

The Shamrock
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December 2014
Volume 13

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The Shamrock



The official newsletter of the SA Irish Regiment

November: Remembrance Month



By Lt Col. John McCrae (1892-1918),

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

In Flanders Fields the poppies blow
 Between the crosses, row on row
 That marked our places, and in the sky
 ... The larks, still bravely singing, fly.

Scarce heard amid the guns below
 We are the Dead. Short days ago
 We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
 Loved and were loved,
 And now we lie
 In Flanders Fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;
 To you from failing hands we throw
 The torch: be yours to hold it high.

If ye break faith with us who die
 We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
 In Flanders Fields.

Editors Note:

"In Flanders Fields" is one of the most notable poems written during World War I, created in the form of a French rondeau. It has been called "the most popular poem" produced during that period.

Canadian physician and Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae is popularly believed to have written it on 3 May 1915, after he witnessed the death of his friend, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, 22 years old, the day before.

The poem was first published on 8 December of that year in the London-based magazine Punch.

Since then the poem and the poppy has become symbols of remembering the terrible carnage of World War 1 and all wars since then.

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November: Remembrance Month. Continued...

By: *The editor*

11 November: Remembrance day. November seems to be the month of anniversaries and remembrances - particularly the date 11/11 which has such significance for all those that has ever worn a uniform. The symbol of the Poppy is to be seen everywhere - on lapel badges, on the television and on the electronic media as people change their Facebook profiles to the poppy.

Remembrance Day (also known as Poppy Day or Armistice Day) is a memorial day observed in most Commonwealth countries since the end of World War I to remember the members of their armed forces who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

Remembrance Day is observed on the 11th of November to recall the end of hostilities of World War I on that date in 1918.

Hostilities formally ended "at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month," in accordance with the Armistice, signed by representatives of Germany and the Entente between 5:12 and 5:20 that morning. Although signed at approximate 5:20 the armistice only came into effect at 11:00 in order to give all the Armies enough time to inform their frontline units of the cease fire.

The date of 11h00 on 11 November 1918 has become synonymous with remembrance and 2 minutes silence is usually observed at 11h00 on 11 November in remembrance of all fallen soldiers of all wars. In South Africa memorial parades are held on the Sunday closest to 11 November.

The Armistice of 1918 was signed in the forest of Compiègne, in dining car 2419 of the Orient Express. It was kept there as a museum until it was re-used by the Germans in 1940 for the signing of the French surrender to the Germans.

It was destroyed by SS troops in 1945 to prevent its capture by the Allies.

Significance of the poppy:

The area of Flanders consists of almost the whole Western part of Belgium. It saw some of the heaviest and bloodiest battles of the terrible First World War, between 1914 and 1918. There was complete devastation as whole towns, roads, farms and all natural life simply disappeared into a sea of mud and became a huge and muddy graveyard.

The only living thing that survived this sea of mud was the poppy. Poppies only germinate and flower in disturbed soil, and the colourful flowering of the poppies with the advent of the warm spring weather would bring some small joy to those still alive among the carnage. The poem - "In Flanders Fields" originates from this.

Flanders is also the only area on earth where red poppies grow. All other poppies in the rest of the world are white. According to legend it is the blood of all the soldiers that coloured the poppies red in this specific area. As such the red poppy has become the symbol of fallen soldiers.

"At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them"

oOo

November: Remembrance Month. Continued... SA Irish Regiment Roll of Honour

By: *The editor*

SA Irish Roll of Honour

The Officers and men whose names are herein recorded were killed in action or died from wounds received in service either with the Regiment or during their period as Prisoners of War.

WORLD WAR 1: 1914 TO 1918

- PTE. M. BERRY
- PTE. G.T.G. CLARK
- PTE. R.F. HIND
- PTE. J. MAHON

WORLD WAR 2: 1939 TO 1945

- MAJ. A.W. WARD-CLARE
- CAPT. J. FITZGERALD
- CAPT. H.W. HARRIS
- CAPT. S.G. POOLEY
- LT. R.P. DENNY
- LT. T.W. MEGAW
- WOII. J.H. CLOETE
- S/ SGT. D.J. QUIGLEY
- SGT. H.D.R. BERRY
- SGT. F.J. BOULTER
- SGT. W.B. DE BEER
- SGT. J.A. MAC DONALD
- SGT. F.C. MURPHY
- CPL. W.J. CASEY
- CPL. B.C. DOYLE
- CPL. W.B. GILLESPIE
- CPL. H.G.F. HUMPHREY
- CPL. R.A. KINNING
- CPL. R.L. LOVELACE
- CPL. N. ROSENTHAL
- CPL. V.V. VAN DER RIET
- CPL. J.A. VAN DER WALT
- CPL. J. WINLOCK
- L/CPL. N.P. BURL
- L/CPL. G.W. DUFFIELD
- L/CPL. A.A. DUTOIT
- L/CPL. S.B. LAWLOR
- L/CPL. L.J. MANLEY
- L/CPL. A. MC MAHON
- L/CPL. G.D. PITCHFORD
- L/CPL. M.E. RATHBONE
- L/CPL. P.T. RAYNOR
- L/CPL. J. REILLY
- L/CPL. G.F. WATSON
- L/CPL. B. WINTERBACH
- PTE. J.P. BRESLER
- PTE. E.R. BROWNE
- PTE. A.R. CAMPBELL
- PTE. R.M. COCKINGS
- PTE. G.H. (PIPER) COHEN
- PTE. G.W. COLLINS
- PTE. D.J. CONRADIE
- PTE. J.E. COPPIEGER
- PTE. R.C. DUKE
- PTE. E. GILLARD
- PTE. W. GILLET
- PTE. T.A. GOODWIN
- PTE. J.F. GORDON
- PTE. P.F. GREEN
- PTE. B.C. GREYLING
- PTE. P.J. HARLE
- PTE. O.C. HARMSE
- PTE. L. HOCKLEY
- PTE. R.D. JENNER
- PTE. A. JUDES
- PTE. D. LAHNER
- PTE. R.O. LEACH
- PTE. H.R. LESAR
- PTE. G.X. LYLE-WALSINGHAM

- PTE. W.R. MARLIN
- PTE. J.H.R. (DRUMMER) MILLAR
- PTE. J. MOREIRA
- PTE. F.A.R. OPENSHAW
- PTE. S. ROBERTS
- PTE. P.W. ROOS
- PTE. E.C. SAVAGE
- PTE. A.D. SCHLEISS
- PTE. J.F. SCHUTTE
- PTE. H.H. SMITH
- PTE. H.S. TEAGUE
- PTE. M. TEIXEIRA
- PTE. P.J. WEIBLEN
- PTE. C.H. WHEELER
- PTE. M.W. WILLIAMS
- PTE. A.R. YEEND
- PTE. P.A. (DRUMMER) SWANEPOEL

BORDER WAR: 1966 to 1994

- LT. L. GREYLING
- PTE. M. (DRUMMER) MASON

POST 1994

•By the grace of God no post 1994 war or peacekeeping casualties thus far.



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**SA Irish Regiment
Wall of Remembrance.**

The Officers and men whose names are recorded below have passed away of non-combat and non-operational causes, since 1994 while in service of the Regiment or its Regimental Association. They are remembered by their friends and comrades.

- WO2. J.H. Smith
- CO. J.S. Mofokeng
- Cpl. R.D. Thlale
- Cpl. S.B. Dlamini
- Cpl. J.S. Ndlovu
- L/Cpl. S.P. Hlatshwayo
- Rf. P.J. Hlalele
- Rfn. R.M. Maila
- Rfn. M.D. Mokoena
- Rfn. S. Berana
- Rfn. M.M. Mogodiri
- Rfn. L.M. Moshoma
- Rfn. M.S. Tsotetsi
- Rfn. S.P. Modupi
- Rfn. T.G. Lekatse
- Rfn. S.C. Nkosi
- Rfn. M.M. Mathebula
- Rfn. M.K. Muthwa
- Rfn. S.J. Motaung
- Rfn. M.C. Naka
- Rfn. M. Gumada
- Rfn. P.C. Mtshali
- Rfn. M.V. Khasane
- Rfn. S. Mptsamai
- Rfn. R.J. Nete
- Rfn. S. M. Motloung
- Rfn. B.P. Shezi
- Rfn. T.B. Mareka
- Rfn. M.I. Mosikidi



LEST WE FORGET



From the Editor

From: The Editor

Thank you once again to all our loyal readers for contributions and making this newsletter a success over the past year.

This is a time when we reflect on the year that has passed by, our successes and our failures. It is also a time of hope, with new challenges waiting in the New Year.

On behalf of the Officer Commanding SA Irish Regiment and the editorial staff, I wish everyone a very blessed Christmas and a very prosperous 2015.

Contributions towards "The Shamrock" can also be emailed to irish.regiment@gmail.com

Remember: Newsletters can be downloaded from the internet. Go to www.sairish.webs.com to download Regimental newsletters and copies of the latest SA Soldier magazines in PDF format. You can also listen to the Regimental march on our website.

Our website is now cell phone friendly and you can now visit our website via your cellular phone.
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From the OC's Desk

By: Lt Col. M.A. Bennett

It is with pride that I look upon the successes of the Regiment during the past year. Indeed we have a lot to be proud of especially if you consider what we have done under budgetary constraints.

I congratulate each and everyone involved with these successes, please forgive me if I do not mention names of specific individuals, since you are all too numerous to mention and the newsletter might run out of printing space.

As we approach the end of the year I want to thank all Officers, Warrant Officers, NCOs, men and women of the

Regiment for all their hard work during this year.

On behalf of myself as Officer Commanding and my command staff, I want to wish all the members of the Regiment and their families a very peaceful and blessed Christmas time.

Enjoy your well-deserved rest during the festive season, to prepare for the challenges of 2015.

To those members deployed far away from home, our thoughts are with you. Keep our flag flying high.

I SALUTE you!
- Faugh a Ballagh!
Lt Col. M.A. Bennett
o0o

From the Honorary Colonel

By Col. B. Molefe (Colonel of the Regiment)

Firstly I want to wish everyone a blessed Christmas and very prosperous 2015.

After a very busy year everyone is now preparing to take a well-deserved time-off to spend in the company of their very patient and supportive families, to whom we are extremely grateful for their support of the Regiment and our serving men and women. Without the support of the Regimental family our successes during the year would not have been possible.

With all the challenges of 2014, behind us, we look ahead to 2015 where we will continue the good work of the Regiment.

To the Officers, Warrant Officers, NCOs, men and women of the Regiment, I wish you a blessed, peaceful and enjoyable festive season. I trust that you will have health, wealth, happiness and the time to enjoy these blessings over the festive season.

- Faugh a Ballagh!
Col. B. Molefe
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Regimental Events

By: The Editor

1 November - Leader-Group Table 2 Proficiency Shoot

8 November - Freedom Regiments Parade

9 November - JHB Remembrance Parade – JHB Cenotaph

23 November - Sidi Rezegh Commemoration Parade

29 November - Regimental Association Ball

1 December 2014 - Regimental Birthday (100 Years)
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Did you know?

By: The editor

The "Great Escape" was lead by a South African.

RAF Squadron Leader Roger Bushell (30 August 1910 – 29 March 1944) was born in Springs, in Gauteng, South Africa. He was an Auxiliary Air Force pilot who organised and led the famous escape from the German prisoner of war camp, Stalag Luft III.

He was executed by the Nazi secret police for his part in the escape where, 73 Allied prisoners of war escaped from Stalag Luft III

His escape was used as the basis for the 1963 film The Great Escape. The character played by Richard Attenborough, Roger Bartlett, is modelled on Roger Bushell.

He was posthumously Mentioned in Despatches for his services as a POW. This award was recorded in the London Gazette dated 13 June 1946.

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Farewell to Sid Gibson.

By: *The Pipe Major*

It is with deep sadness that we must announce the passing away of Sid Gibson on 30 August 2014.

Sid was a veteran of the Regiments campaigns in World War 2 and was one of a few that survived the Regiments decimation at Sidi Rezedgh.

A stalwart supporter of the Pipes and Drums and the Regiment the diminutive Sid was always visible at all parades honouring his comrades, despite living in Natal.

He was laid to rest on 5 September in Scottburgh, Natal.

That cheeky smile will be sorely missed. Rest well Sid.



"They shall not grow old as we who are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn,
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them"

Faugh a Ballagh

o0o



From the Pipes and Drums.

By: *The Pipe Major*

S A Irish Regiment Pipes & Drums 2015 Calendar of Events:

On behalf of the pipes and drums I want to wish everyone a blessed Christmas and a very prosperous new year.

The year 2014 was indeed a very busy year with the Centenary of the Regiment and 2015 is looking to be another hectic year.

The calendar of events for 2015 has not been completed yet, so we will update everyone when our full list of events becomes available.

Faugh a Ballagh!

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News from the Regiment – Centenary formal dinner.

Written by the Editor

The SA Irish Regiment celebrated its centenary year in fine style with a centenary formal dinner held at the prestigious Rand Club in the evening of 21 November.

Hosted by its Officer Commanding, Lt.Col. Marius Bennett, the evening was a huge success, being attended by several VIP guests including Major-General Roy Andersen, Chief of Defence Reserves and Major Vance Crow from the Royal Irish Regiment.

Although the members of the Regiment remembered its past 100 years of service to South Africa, it was also reminded of its obligations to future service to the republic as well as the sacrifices of its members currently deployed in the Sudan, as stated by Lt Col. Bennett in his speech to the officers and other ranks in attendance.

In a special, but sombre, ceremony the Regiment also remembered it's fallen as well as those who were not able to attend due to the Regiment's deployment in peace support operations in Africa.

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Guests taking their seats

Guests at the Formal dinner



Maj Gen. Andersen, Chief of Defence reserves with invited guests. Lt. D.W. Chambers (Left) and Major Vance Crow from the Royal Irish Regiment (Right)



Photos by Maj. I.D. Stins, RD



News from the Regiment – SA Soldiers injured in the Sudan

Courtesy of SAPA

Johannesburg - Two SA National Defence Force soldiers deployed as part of a UN/African Union peacekeeping force in Sudan have been wounded in an ambush near their base, the SANDF said on Thursday.

"The injured soldiers were airlifted by helicopter to the hospital in El Fashir shortly after the ambush. The two members are in a critical but stable condition in the UN hospital," said Captain Jaco Theunissen.

He said two other soldiers sustained minor injuries during the ambush.

The ambush took place at approximately 12:35 on Wednesday (29 October) when a section of 4 SA Infantry Battalion, who had to fetch water from a nearby waterhole in Kutum, came under fire from a suspected rebel group.

"Had it not been for the swift reaction, high standard of alertness and vigilance of the SANDF members, it could have been a different story," said the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Andries Matlaila.

Matlaila said the training his troops received in South Africa prior to the deployment, coupled with the equipment they used, played a pivotal role in repelling the attack.

The rebel group, whose intentions were unknown, were forced to withdraw due to the outstanding retaliation by the South Africans, he said.

This attack followed similar attacks earlier on Ethiopian and Tanzanian forces, in the vicinity of Korma, about 20km away from the South African deployments near Kutum base, in the Northern Darfur region of Sudan.

The incident happened at a time when the Sudanese people were preparing for their national elections scheduled for

April or May next year, which the SANDF as part of the peacekeeping force would be required to support.

Editor's Note: A company of the South African Irish regiment is currently serving with 4 SAI on deployment in the Sudan (designated as Delta Company – 4 SAI). Although this article indicates the soldiers involved in the action were soldiers from 4 SAI, a section of the troops involved were in fact SA Irish Soldiers.

Four SA Irish soldiers were wounded. Two critical and two with minor wounds.

The two soldiers from the SA Irish who were critically injured during the attack were Rfn. S.C. Plaatjies and Rfn. T.J. Mathabe who, by all accounts, were the heroes of the day by thwarting the rebel attack with the massive return fire they provided from their LMG (in true fighting Irish spirit), which forced the rebels to abandon their attack.

We salute you and wish those injured a speedy recovery. Faugh a Ballagh!

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News from the SANDF – SANDF doing its best with limited resources to protect South Africa's borders

Written by Kim Helfrich

Just one of the ways the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) is working smarter comes from Operation Corona the border protection tasking which currently sees 13 companies deployed along South Africa's borders with six neighbouring countries.

The Botswana and Namibia borders are the latest to be added to Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe where there is a uniformed presence to prevent contraband goods being bought into South Africa, stop illegal immigrants and prevent cross-border theft of goods ranging from vehicles through livestock.

Stretched as it is financially the SANDF, in the case of Operation Corona under the auspices of the Joint

Operations Division, is exploring all avenues to ensure men and equipment are on the ground and working within the limits of an already tight budget.

This has seen, in the instance of the Louisvale base outside Upington, a company from the Cape Town Highlanders deployed in existing facilities and moving by road to the border with Namibia where foot patrols are conducted.

But things will improve soon according to Lieutenant Colonel Piet Paxton.

"A re-deployable camp system has been obtained from the Navy and will be erected and operational by August 20 at the base providing better accommodation and facilities, including kitchen and ablution, for the soldiers currently there as well as those who will follow them."

The Reserve Force unit's current modus operandi sees Samil trucks used as transport to and from the border. Paxton said plans are well advanced to change this and provide better patrol coverage along the Namibia/South Africa border.

"I cannot release details because it is an operational issue. All I can say are the soldiers doing border protection duty on the Namibia/South Africa border will be able to do their work far better in the not too distant future," he said.

Protection of the Botswana/South Africa border has also become a fait accompli in the current financial cycle. It is being done partially from existing deployments on the Zimbabwe border in Limpopo boosted by a full-time force company based in Mafikeng.

This is also being evaluated with a view to upgrading and improvement, both from the points of view of doing the border protection task better and ensuring accommodation and facilities for deployed soldiers are of a high standard.

Medical care and treatment for soldiers doing border protection is being addressed by a task team that will report to Defence Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula next month on the expanded state of military health in South Africa.

The task team has visited the three military hospitals operated by the SA Military Health Services (SAMHS), a number of sickbays as well as healthcare facilities that form part of Operation Corona and SANDF continental peacekeeping deployments.

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News from the SANDF – SANDF

increasingly relying on Reserve Force members

Courtesy of Defenceweb

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) is relying more and more on part-time soldiers to supplement the regular force in fulfilling its mandate.

This was confirmed by Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, during the recent Budget Vote of the Department of Defence and Military Veterans in Parliament.

She said that the Reserve Force is “providing an increasing proportion of the deployments, both on external peace support operations and for the protection of our borders.”

It is believed the Reserve Force comprises some 22,000 members, of whom 14,668 were called up during the year ending 31 March 2014.

The majority of the members were utilised for internal deployment under Operation Corona, the safeguarding of South Africa’s borders. Specifically, 7 of the 13 companies deployed for border protection are Reserve Force members, or 55% of the forces deployed.

The Reserves also contribute to the manpower required for continental peacekeeping operations, such as the 1,000 South African soldiers serving in the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Apart from the battalion of soldiers, three Rooivalk attack heliports and various Oryx transport helicopters support the mission.

The percentage of Reserve Force members on foreign deployment is believed to be 25% of each battalion, i.e., 1 of 4 companies.

Mapisa-Nqakula noted that the Reserves possessed many skills which either did not exist in the SANDF, or were under-represented. These included skills which were acquired by members who had served in the regular force, but had subsequently resigned.

“There are skills which you need from those who are out there in the Reserves,” she explained. This included medical doctors and pilots.

Of the 14,668 members called up last year, 10,316 served in the SA Army, 1,529 in the SA Military Health Services, the Divisions accounted for 1,409, the Navy another 619 and 495 served in the Air Force. It is not known with whom the balance of 300 members served.

These Reserves Force members served an average of 183 days per person during the year.

Brigadier General Xolani Mabanga, spokesperson for the Defence Force, says that this figure is very much an average.

“Some members are called up for retraining and then for a six month deployment, a limited number are called up for (similar) periods for administrative and training duties whilst others are only called up for as little as one evening a month,” he explained.

When a Reserve Force member is not deployed on operations, the goal for each member is to do twelve days of service/training a year.

Whilst Mapisa-Nqakula says that the revitalisation of the Reserve Force remains a priority, progress has been inhibited by financial constraints.

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News from the

SANDF – Reserves add value to the South African and United States militaries.

Courtesy of Defenceweb

More proof of the value reserves provide to militaries comes from US Africa Command (Africom) which sees mission accomplishment as not being possible without National Guard and Reserve Component members who serve at its Stuttgart headquarters year round.

“The experience and knowledge the men and women of the Guard and Reserve Component bring to the table from their civilian jobs enables Africom to utilise them wherever required. They get the job done, irrespective of unit or assignment,” said Colonel Steve Breen, the Command’s Senior Reserve Advisor.

“The National Guard and Reserve team has made significant impact on missions in the Africom area of responsibility. They achieve this by providing support to key programmes on the African continent.”

In the current financial year more than 70 Reserve personnel supported the command, both at its Stuttgart headquarters and on the ground in Africa, saving money that would otherwise have been spent on contractors. Between fiscal years 2014 and 2015, US reserve and National Guard personnel will have saved \$1.2 million, according to Breen.

The Reserve Component available to Africom represents a variety of operational skillsets, ranging from intelligence analysts and logistics planners through to human resource experts, operations planners and others. They are typically on order for at least 180 days a year, Breen said.

In South Africa the Reserve Force has long been acknowledged as an important part of the country’s overall defence capability with Joe Modise, the first Defence Minister of the democratic era, also supporting it. He said: “It is universally acknowledged that in a

democratic country the citizen in uniform, the part-time soldier, is an indispensable element of a country's defence".

More recently, in September this year, Defence Secretary Dr Sam Gulube said the Reserve Force was "an absolute requirement" and Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula's thoughts on the Reserves include "their sacrifices together with the understanding of their families are greatly appreciated".

The Minister has acknowledged special skills is a problem area the SANDF has to face but the Reserves offer SA Army Chief Lieutenant General Vusi Masondo a pool of accountants, lawyers, engineers and others to call on when expert advice is needed. Similarly, Surgeon General Lieutenant General Aubrey Sedibe has access to Reserve Force medical practitioners and specialists.

Faced as it is on a continuing basic with funding shortages, the cost-effectiveness of the SA Army Reserve is a pointer to better management of particularly the large salaries and wages bill of the SANDF. The Army Reserve consumes only 7.5% of the total landward force salary budget.

The SANDF Reserve Force strength currently stands at 22 000 of which about 15 000 are called up each year for an average of 180 days. This number meets the requirement of milestone one as set down by the Defence Review.

Of the 14 668 reserve members called up during the year ending 31 March 2014, the majority were utilised for internal deployment under Operation Corona, the safeguarding of South Africa's borders. Specifically, 7 of the 13 companies deployed for border protection are Reserve Force members, or 55% of the forces deployed.

The Reserves also contribute to the manpower required for continental peacekeeping operations, such as the 1 000 South African soldiers serving in the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The percentage of Reserve Force members on foreign

deployment is believed to be 25% of each battalion, i.e., 1 of 4 companies.

Of the 14 668 members called up last year, 10 316 served in the SA Army, 1 529 in the SA Military Health Services, the Divisions accounted for 1 409, the Navy another 619 and 495 served in the Air Force. It is not known with whom the balance of 300 members served.

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News from the SANDF – Reserve Force is major contributor to landward deployments.

Written by Kim Helfrich

Reserves are major contributor to landward deployments. An indication of the Reserve Force's importance to the overall South African defence capability comes with the utilisation, for an average of 180 days a year, of more than 70% of its 21 500 active members.

"The Reserves are making significant contributions within all four services of the Department of Defence and increased utilisation has been observed over a period of time," Defence Secretary Dr Sam Gulube told the recent Reserve Force symposium in Midrand.

Evidence of this was the increased use of Reserves in Operation Corona (border protection) and in continental peace support operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan.

"The Reserves play a significant role and they are contributing positively to the successful accomplishment of the mission and mandate of the Department of Defence and the SANDF," he said.

Gulube quoted from the Defence Review which said the Reserve Force was a "critical" component of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and has to be revitalised to be able to properly perform its designated functions and tasks. Some of these are: augmenting the regular force in ongoing operations; providing an expansion capability for major combat operations

and crisis response as well as providing scarce and specialist skills.

"The roles of the Reserves require of them to be of the right profile of a soldier for them to perform their duties successfully. It is thus critical to ensure the Reserves are rejuvenated, revitalised and transformed on a continuous basis," he said, pointing out Defence Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula making this a strategic priority in the Department of Defence.

The priority six reads: "The Reserves must be transformed and revitalised so that they can fulfil their primary role of providing the majority of the conventional landward capability of the SANDF, whilst at the same time supplementing the peace support missions conducted by the regulars".

As far as a transformation and representation is concerned, Gulube said the white component of the Reserve Force has declined from 100% in 1994 to less than 15% of its current total strength with women making up 23%.

The Defence Secretary sees South Africa's Reserve Force service system as the most cost-effective human resource component of the SANDF with an expansion capability.

For it to be effectively and efficiently managed it is important for the Reserve Force to have widespread employer support from South African private sector.

"The SANDF is striving to have an 'employed Reserve Force' and various efforts are aimed at proactively promoting civilian job placement of Reserve Force members. Unfortunately this effort is jeopardised when civilian employers are not in favour of releasing Reserve Force members for service when they are called up for courses, deployment or other forms of service.

"Previous and current experience has shown the leader element in particular of the part-time force is employed and their availability for service is subject to goodwill of the employer," he said, adding employer support had now become a priority in light of increased

levels and duration of Reserve Force call-ups.

Gulube told the seminar there was sufficient interest and will among citizens to serve in the SANDF but a lack of employer support for voluntary military service could impact on the number of people actually signing up.
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News from the SANDF – Reserves for backbone of Operation Corona

Courtesy of Defenceweb

The ongoing border protection tasking assigned to the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) by Cabinet would be nowhere near as successful as it is if the contribution made by the Reserve Force component of the SA Army is taken away.

The Reserve component of Operation Corona varies from 40 to 65% of total deployed strength at any one time. This variation is due to the call-up cycle.

Earlier this year a company from Western Cape Reserve Force the Cape Town Highlanders was dispatched to Upington, becoming the first soldiers to do operational duty as part of Operation Corona on the South Africa/Namibia border.

The part-time soldiers are based at Louisvale and move to the international border by truck for patrol duties. They are housed in a re-deployable camp system that was surplus to the needs of the SA Navy, meaning accommodation could be provided without having to fork out extra funds.

The deployment of the Reserve Force is part and parcel of Project Phoenix, the plan to comprehensively rejuvenate the part-time component across all four arms of service. That attention has been given to the project is evidenced by the increase in funds allocated. Taking Army Reserves as an example: in 2003 when Project Phoenix started R21 million was budgeted, for the 2012/13 financial year this figure was R625 million.

Another good reason for better utilisation of particularly Army Reserves is that their salaries amount to around seven per cent of the total landward force salaries and wages budget over a 12 month financial year.

To date 60 Reserve Force companies have been deployed as part of Operation Corona with by far the majority of deployments taking place on South Africa’s border with Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The Swaziland and Lesotho borders are also regularly patrolled and this year saw the start of border protection by men on foot and in vehicles along the Botswana and Namibia borders.

While the presence of soldiers is in itself a deterrent this is not always going to be sufficient. Illegals and others intent on coming into South Africa either looking for work or markets to illegally sell goods such as cigarettes and liquor, will keep on coming through and senior officers have over the years emphasised the need for technology to be brought into play as a more effective form of border protection.

This was also stressed by Strategic Defence Intelligence in its latest report on the future of the South African defence industry. In addition to peacekeeping commitments and homeland security requirements, the report indicates border security challenges will be the third main driver of the local defence industry.

“South Africa is also facing severe border security challenges and is expected to undertake strict measures to curb illegal immigration as well as the illicit movement of goods and arms. This is set to encourage government to increase its defence budget from R45.5 billion in 2015 to R53 billion in 2019,” the report states.

A senior Joint Operations officer told defenceWeb some years ago at the Sand River base in the Kruger National Park that technology would “have to enter the border protection scenario sooner rather than later”. He also pointed out the budgetary constraints the SANDF was likely to have to put up with for the foreseeable future would make provision of electronic beam detectors

and unmanned aerial systems, among others, “very difficult”.

At present Reserves typically make up a quarter of any continental deployment, being the fourth company added to a regular force of a three-company battalion. To date more than 50 Reserve Force companies have been part of peace support operations for six months at a time.

It is not yet clear yet whether Reserves will also deploy for 12 months as opposed to six, in particular as regards MONUSCO and its Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).
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News from the SANDF – Africa’s west coast is next Navy anti-piracy deployment

Courtesy of Defenceweb

Navy to fight pirates off African west coastThe SA Navy will deploy warships on Africa’s west coast as far north as the Gulf of Guinea.

The deployments, early next year, will involve frigates and possibly submarines Johannesburg daily, The Times, reported.

Ships of the Namibian and Angolan navies will also take part in the operation to combat pirate attacks.

Oil tankers have been the pirates’ preferred targets.

The maritime arm of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) is currently running anti-piracy operations in the Mozambique Channel under Operation Copper. The deployment of at least one warship, either a frigate or offshore patrol vessel, was in March this year extended to March 31, 2015, by order of President Jacob Zuma, SANDF Commander-in-Chief.

According to The Presidency 220 SANDF members from the air force, military health service and the navy will be employed in Mozambican, Tanzanian and international waters monitoring and deterring piracy along

the southern African coast of the Indian Ocean.

Defence and Military Veterans Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula told the paper the deployment was part of the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) maritime security strategy.

Mapisa-Nqakula said South Africa was in discussions with both Namibia and Angola about the co-ordination of anti-piracy patrols.

Piracy expert Professor Henri Fouche, of Unisa's criminology and security science department, said Angola was of particular concern following a recent attack on a ship just outside its territorial waters.

"These attacks, especially on the west coast, are particularly violent," he said.

"Concerning to South Africa are the disruptions by piracy of West African oil routes.

"On the east African coast all kinds of ships were targeted, but on the west coast it's specifically oil tankers and their lucrative cargos which are targets."

Fouche said the attacks were a threat to South Africa's economy.

"These naval deployments will be in line with the African Union's strategy on the protection of maritime exclusive zones."

Though piracy had been much reduced in East Africa, Fouche said it was still a huge problem in West Africa.

It had spread from Nigeria to Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Benin, Ghana and now Angola.

He said pirates were heavily armed and well organised, operating with deep-sea vessels and barges and with established buyers for their loot.

"They have specific off-loading areas often situated in the myriad inlets along the huge Gulf of Guinea coastline."

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News from the SANDF – The environment is important to the military.

Written by Kim Helfrich

The relationship between security and the environment is becoming increasingly important in world politics and Secretary for Defence Dr Sam Gulube sees environmental issues such as access to water being a cause of armed conflict in developing countries in the future.

Other environmental issues that could lead to hostilities include deforestation, desertification and access to energy resources, he told this week's Department of Defence/SA National Defence Force (SANDF) environment awards function in Thaba Tshwane, Pretoria.

Additionally, South Africa's soldiers will be in the forefront if and when the effects of climate change turn into potential humanitarian disasters.

"The consequences of climate change pose some of the most serious threats to humanity today including an increase in the frequency and severity of floods, wild fires, hurricanes and cyclones. Prolonged droughts and increased desertification will cripple food production and increase famine. Over time, it will result in rising sea levels; threaten low-lying areas and certain island states. Tectonic events such as the recent minor earthquakes in North West province could result in major humanitarian disasters.

"As weather patterns become more erratic and natural disasters become more frequent the military would be expected to maintain a capacity to play a significant supportive role in addressing the consequences of such events," he said.

The SANDF is an organisation where the environment matters and the concept of military integrated environmental management has been included and expanded on in the Defence Review.

Gulube said the important of the natural environment to any military was relevant in three areas.

"Firstly, there is a host of legal, economic, professional and ethical reasons to recognise and manage the environmental impact of the military footprint. Secondly, the military in carrying out its constitutional mandate faces extreme weather conditions, terrain or even prevailing biological hazards as fundamental challenges posed by the environment. Thirdly, in addressing non-military threats stemming from increased global environmental hazards; enhanced command of the battle space; prohibitions under international humanitarian law and protection of friendly forces in the field means the environment has assumed a central position in military strategy and tactics."

Gulube singled out the maritime arm of service of the SANDF for winning three of the four major categories in the DoD annual environmental awards.

"This is an important accomplishment for the Navy that should be further improved. The SA Air Force won of major and two of the minor categories with the largest service, the Army, only winning one category," he said adding the landward force's poor performance and the absence of the SA Military Health Service was an indication they should "seriously take up the challenge posed by the other services".

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News from the SANDF – SANDF Goodwill Project will deliver R5,5 million worth of gifts and hampers

Courtesy of Defenceweb

Goodwill project will bring Christmas cheer to soldiers Launched in Centurion last week the Goodwill Project, an SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Spouses Forum initiative, will this year again see military-type intensity and planning as each and every soldier in a mission area is rewarded via a gift pack.

The Shamrock

All told gift packs and food hampers worth more than R5,5 million will be delivered far and wide, often to desolate spots literally in the middle of nowhere, as well as to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan in a 16 day period.

“Soldiers deployed as part of Operation Corona (border protection) will be visited and be handed a gift pack sometime during the period December 22 to January 6 even if they are at a temporary base camp on the Mozambique/South Africa in the Kruger National Park with wild animals all round them,” Lieutenant Colonel Piet Paxton said.

A week has been set aside by the organising committee for its members to visit South African soldiers deployed on Operation Corona. With the exception of a Reserve Force company in Upington responsible for safeguarding a section of the Namibia/South Africa border, Goodwill Project people will see soldiers in their working environment on the borders with Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

All told close to 6 000 soldiers deployed in mission areas, internally on operations Copper and Corona, as well as those in Sudan and the DRC, will be recipients of gift packs. The packs, chosen by the organising committee, are a wheeled luggage backpack filled with personal items including a Bible, donated by the Bible Society of SA, fittingly with a camouflage cover.

The maritime component of Operation Copper in the form of a ship’s company aboard an OPV will join their SA Air Force colleagues in the Mozambican port of Pemba to receive their Goodwill Project gift packs.

Deployed airmen, medics, sailors and soldiers who have to spend the festive season far from family and loved ones will rest easier knowing these people are also part of the Goodwill Project.

“They will receive hampers, containing mostly food, but also other essentials, that will be delivered to their doors during the December 22/January 6 period,” Paxton said.

The value of the hampers is around R700 each and when added to the gift pack all totals up to more than R5,5 million worth of Christmas cheer.

The major sponsor this year is again Massmart whose contribution was gratefully received by SANDF Chief, General Solly Shoke’s wife, Charlotte, at the recent Goodwill Project 2014 launch function.

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News from the SANDF – Defence Joint Standing Committee members named

Written by Kim Helfrich

Joint Standing Committee on Defence members named Thirteen parliamentarians, including four from the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), have been named as members of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence.

In line with where the electorate put their crosses on polling day back in May, the Freedom Front Plus, in the form of Pieter Groenewald, no longer has a representative on the committee.

Its good showing at the polls has given Julius Malema’s Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) a single member on the committee. He is Paul Ramakatsa, the party’s defence and military veterans spokesman in the National Assembly.

ANC MPs who are named as members are former chairman Malusi Stanley Motimele, Bongani Thomas Bongo, Zephroma Sizani Dlamini-Dubazana, Dennis Gamede, Adelaide Mnisi and James Jim Skosana.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) will be represented by its shadow defence and military veterans minister, David Maynier, and deputy shadow minister Shahid Esau.

NCOP representatives on the committee are LC Dlamini (Gauteng), EM Mlambo (Mpumalanga), T Motlashuping (North West) – all ANC – and the DA’s George Michalakis (Free State).

The committee is scheduled to meet five times in the current session of the fifth Parliament’s sitting with a weekend session from October 24 to 26 planned as a strategic session. This will cover its quarterly and annual programmes as well as its five year plan.

Items on the provisional agenda for this committee include the Defence Review, the Defence Secretariat, the Auditor General on assessing financial and performance related information in both the Department of Defence and the SA National Defence Force and the Department of Military Veterans. One of the first items it will deal with is Maynier’s Private Member’s Bill seeking amendments to the Defence Act.

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News from the SANDF – Challenges ahead if SA wants to be Africa's military superpower

Written by Helmoed Römer Heitman

South Africa has big plans to expand its involvement in Africa. To implement these, defence minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula has a vision and a 400-page Defence Review to guide her developing the capabilities of the SANDF to match national, regional and continental roles envisaged by cabinet and the Presidency.

Yet she will need support and additional funds: quite a lot of it too, judging by the recommendations in the review.

The border security mission presents challenges in terms of present force levels, equipment and funding – up to R1 billion extra will be required to fully equip, deploy and sustain a further 11 companies for deployment to the border, as the minister intends.

Indications are that if all goes according to plan, the SANDF could be up to speed to fulfil its commitments at its borders and in the region by 2023. Only then will the real work of renewing the force capabilities start in earnest.

In her budget speech on 23 July, Mapisa-Nqakula said: ‘It is also going to be important that the implementation of the Defence Review takes into consideration the tasks and commitments for defence arising from the New National Security Strategy.’ This crucial document, which has been many years in the making, should be the central document to shape policy regarding South Africa’s political, military and diplomatic roles and engagement. Approved by government earlier this year, it has still not been made public – which hinders its role as a policy tool.

Government has, meanwhile, tasked the Army with forming a combat group for employment as part of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC), which will in time become the intervention capability envisaged in the Defence Review.

In her speech, the minister reiterated the main responsibilities of the SANDF, which include, among others, defending and protecting South Africa, safeguarding its borders and infrastructure and promoting peace and security in Africa. South Africa’s regional role thus remains central to policy, the only question being to which level this is to be pursued.

In this regard, the Defence Review’s baseline of three long-term battalion or combat group peace support operations is derived from an assessment of government’s intent and on past experience. For several years, South Africa had battalions in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Darfur simultaneously, plus a brief battalion-strength deployment in the Comoros.

The minister also referred to the five milestones proposed in the Defence Review as the basis for planning. These are to arrest the decline of the SANDF; to rebalance the force by reprioritising; to ensure capacity meets current needs; to develop capacity to meet future challenges and to build the strength to deal with a limited war. The fifth only becomes relevant in the event of a major strategic shift, but the first two

fall within the current five-year medium-term strategic framework.

However, the current defence budget – and the budgets forecast for the next two years – will not provide sufficient funding to do that. But, as the minister remarked, ‘many aspects ... can be pursued in the short term without additional funding.’ These include various measures to lay the groundwork for the future development of the defence force. In reality, some of these have already been initiated – such as planning for restructuring within the Army. However, it is never without cost, and is more about reprioritising expenditure.

The current, short-term programme focuses on succession planning and renewal within the SANDF, and will, in fact, not require much funding in addition to what is needed for proper training and maintenance. Once these aspects have been addressed – and this should be done promptly – funding will have to increase to start the rebuilding. An immediate challenge is, however, the current shortfall in the present defence budget, due to both legacy issues and new operational activities, such as unfunded ACIRC preparations, sustainment of current missions and staff structure.

Considering the intent expressed in the budget speech along with what the Defence Review envisages for the first two milestones, relatively limited growth in defence funding should suffice during the current medium-term strategic framework. Real growth will, however, be needed in the second part of the period.

The targets set in the Defence Review for Milestone 1 (by 2015/16) that are relevant to the regional peace support role include enhanced strategic awareness capability, which includes expanding and enhancing the Special Forces capability; establishing a permanent forward base in Africa; re-establishing or enhancing a tactical airfield unit capability and a naval port-operating capability; and ensuring that troop contribution obligations are maintained at the standard whereby reimbursement from the United Nations is guaranteed.

This is over and above present deployments, which would continue at the same levels. These include the battalion in Darfur, the battalion group and other elements in the DRC, the patrol station in the Mozambique Channel and some smaller elements.

The targets set in Milestone 2 (by 2018/19) that pertain to the regional peace support role include developing a joint rapid response intervention capability; simultaneous renewal of the medium and light airlift; in-flight refuelling and air-ambulance capability and enhancing the medium helicopter lift capability. It also includes extended maritime protection capability. Again, this is over and above the present deployments that would continue, and over and above what is set out for Milestone 1.

Depending on the detailed force structure and chosen design, and the level of border patrolling to be reached within this period, these interventions and capability targets should be attainable at about 1,4% of the current gross domestic product (GDP), which is about 25% to 30% more than the present funding level.

This, however, only creates the basis for an expanded regional peace support operations capability. The actual development of that capability would begin in the second medium-term strategic framework. To evaluate the 2014 budget against South Africa’s regional capability one must also consider this second period, during which the Defence Force would be expected to attain the capabilities of Milestone 3.

This would, again depending on the detail and the required border security deployment, take the defence budget to about 1,6% of the current GDP, or 46% higher than the present funding level.

By the end of the second medium-term strategic framework – 2023 – the Defence Force would be capable of sustaining three long-term combat group level peace support operations, conducting maritime security patrols in Southern African Development Community (SADC) waters, and conducting a short-term brigade

strength intervention operation using air- or sealift. This would be in addition to border safeguarding and patrols of South Africa’s own waters.

Only in the period after 2023 would the Defence Force begin with major renewal of conventional force capabilities to be able to respond to a serious challenge in the region. That would see defence funding rising to about 2,4% of the present GDP. While this envisaged defence strategy is desperately needed, and can be seen as a blueprint to transform the defence force into an organisation that will have at least minimum capabilities for its projected role and responsibilities, the big question remains how this will be done.

Written by Helmoed Römer Heitman, Independent Military and Defence Analyst.

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News from the SANDF – An effective defence industry is needed to support a changing SANDF

Written by Guy Martin

For the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) to be an effective and relevant force, as outlined in the 2014 Defence Review, it needs to be supported by an effective defence industry. This emerged as one of the main themes at Monday’s inaugural aerospace, maritime and defence conference hosted by Denel.

Secretary for Defence Dr Sam Gulube noted that everyone wants to live in a safe, secure and prosperous environment but this does not just happen and requires a defence force supported by a strong industry to ensure security.

Acting Chief Executive Officer of Armscor, Sipho Mkwana, told conference delegates that while there have been some security improvements on the continent, such as the reduction in East African piracy, there are still many challenges, such as the ongoing fallout from the Arab Spring, human trafficking, the plundering of resources

and militant and terrorist organisations like Boko Haram and al Shabaab.

Gulube said that the 2014 Defenced Review, currently before Parliament for discussion and adoption, looks at the security challenges facing South Africa, including those far away on the continent (as South Africa’s prosperity is tied to that of its neighbours and other countries on the continent), the government’s defence strategy, and what defence capability and defence industry capacity is needed to meet these challenges.

The review identifies three main goals: protect South Africa’s interest; safeguard the country including its borders, airspace, maritime zones and infrastructure; and promote peace and security including by participating in peace support operations and intervening in crises when vital to do so. The defence force also needs to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies, according to the Review.

Meeting these goals requires specific military capabilities and the present challenge is to rejuvenate the SANDF’s existing capabilities. The Defence Review divides the transformation of the defence force into several periods. As the SANDF is rejuvenated, the next steps include developing an adequate peace support and crisis response capability that will govern acquisitions over the next decade and beyond; expanding the special forces capability, improving border safeguarding, replacing outdated field support capabilities; developing a rapid response capability; expanding and renewing the airlift and in-flight refuelling capabilities; enhancing air domain awareness and enhancing maritime domain awareness. Medium and heavy forces begin to take priority from 2024/2028 and beyond, Gulube noted.

He added that once the four main milestones have been achieved, this does not mean the end of defence acquisitions and the demise of the defence industry. “By 2028 much of the equipment we would have acquired over the period would have been in service and need to be replaced.” For instance by that time the Army’s

Rooikat and G6 will be both by that time approaching 40 years of service, as will the Rooivalk and Oryx helicopters. The Navy’s combat support ships would be by then going beyond 40 years as well. By the time the defence force reaches the fourth milestone of the Defence Review, the SANDF needs to replace those systems, “unless we wish to operate a museum of military antiques... What we are saying is that there will be life beyond the 2014 Defence Review.”

Gulube noted that the defence review proposes a defence research centre and chief defence scientist to pursue research and development for future-proofing and technology development and that this has great potential for the industry.

Gulube said a strong defence industry was necessary to not only ensure the SANDF was well supplied but to ensure certain sovereign technologies were locally controlled. Where possible, equipment would be developed locally or foreign designs manufactured under license when imports were necessary. Local defence acquisitions would be used to maximise economic leverage, support the economy and create jobs.

However, the Secretary said that it was important to keep sovereign capabilities in South Africa and this includes command and control, electronic warfare, guided weapons etc., with an emphasis on source codes and other property. Important strategic capabilities include equipment maintenance, support and repair, ammunition, batteries and spares as these are essential to keeping equipment going.

Gulube said that "We will also support the industry in its international export efforts. A vibrant defence industry is a national asset." Defence exports also encourage future research and development.

Gulube concluded by saying that the Department’s intention is to support the future development of the defence industry, which according to the Defence Review, is a national asset. He added that he will work with partners on the national defence industry council to

make sure the needs of the industry are aligned to the benefit of South Africa and the continent.

South African Army: Major General Les Rudman, deputy chief of the South African Army, told delegates that the Army needs to adapt to remain relevant. Much of its necessary adaptations are outlined in the Defence Review.

“The changing environment demands of us the need to adapt to remain relevant. Otherwise we will become irrelevant,” Rudman cautioned. He noted that since democracy, there has been a total rethink regarding the role of South Africa’s military and its repositioning to participate in peace keeping, disaster relief and other operations other than war. Rather than a pariah state, South Africa is now perceived as a lead nation on the continent and South Africa’s interests are linked to Africa’s overall unity and prosperity, compelling the country to contribute to continental peace and stability.

These sentiments were echoed by Mkwanzazi, who pointed out that South Africa continues to support regional efforts to respond to crises and to participate in peace support operations – something successfully done in the Democratic Republic of Congo where South African forces, backed by Rooivalk helicopters, brought M23 rebels to peace talks. Mkwanzazi said that deployed military equipment should be African in origin and that African countries must share the further development of military systems otherwise Africa will continue to look to the East and West for more expensive hardware.

As part of the adaptation process, Rudman said that the SANDF and the Army in particular must gear for deployment across the full spectrum of conflict and establish post-conflict reconstruction and development capabilities to transfer fragile peace to permanent stability. He noted that the Army needs to have expeditionary forces with the future South African Army employing mechanised and motorised divisions that could form a contingency brigade. Engineering and maintenance regiments are also essential.

For the SANDF to remain relevant, Rudman said there needs to be a focus on certain technologies, such as command and control, battlespace sensors, advanced navigation technology, secure data transmission, precision weapons, force protection, unmanned aerial vehicles, thermobaric weapons technology and advanced identification friend or foe (IFF) technology. Important capabilities that need to be developed include strategic lift, force protection, asymmetric warfare and the ability to operate in rough terrain. In addition, simulation and testing also need to be focused on, he said.

South African Navy: Deputy Navy chief Rear Admiral Hanno Teuteberg on the naval side noted that in terms of the Defence Review, South Africa needs updated frigates and submarines. For the border protection Operation Corona to be extended to the maritime domain the Navy needs offshore patrol vessels. (Project Biro seeks to acquire such equipment.) He said that the Navy is keen to upgrade its patrol capability in terms of offshore and inshore patrol vessels but that a surface warfare capability and at sea replenishment capabilities are also important, as are a marine force and mine warfare. The Navy also needs to provide a search and rescue and hydrographic service.

To arrest the decline of the Navy, Teuteberg said that warships need to be refitted and maintained and staffed by experienced and qualified sailors. He said it was pointless buying ‘sexy equipment’ if it could not be kept going.

In July this year President Jacob Zuma unveiled Operation Phakisa, which aims to implement policies and programmes better, faster and more effectively. One focus area is the ocean economy, whose potential will be unlocked by representatives from government, industry, labour, civil society and academia.

Zuma said the ocean has a potential to contribute to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) up to R177 billion. The ocean also has a potential to contribute between eight hundred and one million direct jobs. In 2010, the oceans

contributed approximately R54 billion to South Africa’s GDP and accounted for approximately 316 000 jobs.

Operation Phakisa will focus on marine transport and manufacturing activities, such as coastal shipping, trans-shipment, boat building, repair and refurbishment; offshore oil and gas exploration; aquaculture and marine protection services and ocean governance. South Africa can utilise its location and expertise to increase its share of the global marine manufacturing market, including ship-building and repair, rig repair and refurbishment or boat-building.

Teuteberg said this was good news for the South African civil and military shipbuilding industry, which has enormous experience, mostly acquired during the sanctions era, of shipbuilding and refit submarines, built strike craft and numerous other vessels.

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News from the SANDF – Army seeking to renew equipment

Written by Guy Martin

The South African Army will soon start receiving its new Badger infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) but it is also seeking to replace its trucks and armoured vehicles while modernising some of its equipment, such as assault rifles.

“We have made efforts to acquire new equipment from our defence industries and revamp old ones in order to keep our force fit for purpose. The badger Infantry Fighting Vehicle will add new life to our infantry, with manufacturing starting in the 2015/16 financial year,” South African Army Chief Lieutenant General Vusi Masondo told journalists at the annual Army breakfast on Thursday.

“The SA Army has streamlined projects aimed at addressing the issue of ageing hardware. The SA Army Air Defence Artillery’s very short-range air defence (VSHORAD) Starstreak missile is one of the many pieces of equipment that our projects are yielding and is

currently being used by the ADA [Air Defence Artillery] corps as we speak.”

Masondo said that work is underway on R4 upgrades for the Army as part of the African Warrior programme, but other equipment has also been upgraded including the Rooikat armoured vehicle, Olifant main battle tank and SS-77 7.62 mm machinegun.

“The SA Artillery Corps is also doing work on its G6 gun. With all these projects aimed at the renewal of our force, we are also trying to expand our footprint in terms of operations that we get involved in domestically and on the African continent in pursuance of continental and regional security.”

Masondo said ageing equipment was a challenge. “It is true that our Samil vehicles have aged a lot. They are costly to run.” Project Vistula aims to replace the Samil truck fleet and Project Sapula aims to replace the Casspir and Mamba armoured vehicle fleets. Masondo said he hoped to see these projects arrive “sooner rather than later.”

“South Africa’s landward force is facing the challenge of ageing equipment. The SA Army is dealing with it and our people can rest assured that we are more than ever capable to defend their interests,” Masondo said.

In light of the impressive performance of the Denel Aviation Rooivalk combat helicopter with the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) against rebel groups, Masondo said he would like to see this aircraft back in production.

“Our involvement with the FIB and the deployment of the Rooivalk has proved to be a force multiplier and game changer. There has been a lot of interest and enquiries.” Masondo said that export contracts would minimise the costs of the aircraft for the SANDF due to economies of scale.

Minister of defence Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula in March this year also praised the Rooivalk’s performance in the DRC and called for production to resume, saying there was a lot of interest in the

helicopter from foreign countries. However, Denel Aviation estimates that 75-100 aircraft would need to be ordered to make restarting production feasible.

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News from the SANDF – SANDF planning for implementation of Defence Review.

Written by Guy Martin

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has set up a planning committee for the implementation of the Defence Review as it slowly inches its way from concept to reality.

Chief of the South African Army, Lieutenant General Vusi Masondo this morning told journalists that the review has been approved by cabinet and is with parliament for discussion and endorsement. “The Defence Review is posing a crucial question: what kind of defence force do we need... what tasks have to be undertaken? Once this question has been answered they will be required to resource the defence force adequately.”

“We are excited in the SA Army since there is movement on the Defence Review front aimed at bolstering our efforts towards fulfilment of the mandate that the constitution set on us, that of providing combat-ready forces to safeguard our borders and territorial integrity while also playing a role in laying a foundation from which social development would be possible. We are also mindful that the SA Army is not a social agent for socio-economic development and upliftment of the public,” Masondo told journalists at the SA Army annual media breakfast this morning.

“The Defence Review Report recommends a change in the approach on how the SANDF and SA Army in particular conduct business for us to fulfil our constitutional mandate. Our responsibility exceeds just doing border control and safeguarding the people of the Republic. We are a part of the global community that asks of us to become more involved on the African

continent as part of the African Union and the United Nations.

“We have been aware of challenges that have been hindering our operations for a few years and have since reported that to our principals. It also gives us great joy that our requests are now being considered, albeit in a phased approach, depending on the availability of funds.”

Masondo said the first milestone of the Defence Review is to arrest the decline that is currently taking place within the Army. “If we are fortunate enough to have funds being availed we will arrest the decline and reprioritise the SANDF.”

The Defence Review would like to see defence spending increase to 2.4% of GDP but Masondo noted that because the economy is not performing well, with huge debts to service, “funding would be incremental and not immediate.” The Review ultimately would like to see the defence budget standing at R88 billion (double what it is at present) and 158 operational units. Masondo said he welcomed the cabinet’s intention through the Defence Review to improve the funding of the Defence Force.

Because of a lack of funding, most of the Army’s budget is going to salaries. “We are spending a huge portion of the defence budget on human resources. We should be spending 30% on operations, 30% on capital renewal and 40% on personnel. We are not there,” Masondo said, with salaries accounting for over half the defence budget (58%). “We are faced with challenges,” he added, with the budget shortage necessitating the use of funding from the operations budget to pay salaries, something which is “not an ideal situation.”

For the Army, Masondo said the Review would like the establishment of an armour brigade that will provide medium and heavy forces, which can be used for peace enforcement. “The Defence Review envisages the establishment of a motorised division, charged mainly with border safeguarding and internal protection tasks including peace support operations on the continent. It also

envisages the establishment of a contingency brigade. This will allow for a rapid deployment instrument for the chief of the SANDF.”

“We are now actively on a drive to arrest the decline that renders our army unable to optimally reach the heights we would like to reach. The Defence Review makes it possible to continue full-scale force rejuvenation, revamp and in some cases, replace ageing equipment while at the same time addressing the issue of ageing, derelict facilities. The SA Army is moving forward and with that, there is a need to improve the conditions of our soldiers on the ground,” Masondo said.

The Army will in the next two years start receiving 238 Badger infantry fighting vehicles, recently took delivery of the Starstreak air-defence missile and aims to replace its Casspir, Mamba and Samil vehicles through Projects Sapula and Vistula. Although these projects are taking time, the implementation of the Defence Review means they could be accelerated.

In spite of its challenges, Masondo said the Army has done what was asked of it. “Over the years we have complied with ordered commitments, including external operations. The army is healthy. It has challenges here and there but it is managing them.”

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News from the SANDF – 60 years of the Herc

Written by Kim Helfrich

Saturday (August 23) is a milestone in the world of military aviation marking the 60th anniversary of the first flight of the Hercules C-130 at Burbank, California in 1954 and South Africa, through the SA Air Force’s 28 Squadron, is part of the worldwide Herc family.

Last year the AFB Waterkloof-based squadron celebrated the 50 anniversary of the Herc, better known in South Africa as Flossie. 28 Squadron operates C-130BZs and looks set to do so for another six years at least before new airlift capacity becomes reality for the

airborne arm of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

To mark the 50th anniversary of service with the second oldest air force in the world, the BZs carrying the tail numbers 402 and 406 were adorned with special artwork “50 Years of Service” in painted in black on the front section of the fuselage.

The Herc is operated by 70 countries and South Africa ranks number five on the list of operators.

The first production C-130 gave 40 years of service. Known as “The First Lady” the aircraft first flew in 1955 and spent many years as a test aircraft before being converted into a gunship. It was retired to the USAF Armament Museum at Eglin AFB in Florida in 1955.

As of July this year Lockheed Martin has delivered 2 471 production models of the C-130. With more than 300 already delivered production of the latest model C-130J now exceeds total production of the C-130B (230 built) and the C-130A (231 built).

Probably one of the best remembered C-130 flights was the one undertaken by four Israeli Defence Force aircraft from Entebbe Airport in Uganda on July 4, 1976. They carried crack soldiers on a raid to rescue 90 hostages flown safely back to Israel.

The most number of people ever crammed into a C-130 was an amazing 452. This happened on the last flight out of Saigon before that city fell to North Vietnamese forces on April 30, 1975. The aircraft is designed to carry 90 paratroopers with their gear.

From 1957 to 1960 there was a dedicated C-130 aerial demonstration team called The Four Horsemen. Lockheed Martin maintains the team was the only one in the world ever to fly transport aircraft.

To mark the occasion Lockheed Martin invites members of the worldwide C-130 community to share their memories of the aircraft with photos and videos. These can be shared through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, LinkedIn, Google+ and YouTube. Stories will be

collected on a Lockheed Martin sponsored website and shared with page viewers. To ensure stories are included on this site, the hashtag “#herc60” must be included within each post. Submissions also can be emailed to c-130-communications.gr-aero@lmco.com and they will be manually posted on the anniversary site.

The C-130 has the longest, continuous military aircraft production run in history and is one of the top three longest, continuous aircraft production lines of any type.

“In its first six decades, the C-130 shaped aviation history, redefined industry standards and exhibited flexibility other aircraft have yet to match,” George Shultz, Lockheed Martin vice president and general manager, C-130 Programmes, said.

“The C-130 remains the world’s most proven airlifter because of its ability to adapt, remain relevant and deliver results no matter the mission. As we celebrate the Hercules, we want to thank the people who designed and now build, deliver, fly, maintain and sustain it. It’s their contributions that have kept the global C-130 fleet flying and will continue to do so for decades to come.”

The Hercules has been everywhere and is known for its ability to tackle any mission, anywhere, at any time. Aircrews have flown it to both poles, landed or airdropped military supplies to combat hot spots and performed countless relief operations around the globe. From the highest air strips in the Himalayas to landing on an aircraft carrier in the middle of the ocean, the C-130 regularly defies expectations.

Now retired 28 Squadron flight engineer Henk van Rooyen is credited as the man with the most hours aboard a C-130 in South Africa. When he hung up his flight suit with its Warrant Officer Class One insignia a few years ago his logbook showed 11 300 hours in the C-130.

Asked by defenceWeb what’s so special about the aircraft at the Squadron’s 70th anniversary function last year he said: “I can’t tell you! It’s something in your heart it’s in your

blood. There's no other aircraft like the C-130. I can't explain what it does to you".

His words are more or less echoed by any number of men who this author knows and who have flown and maintained the SAAF's C-130BZs. As one they will tell you "the only aerie that can replace a C-130 is another C-130".

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News from the SANDF – SANDF Reserve shines in military skills competition.

Written by Defenceweb

SANDF Reserve Force team wins gold in Germany A nine-strong "senior" team from the SANDF Reserve Force brought home the bacon from the recent CIOR (Inter Allied Confederation of Reserve Officers) International Military Skills competition.

The South African team travelled to Hammelburg, Germany, to take part in the "experienced" category and finished first ahead of mainly NATO countries.

"The competition evaluates the many and varied skills soldiers need to be combat ready," team leader Lieutenant Colonel Uys van der Westhuijzen said.

Skills put to the test by CIOR instructors were tactical combat casualty care in a simulated environment, pistol and rifle shooting, crossing land and water obstacles as well as an orienteering march over varying terrain and conditions. The march included map reading, distance estimation and grenade throwing, among others.

"Making it even more challenging is that the different shooting events have to be completed within set times, the obstacle crossings and the orienteering march in a short a time as possible and all of it done in combat uniform with webbing," Van der Westhuijzen said.

The South Africans competed against 23 other team and won, for the first time, the "experienced" category.

Apart from Van der Westhuijzen and coach Captain le Roux, who represented the Infantry Formation along with Major Labuschagne and riflemen Mdlalose and Smit the rest of the team was Lieutenant Du Toit, Corporal Hlope, Trooper Ngidi (all Armour) and Captain Ditshego (SAAF).

"Our team proved we are indeed fit and ready when measured against international standards," Van der Westhuijzen said adding the support from Defence Reserves Division, Reserve Force Council, SA Army Force Preparation and unit commanders contributed in no small measure.

"They all realise the need for and importance of our soldiers being exposed and evaluated against international standards to assess, evaluate and improve combat skills," he said.

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News from the SANDF – Oryx upgrade to be completed in 2016.

Written by Guy Martin

An Oryx helicopter during an Air Capability Demonstration. The long-delayed upgrade of the Denel Aviation Oryx avionics and navigation system will only be completed in early 2016, four years later than originally planned.

Denel is on track to meet the newly agreed completion timeline of January 2016, the company said.

"Qualification and certification of the system upgrade has been completed. To date a total of ten aircraft have been modified of which some have been released to the customer for operational deployment, whilst others are due for scheduled services. A contract variation order addressing changes in timelines was received from the client," Denel said.

The avionics upgrade is part of Project Drummer II, an extension of Project Drummer, initiated in 2006 for the mid-life upgrade of the Oryx helicopter, allowing them to serve to around 2020.

The R492 million fixed-price, fixed-term avionics and navigation upgrade contract was originally scheduled to be completed by June 2012, but "due to extended engineering and flight test efforts, the programme was delayed," Denel said. A total of 38 aircraft are receiving the upgrades.

Part of the reason for the Oryx delay is that some analogue equipment was retained whilst new digital equipment was added, forcing Denel Aviation to produce an interface unit for the new equipment. Another setback was the turmoil at Advanced Technologies and Engineering (ATE), which was one of the subsystems suppliers for the Oryx upgrade project. After entering business rescue, ATE was taken over by Paramount to become Paramount Advanced Technologies last year.

Denel added that the Oryx programme accounted for revenue of R30 million during the 2013/14 financial year and that "the provision for onerous contracts in respect of this project is R155 million."

The Oryx first flew on September 18, 1987 and deliveries commenced in May 1989. Denel Aviation assembled 51 aircraft of which 38 are believed to remain in service. The Oryx replaced the Aerospatiale SA330 Puma in South African Air Force service. The helicopter forms the backbone of the Air Force's rotary wing transport fleet and has been deployed overseas on peace support operations, such as to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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From the Chaplain

Read Psalm 89

A maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

1 I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations.

2 I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

3 You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant,

4 'I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.'"

5 The heavens praise your wonders, Lord, your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones.

6 For who in the skies above can compare with the Lord? Who is like the Lord among the heavenly beings?

7 In the council of the holy ones God is greatly feared; he is more awesome than all who surround him.

8 Who is like you, Lord God Almighty? You, Lord, are mighty, and your faithfulness surrounds you.

9 You rule over the surging sea; when its waves mount up, you still them.

10 You crushed Rahab like one of the slain; with your strong arm you scattered your enemies.

11 The heavens are yours, and yours also the earth; you founded the world and all that is in it.

12 You created the north and the south; Tabor and Hermon sing for joy at your name.

13 Your arm is endowed with power; your hand is strong, your right hand exalted.

14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.

15 Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, Lord.

16 They rejoice in your name all day long; they celebrate your righteousness.

17 For you are their glory and strength, and by your favor you exalt our horn.

18 Indeed, our shield[e] belongs to the Lord, our king to the Holy One of Israel.

19 Once you spoke in a vision, to your faithful people you said: "I have bestowed strength on a warrior; I have raised up a young man from among the people.

20 I have found David my servant;

with my sacred oil I have anointed him.

21 My hand will sustain him; surely my arm will strengthen him.

22 The enemy will not get the better of him; the wicked will not oppress him.

23 I will crush his foes before him and strike down his adversaries.

24 My faithful love will be with him, and through my name his horn will be exalted.

25 I will set his hand over the sea, his right hand over the rivers.

26 He will call out to me, 'You are my Father, my God, the Rock my Savior.'

27 And I will appoint him to be my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth.

28 I will maintain my love to him forever, and my covenant with him will never fail.

29 I will establish his line forever, his throne as long as the heavens endure.

30 "If his sons forsake my law and do not follow my statutes,

31 if they violate my decrees and fail to keep my commands,

32 I will punish their sin with the rod, their iniquity with flogging;

33 but I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness.

34 I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered.

35 Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness— and I will not lie to David—

36 that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before me like the sun;

37 it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky."

38 But you have rejected, you have spurned, you have been very angry with your anointed one.

39 You have renounced the covenant with your servant and have defiled his crown in the dust.

40 You have broken through all his walls and reduced his strongholds to ruins.

41 All who pass by have plundered him; he has become the scorn of his neighbors.

42 You have exalted the right hand of his foes; you have made all his enemies rejoice.

43 Indeed, you have turned back the edge of his sword and have not supported him in battle.

44 You have put an end to his splendour and cast his throne to the ground.

45 You have cut short the days of his youth; you have covered him with a mantle of shame.

46 How long, Lord? Will you hide yourself forever? How long will your wrath burn like fire?

47 Remember how fleeting is my life. For what futility you have created all humanity!

48 Who can live and not see death, or who can escape the power of the grave?

49 Lord, where is your former great love, which in your faithfulness you swore to David?

50 Remember, Lord, how your servant has been mocked, how I bear in my heart the taunts of all the nations,

51 the taunts with which your enemies, Lord, have mocked, with which they have mocked every step of your anointed one.

52 Praise be to the Lord forever! Amen and Amen.



South African National Orders – SANDF Decorations

Courtesy of SA Soldier Magazine



Nkwe ya Gauta (bravery).



Nkwe ya Selefera (bravery).



Nkwe ya Boronse (bravery).



Iphrothiya yegolide (merit).



Iphrothiya yesiliva (merit).



Iphrothiya yebhronzi (merit).



Tshumelo Ikatelaho (campaign award).



Medalje vir Troue Diens (long service award).



Medalje vir Troue Diens and bar 20 Years (long service award).



Medalje vir Troue Diens and bar 30 Years (long service award).



Medalje vir Troue Diens and bar 40 Years (long service award).



Medalje vir Troue Diens and bar 50 years (long service award).



Medalje vir Troue Diens RD and bar 20 Years (RD = decoration for Reserve Force emblem).



Okhankanyweyo (as displayed on the ribbon of the Tshumelo Ikatelaho) (mention in despatches to the President).

Regimental Photos



In Memory of Sid Gibson: World War 2 Veteran who passed away at age 92



A World War 1 Recruitment Poster



Our OC, Lt Col. M. Bennett and our RSM, MWO G.S. Moseki

Our Colours on parade in Braamfischerville - 08 November 2014





The SA Irish leading the Remembrance Day parade in Johannesburg.

Sidi Rezegh 2014

Our Officer Commanding Lt Col. Bennett with his VIP guests during the Sidi Rezegh Parade on 23 November 2014. This service marked the 73 anniversary of the battle of Sidi Rezegh.

We were honoured to share the parade with the Transvaal Horse Artillery (THA). Who was also involved in the battle of Sidi Rezegh.

Unfortunately a sudden and unexpected rain storm forced the proceedings to move under cover and a smaller version of the parade and service was held.

In attendance was Maj Gen. Yam, GOC SA Army Infantry formation and Maj Gen Andersen, Chief of Defence Reserves, in his capacity as the Honorary Colonel of THA.

You can view more photos on our facebook page.
www.facebook.com/SouthAfricanIrishRegiment

