

The landward fire power projection.
The 2016/17 Defence Budget - Tightening the belt

By Mr Dawid Fourie, Deputy Director Operating Budget

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, recently tabled the 2016/17 Defence budget in Parliament. The Defence budget for 2016/17 amounts to R47,170 billion. This is equal to 1.04% of South Africa’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 3.26% of Government’s Expenditure (GE).

The Defence budget is divided into eight main programmes. Over the medium term these programmes are receiving the amounts as indicated in Table 1.

The Landward Defence programme is the largest programme within the Defence Vote receiving 33% of the total allocation. The next largest programme is Air Defence receiving 15% of the allocation followed by the General Support programme with 13% and the Administration programme with 11% of the allocation. The reason for the General Support and Administration programmes receiving such relatively large allocations is that the total budget for maintenance and repair of Defence facilities, capital works, office accommodation, municipal services, buildings leases, mainframe systems, technology development and the transfers to the Department of Military Veterans and the Armaments Corporation of South Africa (Armscor) are included in these two programmes.

The Defence budget is also divided per economic classification. The division per economic classification is indicated in Table 2 (see page 21).

Compensation of Employees is by far the largest item on the Defence budget in that 57% of the total budget is being spent on salaries, wages and allowances as well as pension and medical contributions. Goods and Services amounts to 26% of the allocation while Transfers and Subsidies amounts to 16%. Transfers and Subsidies include the transfers to the Special Defence Account for the acquisition, development and maintenance of main weapon systems as well as the transfers to institutions such as the Department of Military Veterans, Armscor, the SA Safety and Security Education and Training Authority (SASSETA) and the Reserve Force Council.

With this budget allocation the Department of Defence (DOD) and the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) maintains and prepares its capabilities, conducts its ordered commitments and operations, maintains its facilities and systems, remunerates and trains its personnel, and provides a medical service to its uniformed members and their dependants.
Every member of the DOD and SANDF is being encouraged to ensure that money is spent on the items and services for which it was made available, and the best possible service is being rendered within the constraints of affordability so that the citizens of South Africa can be given the assurance that within Defence their tax money is being spent in the most economic, efficient and effective manner to the benefit of all in South Africa.”

To assist Service and Division Chiefs in tightening the belt and managing funds prudently the following two sub-systems are available on the Financial Management System:

**EZEZIMALI**

Directorate Budgeting is responsible to assist the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans in obtaining an approved budget by providing sound guidance, thorough evaluation, professional support, excellent training and appropriate and user-friendly policies and subsystems in the preparation of Defence’s Estimate of Expenditure and Revenue.

Ezezimali was developed as a budgeting subsystem to support this!

Ezezimali provides the DOD with a “Budgeting Toolbox” filled to the brim with all that is required to prepare a medium term budget estimate.

Each Service and Division’s interests are secured through their representatives that serve as the budgeting guideline representative (Advance User). This Advance User is the nodal point for all items on which that Service or Division provides budgeting guidelines to the DOD. This allows every environment to ensure that planning, budgeting and expenditure is aligned and executed in accordance with policy and guidelines provided by each functional authority.

**BUDGETING TOOLBOX**

Ezezimali translated as “Monetary issues” is a live decentralised information sharing tool which provides in its Budgeting Toolbox, the following information critical in the budget processes of the DOD:

- **Quick links to Public Finance Management Act**
- **Policy on Budget Preparation**
- **Functional Planning and Budgeting document**
- **Catalogue for Office Furniture** – Provides all types of office furniture (standard and non-standard)

Although the allocation is not sufficient to finance all the commitments and expected outputs, tasks and activities of the DOD and SANDF, all efforts are made continuously to optimise the allocation in such a fashion that maximum outputs can be provided with the limited means being provided. Austerity measures have been implemented to ensure that money is not being spent on unnecessary items and activities. Every member of the DOD and SANDF is being encouraged to ensure that money is spent on the items and services for which it was made available, and the best possible service is being rendered within the constraints of affordability so that the citizens of South Africa can be given the assurance that within Defence their tax money is being spent in the most economic, efficient and effective manner to the benefit of all in South Africa.”

**Table 2: Defence Budget Allocation per Economic Classification.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Classification</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>2017/18</th>
<th>2018/19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Payments</td>
<td>36 191 050</td>
<td>39 477 357</td>
<td>40 752 331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation of Employees</td>
<td>26 884 560</td>
<td>26 447 971</td>
<td>27 116 696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods and Services</td>
<td>12 216 659</td>
<td>13 029 388</td>
<td>13 635 635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfers and Subsidies</td>
<td>7 780 855</td>
<td>8 833 665</td>
<td>9 493 285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments for Capital Assets</td>
<td>287 812</td>
<td>434 193</td>
<td>476 495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>47 169 745</td>
<td>48 744 613</td>
<td>50 725 085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Item Code search** – Should you wonder which item code to use, then you search by typing in the item name or description.
  - **NATO Code** – It indicates the item description (Include/Exclude)
  - **NSN Codes** – Also known as “ICN numbers”
  - **SCoA Code and description**
  - **Budgeting Guidelines per Item (Search)** – This function works like a google search, you just type any word e.g. “computer”, therefore all the guidelines containing that word “computer” will appear on the screen.
  - **Policy** – Related to Item Codes
  - **Tariffs** - For both Revenue and Expenditure Items
  - **Item** – Data manager details
  - **DOD Contract Register** – All current contracts for In-land (CPSC), Coastal (STPC) and National Treasury.

All these functions are interlinked meaning that once you have accessed Ezezimali you can browse descriptive through all these functions. However, you must start with any information you have (e.g. Item code, Item description, NSN or NATO codes) to be able to browse through the other functions.

**EZEZIMALI ON TOUR**

With the support and mandate from the relevant Service and Divisional Command Boards, Ezezimali was taken to the DOD units throughout South Africa. The intent was to empower all unit commanding officers and their staff with the knowledge to utilize Ezezimali in the preparation of their annual medium term budgets. Services and Divisions hosted 22 workshops through all the provinces, reaching 217 units with the total attendance of 1 034.
ACCESS AND REGISTRATION

Ezezimali is accessible by anyone in the DOD with access to the Intranet. There are several ways of accessing Ezezimali on the intranet. The easiest ways are to:

- Follow the Quick Link from the DOD website or
- Follow the “Ezezimali” link from the Financial Management Division web page.

Remember to first register yourself on Ezezimali to have access to information by completing the following personal details:

- Force Number
- Title
- Name
- Surname
- Select your Budget Holder, e.g. SA Army

Ezezimali can now be taken with you when you are away from the office. Download “Ezezimali on the go” (Ezi-go) from the Ezezimali homepage.

For any queries regarding the budgeting guidelines please forward them by means of the “Forum Page” available on the Ezezimali website or else contact Ms Mavis Matshika on (012) 355 5844 or Mr Arno Jordaan on (012) 355 5848.

ULWAZI

Ulwazi Financial Reporting system

“Ulwazi” the Zulu word for knowledge was the concept behind the development of the new Ulwazi Financial Reporting system. The Ulwazi system was developed to enable the members of the department to access financial information to enable them to manage their units or sections.

This system can be accessed from the Finance Management Division Intranet web-site. To access the system you need to register yourself by completing the Ulwazi registration form first. There after you will be able to draw the following reports from your own desktop PC:

- PERSOL revenue deduction report – list of PERSOL deduction per unit for House rent, Boarding and Lodging, Court fines, Duty Bus, Parking and Municipal services.
- Cash Receipts Voucher report – list of all Cash Receipts Voucher (CRV) issues by the FASC office to a specific unit.
- Budget Report – a report to indicate the 2016 MTEC cycle for a unit.
- Expenditure report – an in-year expenditure report indicating a unit expenditure status on serial number level.
- Summary Expenditure report - an in-year expenditure report indicating a unit expenditure status on Item first level.
- PERSOL revenue reconciliation statement – this reports assists a unit Officer Commander to reconcile their units monthly revenue.

Additional reports are going to be added to the Ulwazi reporting system in the near future. For any additional information or suggested improvements please contact Mr Robert Wapenaar on 012 355 5569 or robert.wapenaar@yahoo.com.

ULWAZI

“monetary issues”
Members who are planning to resign are urged to notify their employers of their eminent exit at least ± one month in advance, in order to allow for sufficient time for their documents to be processed by both the employer and GEPF.

The following forms need to be completed by the member when they resign:

- Resignation choice form – member must indicate whether benefits should be paid into own bank account or transferred to an approved fund.
- Z1525 (Particulars of approved external retirement fund) to be completed by the financial advisor and confirmed by member should the member opt to transfer benefit to an approved fund.
- Z894 (Bank Form) - To be completed by the bank if member opted for the benefit to be paid to own account

When transferring to an Approved Fund:

- GEPF will only transfer benefits to an approved fund that is registered with the Financial Services Board (FSB)
- No transfers to provident funds are allowed.
- The full actuarial interest is transferred to the new fund and, depending on the new fund’s rules, you can withdraw one third after reaching the age of 55 (ensure that you do not have any debt, divorce gratuity to ex-spouse as this deduction will be deemed the one-third deduction)
- Two thirds will then be used to “buy” an annuity which will be payable monthly.

- ID copy - Green Bar coded ID. Must be certified (certification stamp must not be older than 6 month)
- If divorced – decree of divorce and settlement agreement
- Forms to be completed by your HR department:
  - Z102 – Withdrawal from Fund form
  - In case of Departmental Liability – Duly completed Departmental Liability Claim Form completed by the employer and signed by both the employer and the member.
- Additional Information required:
  - Last salary pay slip
  - Proof of service termination (Persal print out)

Members are advised to settle out outstanding debts with the employers prior to exiting in order to avoid certain debts being deducted from their pension benefits.

Outstanding tax matters with SARS should also be settled with SARS prior to your exit. Members earning more than R60 000 must be registered with SARS as a taxpayer with a valid Tax Number.

It is important for a member to confirm his/her starting date as a GEPF member by submitting documents such as pay slips to the HR department (the employer has this on record).

The employer has to submit the application forms in respect of Resignations to the appropriate GEPF Regional Office one month prior to the member’s exit date. This will allow sufficient time for GEPF to process your pension benefits.
Focus on peace support operations doctrine

By AB Samuel Ramonyai, trainee at SA Soldier
Photo by Pte Paul Mpangala

A joint doctrine seminar was recently held by Directorate Joint Doctrine Development to review the present Peace Support Operations (PSO) Doctrine. The seminar was attended by senior officers from all Services at the Peace Mission Training Centre at the SA Army College in Thaba Tshwane.

Director Doctrine Development Joint Operations, Brig Gen Winnie Bobelo, welcomed everybody and gave a brief overview of what the seminar was all about.

The first speaker to open the seminar was Ms Annette Leijenaar, Head of Conflict Management and Peacebuilding at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), who gave a presentation on the complexities of international peacekeeping operations.

The General Officer Commanding Training Command, Maj Gen Gordon Yekelo, who gave a presentation on the development of PSO Doctrine, thanked the Directorate Joint Doctrine Development for taking bold steps to review the doctrine. He appreciated them and said that taking steps to review the doctrine might appear to be a small step, but this was not so because the doctrine had not been reviewed for ten years.

He said: “We have been living dangerously in the sense that we have neither integrated nor codified the lessons we might have learnt over ten long years since the publication of Joint Warfare 106 Part 2”.

Maj Gen Yekelo said: “The development of doctrine is informed by the primacy of political considerations, which is a basis for understanding the context, including the operating and changing security environment. While the doctrine must be sound militarily, it must be premised on the above political context and considerations.”

He urged that the SANDF should avoid reviewing the doctrine after ten years. He added: “The SANDF must make a system-wide review about how we conduct PSO and related operations. Begin to regard PSO as a strategic opportunity for Force Development similar to other countries.”

The SA Army, the SA Air Force, the SA Navy as well as the SA Health Military Service also presented their important and roles in the PSO and in logistics in threatening situations.

The Directorate Operations Legal Support also gave the latest United Nations (UN) report presentation on sexual exploitation and abuse in PSO. The UN “Zero Tolerance” policy stipulates that sex is forbidden if done with minors (under 18), in exchange for food, goods, services, money or through intermediaries.

Brig Gen Bobelo urged that zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse should not only apply to Joint Operations, but should also apply to the whole SANDF.

Lt Col Kwezi Nompetheni, Peace Support Operations, briefed on the outcomes of the special committee meeting on peacekeeping, said: “We continue to operate in increasingly dangerous environments. Thankfully, overall casualty figures per deployed
Peacekeeper have gone down over the past 15 years, with the exception of 2012 and 2014. Peacekeeping missions are also increasingly deployed to places where there is no peace to keep and no peace agreement to support.”

He further highlighted the importance of training and providing peacekeeping personnel with adequate equipment to fulfil the mandate. He stressed that the use of modern technology in a peacekeeping context must uphold the principles enshrined in the Charter of the UN, namely respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states.

The Joint Warfare Publication 106 Part 2 defines PSO as the collective term given to military activities conducted during a peace mission.

The doctrine publication has been written to capture the latest and most appropriate global concepts to apply in Africa and is of particular relevance to the SANDF PSO. The publication is primarily focused on the military reader working at the operational level. It is hoped that officers at all levels and civilian agencies will take the time to read and understand the contents of the doctrine.

The review of the publication was done through the presentations, lessons learnt, informed discussions and incisive analysis of current SA National Defence Force (SANDF) approach to PSO and the principles and concepts of PSO. This led to a new publication.

The Military Academy presents the 8th SA-Netherlands International Security Course

This year the students were officers from the SA National Defence Force, and from the defence forces of Mali, Botswana, Kenya, Uganda, Angola, Namibia and Zambia. The course was presented by lecturers from the CEMIS, the Netherlands Defence Academy, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Transparency International.

Addressing the students at the certificate ceremony, Maj Gen Gordon Yekelo, the General Officer Commanding Training Command, impressed on the students that they should apply the knowledge received on the course throughout their careers, but must also cherish the friendships that were made. Brig Gen Lawrence Mbatha, the Commandant of the Military Academy, also mentioned that the different continents were becoming more integrated and that collaboration between countries was becoming increasingly important. That is why courses such as this one lay a good foundation for the future and future leaders.

The Military Academy recently hosted the 8th SA-Netherlands International Security Course. It is becoming an annual event, and the course is attracting increasing attention from the African continent. Members from the Centre for Military Studies (CEMIS) at the Military Academy and from the Netherlands Defence Academy co-hosted and organised the event.

The aim of the course is to provide young officers with a proper appreciation of international relations and to develop the skills necessary for forming and developing opinions on the matter. Participants received a number of presentations during the course and also had ample opportunity to participate in discussions and make presentations on different subjects.

The approaches were therefore twofold: To provide relevant information on international relations and security and to stimulate debate and independent thought on the subject. The course content is intended to address the needs of junior officers serving on peacekeeping or other complex missions. The course also equips attendees with a broader understanding of the geo-political environment in which current missions are undertaken as well as knowledge of human rights, the law of armed conflict, the role of gender in conflict and peace and lessons learnt from specific case studies.

Above: Maj Gen Gordon Yekelo, General Officer Commanding Training Command (right), handing over a certificate and photo to Candidate Officer Nicholas de Wet.
The office of the Defence Foreign Relations (DFR) accredited eight new Defence Attachés in South Africa. Constant liaison is maintained with the Military Attaché and Advisory Corps (MAAC) members after the accreditation and the de-accreditation process.

Director Foreign Relations, Brig Gen Talita Mxakato, said the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) accredits the new MAAC members who represent their countries and de-accredit those who have completed their tours of duty.

She said: “In my capacity as CDFR, I shall accord you with all the necessary support and assistance needed at all times. DFR is nodal point between yourselves, the SANDF, Department of Defence (DOD) and the Defence Industries; as such my door is always open to your assist you.”

Brig Gen Mxakato mentioned that DFR intended to develop a good working relationship with the MAAC members during their tour of duty. She said they would continue to strengthen and enhance the existing relations with countries represented by MAAC members.

The Chief of Defence Intelligence, Lt Gen Jeremiah Nyembe, pointed out in his welcoming address to the MAAC members that they had been sent to South Africa in terms of bilateral and multilateral agreements that have been reached over the years.

He said that the ceremony reaffirmed the SANDF’s commitment to enhancing the excellent relationships between itself and other countries; particularly in the field of defence diplomacy.

Lt Gen Nyembe said: “New objectives and directions concerning the work of the armed forces involve the endeavour to make our continent a success. This may also mean that your deployment here will further assist in implementing the terms and conditions of the Memorandum of Understanding with your countries.”

He added: “You have been appointed by your governments to our country to conduct Military Diplomacy. You are representatives and protectors of the interests of your nations which have established productive relations with our country. We expect from you that as our country cements its position as an important global player, interactions such as these become vital to enable us to play a meaningful role in dealing with global issues in tandem with those countries that share our objectives.”

ABOVE: The Defence Adviser from the Republic of Zambia, Brig Gen Hamaimbo Muzyamba, said that the members of the Military Attaché and Advisory Corps would work tirelessly to further develop existing relations.
Lt Gen Nyembe said the SANDF would provide the platform for military and trade relations and would strengthen military to military cooperation leading to an exchange of ideas on military technology, including the promotion of world peace.

One of the South African Government’s international relations policy objectives is enhancing defence relations with countries whose armed forces share a similar vision of world peace as a prerequisite for effective trade and investment.

Lt Gen Nyembe said it was upon this firm foundation that the SANDF was eager to promote cordial defence relations guided by mutual trust, the benefit of equality and the cooperation with other armed forces. He indicated that some countries provide developmental assistance to different militaries.

He added: “The cooperation I speak of here will also have a positive impact in bilateral and multilateral interactions with the office of the CDFR. Brig Gen Mxakato will be your special guide in leading defence diplomacy representatives to engage with you in the promotion and sustainability of our good relations through DFR.”

Col Lief Carlisson, representing the Dean of the MAAC members, said he had been three years in South Africa and he remembered the warm welcome from the SANDF and the people at large. He advised them to participate actively in MAAC activities.

He said: “Start as soon as possible to interact with the SANDF and the South African Defence Industry. It is a high-level industry and one of the world’s most advanced. So, in engaging with the Defence Industry, engage with MAAC members as well, as it is a great family.”

Brig Gen Hamaimbo Muzyamba, a Defence Adviser from the Republic of Zambia, expressed his gratitude on behalf of the new MAAC members for the acceptance of their country’s request to serve as Defence Attachés in South Africa.”

He said: “We appreciate the hospitality and the assistance given to us. My colleagues and I pledge to work hard to enhance and further develop existing relations between the SANDF and ourselves.”
Military Attaché and Advisory Corps on tour

Article and photos by Mr Lufuno Netshirembe

Defence Foreign Relations (DFR) is mandated to promote relations with the Military Attaché and Advisory Corps (MAAC). In execution of this directive DFR hosts a tour annually with the MAAC in the different provinces of South Africa. The DFR recently hosted the MAAC on a tour to Kimberley in the Northern Cape.

The recently promoted Lt Col Willem van Wyk, SO1 MAAC in the DFR, coordinated his inaugural tour in his new rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He impeccably scheduled the tour that begun at the SA Army College in Thaba Tshwane from where it went to Kimberley, safari ya salama (a Swahili phrase used to express good wishes for the trip about to be taken).

Subsequent to the safe arrival at Kimberley the previous day, on 24 May the Attachés and DFR MAAC team led by Lt Col Van Wyk visited Army Support Base (ASB) Kimberley, the “Diskobolos” Unit, where the

ABOVE: The Defence Foreign Relations team with the Military Attachés of Algeria, the USA, Argentina, Brazil, China, Ethiopia, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Romania, Sweden, Tanzania, Uruguay and Zambia.

ABOVE: Col Samuel Wamwayi, Kenya Defence Attaché (left), presents Col Gert Richards, Officer Commanding Army Support Base (ASB) Kimberley “Diskobolos” Unit, with a token of appreciation.

ABOVE: At 3 SA Infantry Battalion the Defence Foreign Relations team and the Military Attaché and Advisory Corps group were treated to a display of agility and endurance by members who competed on the obstacle course, which is one of the disciplines of military pentathlon.

Office Commanding, Col Gert Richards, gave a brief presentation to orientate his guests.

At the ASB Kimberley the visitors had an opportunity to visit the inter-technic maintenance and repair facility of the Air Defence Artillery weapons systems where they were given a brief overview of what happens there. At the Joint Tactical Headquarters, the Second-in-Command, Lt Col Tania Burger, gave a presentation on the unit.

After the presentation by Lt Col Burger the MAAC team visited the Magersfontein Battlefield (11 December 1899) Museum where Mr Frank Higgo, the tour guide, gave a comprehensive history on the battle between the English
and Boers in that area. Later Col Richards hosted a gala evening at the Jack Hindon Officers’ Club. Lt Col Katrina Absalom, ASB Kimberley SO1 Supply Support Service Centre, spoke about the history of the building where the gala was held.

The following morning the visiting group led by Lt Col Van Wyk visited 3 SA Infantry Battalion (3 SAI Bn). Lt Col Lungisile Madikizela, the Training Officer, gave a briefing on the mandate of the unit. This was followed by a tour of the base where they saw the simulator and live firing training facilities. WO1 Thabang Makhasane, Musketry Warrant Officer, gave the visitors a chance to have a practical feel of the simulator and to fire weapons.

Later the Attachés viewed some soldiers doing military obstacle training. S Sgt Quinton Warnick, Physical Training, Sport and Recreation Non-Commissioned Officer, explained that the obstacle training formed part of the military pentathlon, which is one of the sporting codes that the unit offers.

After the visit to 3 SAI Bn the MAAC team headed to the Northern Cape Legislature where Mr Rabi Motingwe, Senior Researcher, and Mr Epang Matolweni, Executive Manager in the Speaker’s Office, gave an overview of the role and functions of the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature.

To conclude the busy schedule of the day the MAAC team visited the Air Defence Artillery School where Lt Col Christiaan Prent, the Second-in-Command, and Maj Chris Oosthuizen gave a presentation on the mandate of the unit.

As the legend has it, a tour to Kimberley would not have been complete without a visit to the historic Big Hole. A short visit to this place by the MAAC and DFR team marked the end of the tour, after which it was time to return to the SA Army College in Thaba Tshwane where the journey started.

ABOVE: The Military Attaché and Advisory Corps group listening to S Sgt David Pretorius, senior instructor at Air Defence Artillery School, explaining the functioning of the Mark V twin-barrelled 35mm gun.

ABOVE: Lt Col Willem van Wyk, SO1 Military Attaché and Advisory Corps at Defence Foreign Relations, on board the vintage Big Hole tram.

LEFT: Brig Gen Ibrahim Kimario, Defence Advisor from Tanzania, checking his performance score after shooting with the R4 simulator rifle.
Psychology in Africa

By Prof Gielie van Dyk, Senior Lecturer Department of Industrial Psychology (Mil), Faculty of Military Science, Stellenbosch University
Photo by Dr Raymond van Diemel

Africa is a continent well known for several wars over the past decades. Currently wars in Africa are not about ideology or religion, but about natural resources. Nowhere in the world is this a greater reality than currently in Africa.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo the M23 rebels are fighting for oil and colbaltite-tantalite, rebels in Sierra Leone are fighting over diamonds in Sierra-Leone, the Boko Haram movement is trying to control oil in the Sudan and Nigeria with the Seleka movement fighting for wood in the Central African Republic. The recent wars in Africa form part of the industrial colonisation wave that not involves land but the minerals and oil in Africa soil. Over the years soldiers and their families have contributed to various ways to conflict resolution and peace.

These wars, however, have left psychological scars on soldiers as well as their families, e.g. phobias, fears, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, relationship conflict, conflict with the ancestors, to mention but a few. Most of these soldiers and their families do not have access to psychological services. However, forces in the SA National Defence Force receive psychological support during, before and after operations from the Directorate Psychology.

In most African countries military psychologists and military psychological services are non-existent or under pressure.

Military Psychology addresses the challenges being experienced by soldiers as well as their families before, during and after operations. Applying Military Psychology can contribute to high levels of combat readiness and mental health and therefore minimise the effect of war on soldiers.

To address the need for military psychology in Africa, a textbook "Military Psychology for Africa", was launched in March 2016 by the Faculty of Military Science of the Military Academy in Stellenbosch. This book can be used by universities, military academies, peacekeeping training institutions, e.g. in Kenya, and may even be used to develop short courses based on chapters in the book. The book is the first of its kind in Africa, and is based on in-depth theoretical knowledge. It is the result of empirical research conducted in Africa and applied to African scenarios. The content focuses on the contribution of military psychology during conventional war and peacekeeping operations, with a framework for a psychological plan to support leaders and soldiers during operations. In the book, for the first time, scholars follow a holistic approach in focusing on preventative, conscious, sub-conscious and body dimensions to treat trauma and prevent post-traumatic stress disorder.

The book also focuses on the role of traditional healing in Africa, and the effect of HIV and AIDS on combat readiness in military units. Other chapters include leadership, selection and support to military families, combat readiness, military work readiness and the career success of soldiers.

The book empowers the soldier, platoon/company and force leader in Africa to manage complex operations competently and informatively. The pocket/pool of knowledge in the book has already been made available to the Makerere University in Uganda (East Africa) as well as to the Anambra State University in Nigeria (West Africa).
A decision was taken by the National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure (NATJOINTS) to conduct exercises in various provinces to ensure that all role-players from the various disciplines can work together in a coordinated manner so that we are in a position to deal effectively with any situation, whether proactively or reactively.

It is also intended to test the very important concepts of command, control, coordination, communication and intelligence sharing among role-players from different environments. The first such joint simulation, in this round of exercises, took place recently in the Western Cape.

The Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure (JOINTS) at national, provincial and local level consist of several government departments and other agencies which meet and work together regularly, for example in terms of major events, natural disasters and crises. In this regard it conducted a multi-disciplinary simulation exercise (EXERCISE SEA DOG) recently in Simon’s Town, Western Cape.

Joint Tactical Headquarters Western Cape, SA Navy (Simon’s Town), Air Force Base Ysterplaat (22 Squadron) and Area Military Health Unit Western Cape together with various law enforcement agencies and emergency services took part in the planning and execution of EXERCISE SEA DOG.

The simulation exercises took place at five different locations in Simon’s Town and started at 05:30 in the early mornings. **Simulation 1:** Unknown armed men with assault rifles approach Simon’s Town harbour from the sea, shooting at everybody insight. **Simulation 2:** Armed men fired shots at Simon’s Town Quayside Hotel and took all the residents hostage. **Simulation 3:** “Terrorist Attack” at Navy Dockyard in Simon’s Town. **Simulation 4:** Armed men attack the Simon’s Town Railway station to inflict maximum casualties. **Simulation 5** illustrated a counterattack by SA Police Service Special Forces at the “terrorist headquarters” at lower north battery in Simon’s Town. Possible radiation traces were detected and the SA Navy cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) team was deployed to execute detection and decontamination tasks.

**ABOVE:** Unknown armed men ambush an SA Police Service vehicle near Simon’s Town harbour.

**ABOVE:** The SA Police Service stormed the entrance to the Simon’s Town Quayside Hotel where “terrorists” kept the residence hostages.

**ABOVE:** SA Police Service Special Forces assisted by 22 Squadron launch an air assault on the confirmed “terrorist headquarters” at Lower North Battery.

**ABOVE:** The SA Navy cardiopulmonary resuscitation team busy with detection and decontamination drills.
Area Military Health Unit Gauteng celebrates International Nurses Day

By Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photo by L Cpl Jonathan Mogano

Area Military Health Unit (AMHU) Gauteng nurses recently celebrated International Nurses Day at the SA Army College in Thaba Tshwane. Units collaborated to show their appreciation of the efforts and dedication of nurses by encouraging and rewarding them.

International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world on 12 May each year to mark the contributions of nurses to society. The day has been celebrated since 1965.

Lt Col Stella Erasmus, SO1 Nursing AMHU Gauteng, described her journey to becoming a nurse as a wonderful experience and she maintained that she would always be grateful to the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) for what it had exposed her to. She said that it was interesting to be in a deployment area for the first time.

She said: “When I think back on my journey as a nurse, from the time I was a student nurse, I must say that there are a lot of memories. I have learned a lot of things in my profession, especially regarding human behaviour.”

Lt Col Erasmus narrated her story of being a nurse and explained how terrifying it was for her to experience a patient dying for the first time. She said that it always felt good when a patient who reported very sick, recovered and then discharged from hospital. She described it as a rewarding experience.

She urged nurses to take care of themselves as well: “As a nurse you need to take care of yourself as well. If you are not healthy mentally, physically and emotionally it may be difficult for you to give the necessary care”.

The Social Worker at the SA Army College and Personnel Service School, Lt Khensani Nkuna, said that they planned the event to ensure that nurses in the area participated. She said the event was to acknowledge their contributions to the health care services.

Lt Nkuna said: “When you look at our communities, there are clinics and hospitals to access when they fall ill. However, there is a common sentiment among some members who feel that nurses do not care about them. At times even nurses themselves are frustrated in their work by what they experience on a daily basis. Nurses are seldom appreciated for their services; however, people only see the mistakes that nurses make.”

Lt Nkuna indicated that the event was based on the theme of Nurses Month. She said the event was meant to improve health care systems and urged nurses to be resilient even though they faced a lot of challenges. She said that some of these challenges could not be overcome owing to inadequate funding of health care services and facilities.

She said: “The good thing about nursing is that if healthcare facilities and hospitals cannot provide a particular service or lack equipment, they advise and guide patients on how to take care of their conditions to get better.

“Celebrating International Nurses Day is important to the nurses in the military. They deserve to be recognised on this day because they conduct their work professionally and diligently and encourage their patients to be free and open in expressing themselves. Since I have started working in the healthcare fraternity, I have come to witness nurses who are committed and dedicated to their work, and that is inspiring.”

Lt Nkuna said nurses must always look to themselves on be open on how they viewed the profession and how they understood it. She mentioned that although they are discouraged by some people and their working environment, they must understand that they are doing this kind of work for a purpose, and that is to save lives.
Soldiers exercised their Right of Freedom of Entry into Greytown

Article and photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

Air Force Base (AFB) Durban and 15 Squadron were granted Freedom of Entry into Greytown and Umvoti Mounted Rifles exercised its Freedom of Entry respectively during the Freedom of the City Parade recently held by Umvoti Municipality in Greytown.

The custom of granting this privilege of the city to a regiment or unit, so that its troops may march through the city concerned with drums beating, colours flying and bayonets fixed, has a long history. It symbolises the confidence of the civilian population in the regiment or unit and confers on it the right and privilege of bearing arms while marching through the city or town.

In granting the Freedom of Entry to the City of Greytown, the Mayor of Umvoti Municipality, Councilor Thamsanqa Ngubane, acknowledged the role and contribution made by AFB Durban and 15 Squadron towards peace and stability in the area and South Africa at large. The Mayor praised the bases for their tireless efforts in promoting democracy, which will result in human development, prosperity and general happiness in the country. He also recognised various operations performed by the base and the squadron, including air transporting, conducting operation against stock theft, campaign against substance abuse and socially related needs.

Mr Ngubane said: “We are granting them the Freedom of Entry because in their evolution as military regiments, there are operations that they have done within the demarcated border of Umvoti Municipality. The celebration of Freedom of Entry into Greytown meant that we must be mindful of the supreme sacrifice paid by the many soldiers in the siege and relief of South Africa, as well as those who have given their lives in the many surrounding battlefields that it was their sacrifice that has brought us our freedom.”

He said that in the process, the regiments have developed trust and confidence on the people of Umvoti and the Freedom of the City provides them the right, privilege, honour and distinction of marching through the streets of Umvoti Municipality on all ceremonial and other occasions with bayonet fixed, drums beating and colours flying.

The Mayor added that the democratic elections in 1994 heralded the birth of truly united South Africa. The regiments and units that paraded through the streets of Ladysmith reflected the demographics of the modern South Africa. This is one remarkable achievement in any country’s history and the soldiers who serve in these regiments and units reflect the same pride in their traditions as those who served before them.

In conclusion, the Mayor said that the municipality was heartened by the selfless contribution by a number of people and organisations and particularly by the people of Greytown. He said that they have always maintained that together we can always do more as a collective. He mentioned that the Freedom of the City Parade was worthwhile attended as simply was to witness history in the making.
Embrace diversity - a necessary feature in the global village

By Col Lumkile August, Senior Staff Officer Service Systems
Photo by Pte Paul Mpangala

Africa is one of the most ethnically diverse continents and still recognises and cherishes the practices of all segments of society. Tanzania has more than 120 ethnic groups/tribes (including clans), Kenya has about 42 and in Nigeria, the most heavily populated country on the continent there are more than 500 ethnic groups. Numerous African leaders have in recent times raised their concern about how “ethnicity was once again rearing its ugly head”. This was due to some people using ethnicity for their own selfish ends at the expense of others who may be from tribes other than their own.

Diverse groups mostly identify one another according to their different cultural backgrounds. Some define culture as “the total range of activities and ideas of a group of people with shared traditions, which are transmitted and reinforced by members of the group”. It is mostly due to their cultural backgrounds that people form their views about life, whether social settings or their professional lives. Although culture evolves, this process differs for each individual. For some it may take longer while others may adapt their cultural practices more quickly.

The generational mix and interconnectedness of the world we live in contribute to cultural practices evolving. The change in cultural practices over time occurs because of discovering new ways of doing things. Moreover, the newly adapted culture is often more suitable for current conditions.

By Col Lumkile August, Senior Staff Officer Service Systems.

Generally, people tap into their different backgrounds and past experiences when interpreting information. In the process perceptions are formed, correct or otherwise. These perceptions could as a result be biased towards what is already known. It is important that when people from different backgrounds interact they are aware of these differences and, if not, are prepared to learn and understand them. For example, gestures such as laughing, “… which are connotated in most countries with happiness – is in Japan often seen as a sign of confusion, insecurity and embarrassment. In some African cultures, for example, saying to a female friend that one has not seen for a while that she has put on weight, means she is physically healthier than before or has had a nice holiday, whereas this would be considered as an insult in Europe, North America and Australia” (www.cibc.net-Centre for Intercultural Competency).

What then in diversity should one learn to embrace and leverage, instead of it being a source of animosity? Diversity, at any level, whether in a formal or personal set-up, could bring about more opportunities, e.g. different people offer different skills and experiences which need to be seen for what they are and exploited to the advantage of the people they are offered to. For example, different people in a group can be good writers or speakers and therefore have their own unique contributions to offer.

In the international arena one can only imagine what it would be like if all nations agreed about everything; for a start, leaders would not know when they are going astray as they would soon not be used to having different views. The world is made more complex than it already is by people’s inability and not being prepared to tolerate diversity. Often people have to be reminded that we are different, culturally and otherwise. The international system, although it accommodates diverse nations’ practices, still has to accept norms that people in general are expected to follow. However, these rules are sometimes believed to favour the norms and values of powerful nations, to the detriment of the others.

The old adage: “There are many ways to skin a cat” still applies, in my view. Indeed there are many solutions
that can be offered to overcome any single challenge. Diverse views and cultures may have different ways to solve a problem, but what is needed in most cases is understanding the people involved. It is also important for leaders to understand these differences and ways of dealing with diverse problems that involve people that may be from different backgrounds. To solve the same problem in Africa might need a different approach to, for example, what is needed in New Zealand. In most cases this is caused by differences in culture and views.

Currently, the world is in turmoil due to complex and ancient diverse views and beliefs. In the absence of clear and agreed upon possible solutions, many a time, nations and stateless actors resort to violence. However, violence is destructive in whatever form one may think of it. It may deter further action by a weaker party in the conflict, but may not always result in the achievement of permanent solutions. Violence is also costly, especially when the conflict is protracted. The alternative of a negotiated settlement, where civil discussions are held, may take longer but is likely to assist warring parties to understand one another and find long-term solutions to challenges. In this way future conflicts are likely to be avoided or solved more quickly on account of the relationships formed among the negotiators.

“War and Guns will never accomplish agendas”
Prof Ibrahim Ghandour - 12 November 2014, Sudan

In the security and strategy realm it is understood that conflict is a permanent feature of our lives; therefore it is something we will always have to live with. For this reason, others have suggested that instead of studying military tactics the emphasis should be on studying peace because it is important for stability and the general prosperity of nations. It is everyone’s desire to live in a secure environment and in harmony with one’s neighbours. However, the powerful usually dictate the terms governing how people should lead their lives. This can result in conflict.

Most realists believe that national power must be employed in pursuit of the national interest. Some though, believe that realism cannot be applied dogmatically, but should be subject to analysis and the acquisition of the relevant facts. The latter makes one wonder if realism is taken seriously by world powers.

Is diversity necessary for a relatively peaceful world? I would argue that it is part of our lives and as such we cannot do away with it. Therefore, for people across the globe to live in harmony with one another, we need to be open-minded, learn about our different backgrounds and tolerate one another in the process of sharing our diverse cultures. This would ensure that security issues that arise from not understanding one another and later resorting to violence are minimised. Differences, like conflict, are a permanent feature of the world we live in. Our different backgrounds should not be the reason for animosity but an opportunity to move in unison, enjoy security and prosper together!

*The article was written while the author was on a Foreign Learning Opportunity in Tanzania.*
SA Military Health Service
increasing health awareness

Article and photos by
Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela

The Armscor Military Medical Centre, in a joint effort with 68 Air School and the Personnel Service School, recently organised an outreach programme in Soshanguve at the K.T. Motubatsi Hall. Elderly people were invited to the hall for medical screening that included hypertension, blood glucose testing, HIV testing.

The three centres also heeded the call to send the message of World Hypertension Day. The objective of this day is to communicate to the public the importance of knowing about hypertension and its serious medical complications by providing information on prevention, detection and treatment.

The Nursing Area Manager, Maj Evelyn Baloyi, said they had followed the health calendar in collaboration with the Department of Health. She said the Nursing Department of the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) had aligned their programmes with the health calendar.

Maj Baloyi said the idea of presenting an outreach programme in communities create awareness regarding the services of the SAMHS. She said people would be able to identify the SAMHS which offers health services to soldiers. She said: “The idea of doing an outreach programme came about when we did some brainstorming. We felt that it was better to go to communities and educate them about the work of the SANDF, especially in regard to the SAMHS capability.”

She added: “It is the first time we have presented an outreach programme as we mostly work in units. So we chose to extend our service to communities to touch their lives and make a difference.”

Maj Baloyi was impressed with the reception and the attitude of the community members towards her staff. She said that they were positive about the process and came in large numbers. She indicated that the local clinic was also supportive of the programme and allowed them to refer some of the people who were screened.

She said: “The three sickbays have collaborated in the campaign and have received support from the local clinic. We also got some sponsorship from a Spar supermarket; in addition staff members from the sickbays have contributed money to buy groceries and other items for this outreach programme.”

A clinical associate at 68 Air School Sickbay, Lt Mpho Kanono, mentioned that as medical professionals they had been given a mandate by the Department of Health so that medical institutions could organise outreach programmes to interact with communities and give inputs on health education.

Lt Kanono said: “As clinical associates, who are part of this Medical Task Team, we work professionally with nurses and doctors. Personally I think it is good to assist communities by presenting outreach programmes that give the necessary support.”

Lt Kanono felt that it was better to visit people in their communities because it is the place where medical professionals can identify problems and illnesses. He believes that when a person reports sick to a clinic or a hospital, it could be that such a person has been sick for some time, but has been unaware of it. He said that it was encouraging to see people responding positively to the programme and that they were therefore taking their well-being seriously. He also mentioned that people came in considerable numbers and this gave SAMHS an indication that it was needed.

Lt Kanono said: “As health professionals we also need to concentrate on other issues such as social development and social well-being to deal with some of the problems communities have. We also need to play our part in assisting communities to deal with their challenges.”
“We believe in heroes. We keep your spirit alive”

The SANDF Education Trust


The main objective of the SANDF Education Trust is to support the education needs of the dependants of the following persons:

- SANDF members killed or severely injured subsequent to April 1994, while on official duty.

- Civilian members of the Department of Defence (DOD) killed or severely injured subsequent to 27 April 1994, while deployed during official SANDF operation.

- Citizens of the Republic of South Africa killed or injured subsequent to 27 April 1994, during official SANDF operations provided that such citizens are not engaged in activities opposing the SANDF.

The SANDF Education Trust is funded through donations and contributions received from the private sector and international business enterprises. Ongoing fund raising initiatives are in place, and the SANDF welcomes all contributions.

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Together we move South Africa Forward
What is fatty liver disease?

Healthcare update from the desk of Dr Joe Column, Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS)

Visuals courtesy FattyLiver.GiCare.com

Fatty liver disease is one of the most widespread types of liver disease. If not closely monitored and treated, it may sometimes lead to serious health problems. In certain people the excessive fat is, however, not necessarily serious, particularly if it does not result in inflammation of the liver or other damage to the liver. As in the case of all healthcare issues, it is important to keep a watchful eye on the condition and to seek medical advice and treatment when necessary.

Fatty liver disease essentially describes a condition whereby fat builds up in the cells surrounding the liver. This condition generally occurs in two different forms, namely alcoholic and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. It is imperative that patients who have developed the condition because of excessive alcohol consumption refrain from drinking alcohol at once.

Non-alcoholic liver disease is more common among patients who are middle-aged, overweight and inactive. These individuals may also have additional healthcare risk factors such as high cholesterol, diabetes or insulin resistance, which is a pre-diabetic condition.

Additional causes of fatty liver disease could typically include the use of certain medicines, viral hepatitis, inherited liver disease, rapid weight loss or malnutrition.

How do you treat fatty liver disease?

There is no specific treatment for non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, but by making a few important changes to your lifestyle the amount of fat in the liver can be reduced significantly. The best way to reduce the fat surrounding the liver is to shed a few kilograms in a healthy and controlled manner.

Focus on eating a healthy diet since all foods that are eaten, both good and bad, will impact your health. Ask your doctor or dietician for an eating plan that is right for you if you have not already done so.

Here are a few typical pointers that will improve your overall health and well-being:

• Reduce the amount of unhealthy fats consumed
• Increase fibre intake
• Include fresh fruit and vegetables in the diet
• Drink lots of water
• Reduce the amount of salt and sugar used
• Eat small, regular meals throughout the day
• Think before you eat and drink

Exercise is also a great way to improve your health and help you lose excess weight. Here are a few tips to get you started:

• Begin with 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity exercise at least three to five times a week and then move on to more vigorous physical activity once you start feeling fitter and stronger. If you have an underlying cardiac condition or other risk factors, you should consult a health professional before embarking on an exercise programme.

• Choose a variety of activities you enjoy so that you do not get bored.

• Weight loss is not only about cardiovascular exercise. Remember to include some weight training or muscle strengthening activity into your exercise plan at least twice a week.
Life after a transplant

By F Sgt Vivian de Klerk, Communication Operator at Joint Tactical Headquarters Western Cape

Photo by Ms Lindie Kleinhaus

At the age of 23 I was diagnosed with a very rare, chronic and debilitating bone marrow disease, called Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria (PNH). This disease is a genetically acquired disease (meaning that there were a mutation in my genes, but I did not inherit it from my parents). The disease left me very tired due to the fact that my red blood cells had a short lifespan and I had to rely on regular blood transfusions to keep me alive. I was also at risk of internal bleeding and blood clots due to my dysfunctional platelets. In short – my blood was not doing what it was designed to do owing to a missing gene.

After being diagnosed with the disease I received medical care at 2 Military Hospital in Wynberg and was later referred to Prof Peter Jacobs at Constantia MediClinic Bone Marrow Transplant Unit. Prof Jacobs and his team were among the most experienced professionals in the field of haematology and he soon realised that I urgently needed a bone marrow transplant. Although there was only a small chance of this saving my life it was the only option. There was no other cure for PNH. The search for a matching donor was under way.

Finding a donor proved to be easier said than done. There were no matching donors on the South African Bone Marrow Registry and none of my family members were a match. My chances of finding a matching donor was 1 in 100 000. Weeks became months and months became almost three years. While waiting I received regular blood and platelet transfusions at 2 Military Hospital. The doctors and nursing staff at 2 Military Hospital went out of their way to assist me while waiting for my transplant. In this time I truly saw how dedicated some of the SAMHS personnel were.

Then, at the end of 2010, I received the news that would change my life: I had a possible matching donor in Germany. I was scheduled to have my transplant on 13 January 2011. After having intense chemotherapy to eradicate my own unhealthy bone marrow I got injected with the donors stem cells. The stem cells was harvested the day before in Germany and flown to Cape Town where it arrived safely on 13 January 2011.

Everyone hoped and prayed that the stem cells would start growing and, after a mere seven days Prof Jacobs came into my room and told me that I could go home the following day. He could not believe how fast the donor cells have been engrafted and that my blood results showed a spike in the right direction. The transplant was a success. One of the nursing staff came into my room and said “God, you are amazing!” I replied: “No, God is amazing!” This was truly a miracle that was overseen by a Higher Hand and very dedicated medical professionals.

Soon after my transplant I started to do light exercises again. I also kept to a healthy diet. After a few months I was able to return to work at Joint Tactical Headquarters Western Cape as a communication operator in the Maritime Air Radio Organisation. In 2012 I passed my first military fitness test after the transplant. Slowly but surely I was able to start taking part in sport again and decided to join the Simon’s Town Military Cycling Club. This served as an easy way to keep fit and the opportunity to do sport on Wednesdays motivated me to get on my mountain bike and enjoy sport with other SA National Defence Force (SANDF) members.

In 2014 I participated in the South African Transplant Games that took place in Cape Town. These games are open to all athletes who have had a lifesaving organ transplant. I entered the cycling event as well as the javelin, long jump and the 1500m run. It was really humbling to compete with other athletes who had also had transplants. There was a shared feeling of admiration between the athletes. I knew that the person next to me went through a lot just to be there.

I knew we were there because someone else’s heart or lungs or stem cells were keeping us alive. We were there to compete in sport, but most of all we were there to celebrate the gift of life. I managed to qualify for the World Transplant Games in Argentina in 2015 and went on to compete with transplant athletes from across the world and win medals in the cycling, javelin, ball throw, long jump and 4 x 100m relay events. Currently I am the transplant world record holder in the javelin for women age 30-34.

Being selected for the South African Transplant Team and receiving Senior Protea Colours was definitely one of the highlights after my transplant. It was an honour to represent my country on an international stage. I was proud to see how well managed Team South Africa was and how hard everyone worked to raise awareness for organ donation.

Being an athlete in the SA Transplant Team held more responsibility than just competing in a sporting code; it was about showing gratitude towards my donor and the donor family and encouraging people to become organ donors. It is also a way to encourage other organ recipients to live a healthy life after a transplant. It proves that nothing is impossible after a transplant! Being healthy and alive is truly a very special gift.

*Readers who would like to know more about becoming an organ or stem cell donor can visit the following websites:

The Organ Donor Foundation: www.odf.org.za

The Sunflower Fund: www.sunflowerfund.org.za

South African Transplant Sports Association: www.transplantsports.org.za
The Chief of the SA Army leads the SA Army fitness drive from the front

By Lt Marumo Machete, SA Army Corporate Communication
Photos by Sgt Chené Kruger and L Bdr Refilwe Sebopa

The Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Lindile Yam, added another dimension to the aphorism - a healthy body houses a healthy mind - when he reaffirmed fitness as a vital precondition for the attainment of combat readiness in the military.

Lt Gen Yam shared his sentiments on the relationship between physical fitness and combat readiness following his successful completion of a grueling fitness test recently done at the SA Army Headquarters in Pretoria. The standard senior male category fitness test undertaken by the Chief of the SA Army served as a stern reminder to all members of the country’s largest force component that not even its most senior commanders were exempted from completing their battery test.

By successfully completing his fitness evaluation, Lt Gen Yam effectively set the pace for all SA Army members to follow suit. He quipped that he cannot expect his soldiers to undergo an activity that he is unable to complete. Lt Gen Yam called on all SA Army members to honour their obligation to fitness and strive to make a difference whenever their services are required.

Lt Gen Yam added: “I call on the leader group and those on the most senior echelons of command to make time for physical training and ensure they comply and lead from the front.”

The Chief of the SA Army said that he was well aware of the heavily weighing responsibility on them to run their directorates, formations, brigades and sections, but emphasised that: “We have no option, but to do our bit when it comes to fitness and lead by example”.

He humbly submitted to instructions from Physical Training, Sport and Recreation (PTSR) officers from Directorate Force Preparation as a way to lead his forces from the front and inculcate a culture of healthy living and equality of all members in the application of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) policies.

Lt Gen Yam said: “I have always taken my fitness test despite my challenging work schedule, but I have also regretfully missed some especially in my senior level. Fitness tests are engrained within PTSR and Force Preparation policies in the SANDF and we have a responsibility to oblige.”

RIGHT: The Chief of the SA Army (front left), Lt Gen Lindile Yam, sweating it out during his 2.4km run during the SA Army HQ fitness test.

BELOW: The Chief Director Army Force Preparation, Maj Gen Nontobeko Mpaxa, tackles the dreaded sit-ups as part of her fitness test.
Through an intricate blend of aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength and power exercises, SO1 PTSR Force Preparation, Lt Col Louis Janeke, Captains Phuthi Mokoele and Marco van Rooyen and Gunner Vincent Ringane facilitated the Chief of the SA Army’s fitness evaluation and he acquitted himself well.

Lt Gen Yam said: “It is the wish and instruction of the Chief of the SANDF that PTSR policy execution becomes a duty of each Chief of Service and Division because it plays a critical role in force preparation. As the Chief of the SA Army, I am not excluded from that instruction and so is the entire leadership of the SA Army.”

The Chief of the SA Army is passionate about healthy living and leading an active lifestyle that encompasses regular exercises. He is adamant that with the right attitude and example from Army commanders, men and women in uniform will embrace physical training without any form of resistance.

It would appear that senior commanders of the SA Army are heeding the Chief of the SA Army’s call, with the Deputy Chief of the SA Army, Maj Gen Lawrence Smith, also having undergone his fitness test. The Chief Director Army Force Preparation, Maj Gen Nontobeko Mpaxa, is also a regular on the fitness turf and has completed the test with her directorate.

Lt Gen Yam said: “I am putting my fist on the table and urging that all SA Army members undergo their fitness tests and maintain a healthy lifestyle, and the leadership of our organisation will be at the forefront. These shall do, over and above our force preparation obligations, as a way of enhancing wellness of our members and cut down on spiraling medical costs that an inactive lifestyle imposes.

“I want to command an army where physical training, sport and recreation are not scorned upon. I want officers and soldiers to take up physical training without being forced because that would be a sure sign of character that defies laziness of the body and mind. An SA Army soldier should challenge himself/herself because not only will that benefit us in operations, but it also has the potential to spill over to other areas.

A soldier that always challenges himself/herself is able to take up small and big obstacles timely and with a great sense of responsiveness, innovation and precision.

“When you are fit, your reflexes are very responsive. It often saves you from unnecessary injuries and comes in handy when you are cornered, more so in battle.”

Still on the fitness front, the Chief Director Army Force Preparation sent out an open invitation to all SA Army members to put their bodies to the test and take part in the upcoming 10th SA Army Fittest Soldier Competition in Potchefstroom from 4 to 8 September 2016.

Maj Gen Mpaxa, a seasoned Fittest Soldier entrant, indicated that she was emboldened by the Chief of the SA Army’s initiative to lead the rally towards overall fitness from the front. She pledged that her directorate, as lead directorate mandated for force preparation, will champion Lt Gen Yam’s exemplary drive to get all soldiers to never neglect their fitness responsibilities, regardless of the positions they occupy in the hierarchy of the organisation.
Key factors for a good Comrades Marathon run

Article and photos by Lt Col Thérèsé Doman, Defence Corporate Communication, SO1 Visits and Events

 Altogether 133 SA National Defence Force (SANDF) athletes consisting of 118 male and 15 female athletes participated in the 2016 Comrades Marathon. The first SANDF runner, CPO Nhlanhla Khanyile from the SANDF Athletics Club KwaZulu-Natal, crossed the finishing line in a time of 06:40:55 and the overall 105th position and 79th position in the open age category. Wow! More than an hour faster than last year when he was also the first SANDF runner. Last year his time was 07:42:33 and he was in the overall 484th position and 129th in the veterans age group (40-49).

Capt Nokholo Hlezupondo from the SANDF Athletics Club Eastern Cape was for the third consecutive year the first SANDF woman to finish. She completed the race in a time of 07:57:36 and the overall 48th position and 33rd position in the open age category. She also improved tremendously on her time at the 2015 Comrades Marathon, which she had completed in a time of 08:38:56 and as overall 54th among women runners.

This year the Chairperson of the SANDF Road Running Association, Lt Col Chris Steyn from the SANDF Athletics Club Pretoria, completed his 25th Consecutive Comrades Marathon.

Once an athlete has participated in the Comrades Marathon, you would know this is not an easy roller coaster ride. It is tough and they know what the true sense of camaraderie is all about; it is but one of the important keys to successfully complete The Ultimate Human Race. The Comrades Marathon has the power to transform, inspire and motivate athletes, quite unlike any other race.

Soldiers who have wondered whether they should participate in the 2017 Comrades Marathon, should be aware that the minimum requirement to qualify is to complete at least a marathon, i.e. 42.2km, between 1 August 2016 and 1 May 2017 in a minimum qualifying time of 3 hours and a maximum qualifying time of 5 hours.

It is advisable to join a registered marathon or athletics club and obtain an Athletics South Africa license number. Once you have made the decision to participate, the long journey to be well prepared for the first attempt starts.

The 2017 Comrades Marathon will be an up–run from Durban to Pietermaritzburg. Thus athletes have to confront the big five hills: Cowies Hill, Fields Hill, Botha’s Hill, Inchanga and Polly Shorts. It is therefore important to prepare thoroughly for these hills by means of hill training sessions.

The focus of the training should be on the legs, gluteals,
lower abdominals and core. Gym work and cross-training are highly recommended for strengthening the body and to minimise the impact of the increased training load on the road.

A variety of training programmes are freely available on the official Comrades Marathon website: www.comrades.com. The following guide could be used by a novice to select the appropriate training programme according to the athlete’s marathon and half-marathon times:

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<td>01:40 min</td>
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<td>5 hours</td>
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**Keys to the road of Comrades’ success**

Thorough preparation is one of the key factors for a good Comrades Marathon run. Athletes should ensure that their training is consistent and thorough by keeping the following suggested guidelines in mind while training in preparation for the big race day:

**Planning**

- The best training programme should be selected as indicated in the table above.
- The selected training programme should fit in with your unique daily and weekly schedule.
- Plan what to drink and eat enroute by utilising the strategy in long runs and qualifying races.

**Get into a routine**

- Eating habits should not be altered just before or during the race day.
- Trying out new energy gels or snack bars should be tested a few months in advance to know how your body will react to these.
- Tried and tested running shoes should rather be used. To prevent injury or blisters, it is advisable not to start using a new pair of running shoes too close to race day, or even worse, starting to use it on race day itself.
- Test your running gear such as socks, anti-chafe cream, sunscreen, sunglasses, heart rate straps and accessories that might cause irritation or chafing during training sessions to ensure that you are comfortable with them.

**Things to consider**

- Refrain from overtraining or forced mileage when you are tired or injured. As the Comrades Marathon legend Bruce Fordyce stated: “It is better to go to Comrades slightly undertrained and slightly overweight than over-trained and underweight”.
- Aches and pains before or after a run should usually be dealt with in the comfort of your home with sufficient rest, stretching and ice.
- Most running injuries occur over a period of time; it is important for an athlete to recognise when treatment is required and take time off to recover in time.

**Be wise**

- It is advisable rather to avoid sporting activities that have the potential to inflict injury, such as soccer, five-a-side or touch rugby.
- Stay focused, keep your ultimate goal in mind – participation in the Comrades Marathon - and do not race every time you run.
- Do not strain yourself by running in pain in order to reach the kilometres you have set as a target.
- Plan your race, break the route into sections, and calculate where you must be at what time.
- Be wise and run smart in order to have a good start at the Ultimate Human Race – Comrades Marathon (2017).
SANDF Volleyball National Team prepares for the Inter-provincial Volleyball Tournament

Article and photo by Lt Col Joao Amorim, SANDF Volleyball Director Marketing

The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Volleyball Association recently arranged for a training camp for the SANDF Team at the old Air Force Gymnasium in Valhalla to prepare the teams for the upcoming Inter-provincial Tournament (IPT).

The IPT is the most important volleyball tournament played in South Africa under the umbrella of the South Africa Sport Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC). Altogether 37 athletes attended the training camp.

The training camp was divided into several different components. The first was circuit training, which entails speed, agility and strengthening, individual and team drills. The training camp also served the new selected players to acclimatise themselves and adapt to new team mates and systems, while for the younger players it served as a period of evaluation and for the veterans was a time to get back into form. While the players were having a tough time on court about 20 SANDF volleyball members were also busy undergoing the Volleyball South Africa (VSA) Level 1 Coaching Course which was presented by Mr Size Vardhan. Mr Vardhan has a certificate in international coaching excellence from the University of Delaware in the United States. He is the Chairperson of the SA Universities Volleyball Association and a board member of Volleyball South Africa.

The Level 1 Coaching Course is the first level of coaching for all volleyball coaches in South Africa.

The executive committee and the provincial chairpersons also met over the same period at the old Air Force Gymnasium, while the training camp and the coaching course was going on to discuss issues regarding SANDF Volleyball and to prepare for the IPTs, as the SANDF will be hosting the IPTs soon in Bloemfontein; the SANDF Volleyball Championship will be held in Pretoria.

The SANDF Volleyball Association Chairperson, Lt Col Malesela Kwakwa, would like to thank all the athletes, coaches, members of the executive committee and the Provincial Chairpersons, all Services Chairpersons and Mr Vardhan for their support during the training camp and like to remind the national players to keep themselves mentally and physically fit and not wait for the training camp in order to be fit.

Learners on the Volleyball South Africa Level 1 Coaching Course. (Front, fourth from left: Mr Size Vardhan who has a certificate in international coaching excellence from the University of Delaware in the United States.)
2 Military Hospital Biggest Loser Competition - a winner!

By Maj Amora Taljaard, Corporate Communication 2 Military Hospital
Photo by S Sgt Basil Pfister

In 2013 the Biokinetics Department of 2 Military Hospital launched the Biggest Loser Competition, the brainchild of the Officer Commanding, Col Iqram Bux. This project was launched by the Biokinetics Department of 2 Military Hospital in 2013. It took baby steps at first, but was received with overwhelming support and gained momentum every year after that!

Combat readiness is an imperative not only in the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) but also in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and in particular at 2 Military Hospital. By enrolling unit members in the 2 Military Hospital Biggest Loser Competition, the coordinators aim to support precisely that.

Coordinating this project is the Biokinetics Department with Lt Col Carin Diamond as Head of Department, supported by the Departments of Psychology, Dietetics and Physical Training Sports and Recreation (PTSR). Biokineticist coordinators for the project are appointed on an annual rotational basis. Participants are from 2 Military Hospital, Area Military Health Unit Western Cape and the Military Police in Wynberg Military Base, Wynberg, South African Ship (SAS) WINGFIELD and SAS YOUNGSFIELD. A record number of 96 participants registered in 2015. The competition takes place from July/August to December every year when winners of the different categories are announced at a prize-giving ceremony.

The launch of the competition in 2015 took on the format of a mass exercise for new participants. A photo was taken of every participant with a big poster portraying the desired weight loss. Every year a different theme is adopted which is incorporated into the exercise, diet and workshop content. It is expected that by the end of the project participants should have gained practical knowledge to adopt the theme into their daily lifestyle. The theme for 2013 was “Sit less and move more”, while that for 2014 was “You are the missing link” and 2015 was “Creating healthy habits”. Obedience and mastering of the various themes improves the overall healthy psychological and physiological functioning of an individual.

Each participant has to undergo a full Biokinetics Assessment in which anthropometry measurements, weight, body fat, blood pressure and bodily values are measured. Further assessments are done at the end of the project.

Various exercise programmes are introduced, e.g. gym exercises, group exercise, hydro exercise sessions, walking, running and boot camps. As the instructors follow a holistic approach, weekly briefings by Dietetics and Psychology are also presented to the participants.

The Biokinetics Department facilitates three exercise sessions per week with the focus on cardiovascular, endurance and strength training to assist in overall weight loss. The Dietetics Department facilitates education on healthy eating habits and practical ways of shopping, PTSR communicates weekly Phakamisa walking, running and aerobics sessions. The Psychology Department advocates psychological well-being and positive behavioural change.

The workshop is presented to promote healthy living through behavioural change, nutrition and physical activity and all participants are invited.

It also aims at assisting employees to make a shift towards sustainable self-care by initiating the process of becoming self-aware. The aim of this workshop is to equip employees with the tools and knowledge to assist them to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviours in their daily lives and to prevent a relapse.

After the final assessment of each participant has been recorded winners are announced, followed by a prize-giving ceremony. The winner of the competition receives a week long holiday at a venue of his or her choice sponsored by the SAMHS Fund.

The winners of the last three years were Ms Bernadette Petersen in 2013, Ms Sibongile Swartbooi in 2014 and Sgt Leona Benjamin in 2015.
Let the chains fall and empower women

By Chaplain Joseph Mara, 
Fleet Command Chaplain in Simon’s Town

The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands, the foolish one tears hers down (Proverbs 14:1). A woman of strength and character does not consider herself like an actor who plays a certain role. A woman of valour lives the role she plays so that she can add and get value. There are two basic roles that a woman lives or plays. And these are, being a wife and or a mother.

However, due to circumstances and situations known and unknown to us, there is a growing number of single women within our communities. The high rate of divorce increases this number of single people. This is something that has potential to impact negatively on women and their attempt to correct the past wrongs and imbalances.

The battle of the statuses: united state versus free state women

There is an ever increasing conflict between the united state women and the free state women. In other words, women within the united state of marriage views with suspicion those that find themselves in a free state of marriage. For as long as the squabbles, suspicions and fighting between the women as mentioned above continues, the course of women will not be advanced any further than it has been thus far. The Bible mentions the story of two women that had a struggle over a marriage. The women concerned are Rachel and Leah (Gen 29:15-30:24). It is not good to be so desperate for a marriage relationship that you will be willing to do anything even if it means you collude with your father to double cross your younger sibling. That is exactly what Leah did with the help of her father, Laban.

The challenge of the P-H-D Syndrome

The age-old challenge of power struggle that has existed within males is slowly raising its ugly head among working women. It is commonly called the Pull Her Down or P-H-D Syndrome. Instead of supporting each other within the male-dominated work environment, women work against other. The gossips and back-biting of another woman who is occupying a key position does not help her.

Instead, she becomes side-lined and isolated. No wonder some of these women in top positions tend not to fight for women. How could you fight for people that are negative and destructive to you? The two women missionaries, Eudias and Syntyche, worked with the Apostle Paul in preaching the Gospel. Unfortunately, the said women had such a disagreement among them that the veteran preacher had to ask the Philippian church to help them (Philip 4:2-3). When women do not have a common goal they tend to fall victim to the P-H-D Syndrome.

Good friends and mentorship

The kinds of friends you keep can make or break you. A woman that spends her time and energy with the gossipers, backstabbers and goalless friends, will get nowhere life. The Bible has few examples of friendship and mentorship among women. Ruth had Naomi, her mother-in-law, as a mentor.

But Ruth answered: “Don’t ask me to leave you! Let me go with you. “Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Wherever you die, I will die, and that is where I will be buried. May the LORD’s worst punishment come upon me if I let anything but death separates me from you!” When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she said nothing more (Ruth 1:16-18).

Mary, the mother of our Lord, had a good relationship with the elderly Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist (Luke 1:39-45). Mentorship within the sisterhood needs to increase if we are to see powerful generation rising and taking up the baton from the women of 1950s. Sadly, in our time, the younger generation does not seem to value having the older women or mamas around them.

Affirm yourself without sacrificing your uniqueness

In attempting to correct the wrongs of the past, women should be careful that they do not lose their uniqueness as women. Paul uses an athletic metaphor and writes: Surely you know that many runners take part in a race, but only one of them wins the prize. Run, then, in such a way as to win the prize (1 Cor 9:24). Working within the male-dominated world should not compel you to lose your femininity.

The truth is you are a woman. You can think like a man but, please, do not act like one. That magical feminine touch should be felt when a woman is in charge. Be a leader at work but please do not forget to be a home-maker and mother/wife (Ephesians 5:22-24).

Being decisive when it matters

There are situations that may require that a woman must take a decisive step. There comes a time when you have to stand up and do something that, under normal circumstances, you may choose to avoid. That decision that you take will either make or break you or your family. Abigail took a timeous decision that saved her family against David’s men that were instructed to destroy it due to the foolishness of her hubby. You know your man and the best way to help him and make up for what he lacks.

In the New Testament we read of a woman who had a severe bleeding for twelve years. Due to her sickness she was ceremonially unclean and was not supposed to be in a public place. Therefore, by touching Jesus she could have been stoned to death. Her brave decision was rewarded when she was healed completely (Luke 8:42-48).

What is that one act that you have been hesitating to do? Let the chains fall off as you claim your rightful spot in the society, woman of valour and character.
2 Military Hospital Biokinetics Centre scenic walk with Cardiac and Diabetic clinic patients

By Maj Faiqah Davids, Biokinetics Centre 2 Military Hospital

Photo by Maj Gharlieb Davids

Combining cardiac rehabilitation and exercise with amazing scenery and beautiful weather in the Cape Point Nature Reserve was an excellent initiative by the 2 Military Hospital Biokinetics staff. Approximately 35 patients and staff recently participated in the event and walked along the scenic beaches of the Cape Point Nature Reserve. The intensity of the walk and terrain were counterbalanced by the amazing beauty and scenery of the nature reserve.

The participants who attended the scenic walk regularly attend supervised exercise classes at 2 Military Hospital Biokinetics Centre, just one of many services offered to the military community.

To vary the weekly exercise class routine, the scenic walk provided an excellent opportunity to soak up outdoor adventure and at the same time benefit from cardiovascular exercise. Regular exercise for cardiac related patients and lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure and elevated cholesterol levels provide immense benefit to sufferers.

The walk was quite entertaining as patients anticipated the baboons joining but to no avail and the day ended with a variety of delicious snacks on picnic blankets and chairs were participants soaked up the Cape sun to the sound and sight of the waves breaking against the rocks. As one of the patients described the walk: “It was just – Wow! - I enjoyed the session”.

A big “thank you” needs to be conveyed to all the patients who participated, including the staff and support staff of this amazing patient outdoor session, namely Col Iqram Bux, the Officer Commanding 2 Military Hospital, CPO Keith Linderoth, 2 Military Hospital support staff and Area Military Health Unit (AMHU) Western Cape for medical support and transportation.

2 Military Hospital Biokinetics staff and Cardiac and Diabetic clinic patients at the Cape Point Nature Reserve.
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