

## The Shamrock

SA Irish Regiment

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Bertham, 2013

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The official newsletter of the SA Irish Regiment

[www.sairish.webs.com](http://www.sairish.webs.com)

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## From the Editor

*From: The Editor*

We remind all our members to take note of event dates and for specific training dates, you will be contacted by your relevant company commander. When in doubt, please contact the regimental HQ for more detail.

We have noted some problems with accessing our website. When such problems occur please remember to type in [www.sairish.webs.com](http://www.sairish.webs.com) and take note that the www in front of the web address is important to direct to our site.

Remember: Contributions towards “The Shamrock” can also be emailed to [irish.regiment@gmail.com](mailto:irish.regiment@gmail.com)

Remember: Newsletters can be downloaded from the internet. Go to [www.sairish.webs.com](http://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.

**Faugh a Ballagh!**

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## From the OC’s Desk

*By: Lt Col. W.W. Kinghorn, MMM, DWD*

As expected the Regiment’s budget for the next financial year has been cut to the bone. We hope that this situation might improve during the course of the financial year, but there are never any guarantees in life and as usual we hope for the best, but we continue to plan for the worst, so that regimental objectives can still be achieved with limited means.

Our plans have been drawn up to ensure that the Regiment gets the maximum results for our limited funds. We have striven to keep a balance with our operational needs while also keeping in mind the morale and welfare of all of our soldiers. Having said that, I must emphasise that Regimental operational needs always come first as mandated by the Chief of the SA Army.

I am proud of my Regiment coming together during these adverse times, but

we must be prepared for tougher times ahead. I have no doubt that we will prevail through team work,

**Faugh a Ballagh!**

Lt Col. W.W. Kinghorn, DWD, MMM  
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## Regimental Events

*By: The Editor*

Please contact your company commander for more details on Regimental events. More dates will be published as they become available.

- 15 July** - Unit shooting exercise.
  - 23 September** - Unit shooting exercise.
  - 26 August** – Barberton sunset parade.
  - 11 November** - Freedom Regiments Parade.
  - 12 November** - JHB Remembrance Parade – JHB Cenotaph.
  - 19 November** - Sidi Rezegh Commemoration Parade .
  - 1 December** – Regimental Birthday.
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## Did you know?

*By: The editor (Source Wikipedia & Buzz South-Africa)*

South African Special Forces is the military entity that has the highest number of decorations for Bravery in South Africa despite being held to higher standards of awarding of medals. It has held this title since the Second World War ended.

Unofficially though, an operator receives bragging rights or an unofficial achievement when he successfully completes a Gunston 500. This involves the operator conducting an operation or mission behind enemy lines. The operator has to walk 500 or more kilometers with full kit.

The name Gunston 500 comes from the former Surfing Championship with a similar name. During the Angolan war, many of the operators who took part in his conflict have completed it more than once.

Since the operators need to be equipped during war, they carry kits with them that weigh between 60kg and 80kg and for small team operations or long-

distance deployments, the kit can weigh an average of 100kg. The heaviest kit that was ever carried by long deployment or small team operators was 130kg.

Read more:

<http://buzzsouthafrica.com/south-african-special-forces/>

**IRISH SALUTE!**

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## From the Pipes and Drums.

*By: The Pipe Major and P&D Admin*  
**S A Irish Regiment Pipes & Drums 2017 Calendar of Events:**

- 10 June:** Cornwall Hill Gathering (Regional)
- 17 June:** Pretoria Boys Gathering (Championship)
- 15 July:** St Benedict’s Gathering (Regional Final)
- 29 July:** Benoni Gathering (SA Champs & Championship Final)
- 11 November:** Freedom of the City of Johannesburg parade.
- 12 November:** Remembrance day parade - Johannesburg
- 19 November:** Sidi Rezegh Parade - SAIR HQ.

**Faugh a Ballagh!**

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## News from the SANDF – Hlatshwayo assumes command of JOps.

*Written by Guy Martin*

Lieutenant General Barney Hlatshwayo accepted command of the Joint Operations Division of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) during a parade on 3 March.

General Solly Shoke, Chief of the SANDF, charged Hlatshwayo with command during a ceremony at the SA Military Health Service Training Formation in Thaba Tshwane, taking over from Rear Admiral Derek Christian, the Deputy Chief of Joint Operations, who acted as Chief of Joint Operations until December 2016. Hlatshwayo took up his new post on 1

January, but only accepted formal command on Friday.



This is the third Chief of Joint Operations in a short space of time, as Lieutenant General Derrick Mgwebi was in December 2015 appointed as the Force Commander of the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), and his successor Lieutenant General Duma Mduyana passed away on 6 July 2016.

Hlatshwayo is no newcomer to the Joint Operations Division as he has been with the Division since December 2001 until January 2016. His last appointment was the General Officer Commanding Team Bulisa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to assist the DRC Defence Force in the compilation of their Policy and Strategy from February 2016 until December 2016.

During his acceptance speech, which followed a flypast of two A109s carrying South African flags, and a parade of soldiers and vehicles, Hlatshwayo said it was an honour to take up his new post and pledged to take the Joint Operations Division to greater heights.

He said that he has learnt that the defence force is not the only department that should be utilised in deployments and that collaboration with other departments is essential. This division has been involved in a number of operations in Africa, notably in Liberia, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Central Africa, Burundi and the DRC and assisted in the elections in Comoros. "We did our duty despite the limited resources we

had," he said, with all operations being successful.

Hlatshwayo noted that the SANDF is currently deployed on Operation Copper in the Mozambique Channel, on all borders of South Africa and assists other departments with regard to search and rescue, humanitarian assistance etc.

The Joint Operations Division is responsible for the employment of the

South African National Defence Force (SANDF) assets. When there is an operation or an exercise the Joint Operations Division ensures the execution of that operation or exercise by utilising the necessary personnel and equipment from the four arms of service.

According to his CV, Lieutenant General Barney Muntu Norman Hlatshwayo was born on 19 November 1958 in Soweto. After matriculation, he completed Basic Military Training in Tanzania. He joined the Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army (APLA) on 2 October 1976 as one of the students who participated in the June 16 uprising. While serving in APLA during 1978, he was Liaison Officer in the Mbeya Region of Southern Tanzania co-ordinating and liaising with the Tanzania Peoples' Defence Force. He served as APLA's Military Attaché in Dar es Salaam from 1979 to 1980 and as Officer Commanding the Ithumbi Military Base in the Mbeya Region of Southern Tanzania from 1981 to 1985.

From 1984 to 1986 General Hlatshwayo was Director Operations at APLA HQ in Tanzania. He served as Chief of Staff of the APLA HQ in Tanzania and the APLA Office in Zimbabwe from 1986 to 1994. Lt Gen Hlatshwayo played a key role in the SANDF's integration process as the APLA key co-ordinator for a number of integration work groups.

He completed his Platoon Commanders' course in the Peoples' Republic of China, Company

Commanders' course in Sudan and the Intermediate Staff course in Zimbabwe.

As a member of the South African National Defence Force, the General served in the following posts:

Senior Staff Officer Integration from 1994 – 1996.

SSO Doctrine (Directorate Training) from 1996 – 1998.

Deputy Chief Director Army Force Structure from 1998 – 2001, with the appointment he was promoted to Brigadier General.

Director Mobilisation and Demobilisation, (now known as the Joint Force Preparation and Training) at the Joint Operations Division in Pretoria from 1 December 2001 until 2005.

General Officer Commanding, Joint Operational Headquarters from 1 January 2005 until 30 October 2010, with the appointment General Hlatshwayo was promoted to Major General.

Chief Director Operations (Joint Operations Division) from 1 November 2010 until 1 December 2011.

Chief Director Operations Development from 1 December 2011 until 31 January 2016.

General Officer Commanding Team Bulisa in the DRC to assist the DRC Defence Force in the compilation of their Policy and Strategy as of February 2016 until December 2016.

Chief Joint Operations from 1 January 2017. General Hlatshwayo was promoted to Lieutenant General with the appointment.

Some of his career highlights include playing a leading role in negotiating APLA's integration into the SANDF in 1994; as Director Force Preparation and Training he directed, planned and participated in major Joint Military Exercises such as: Airborne Africa, Ndlovu, Blue Hungwe, Tanzanite, Blue Angel, De Gamo, Med Flag, and Rainbow Track

He was appointed as Chief Military Advisor for the facilitation of the Burundi peace process (with Deputy President Zuma and later former Minister C. Nqakula). He participated and assisted in concluding peace agreements with the armed political parties in Burundi.

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## News from the SANDF – Negotiations underway to finalise build of SA Navy’s new hydrographic vessel.

Written by Kim Helfrich

As it enters the final negotiating stage for one part of South Africa’s second largest military equipment acquisition since democracy, Armscor is keeping its cards close to the chest and not disclosing costs or details of offsets associated with the acquisition of seven new hulls.



Project Hotel, for the acquisition of a new hydrographic survey capability for the SA Navy, includes a replacement vessel for SAS Protea and ancillary equipment for use both at sea and onshore. This has been approved by National Treasury for the 2017/18 financial year and confirmed by Armscor General Manager: Marketing And Business Development, Lulu Mzili.

“Negotiations with preferred bidders have commenced. The plan is to complete negotiations and contracting before the end of the first quarter of the new financial year,” she said in response to a defenceWeb enquiry.

The preferred bidder for the new hydrographic capability is Durban-based Southern African Shipyards (SAS) while the Cape Town operation of Dutch headquartered Damen has been named preferred bidder for the in- and offshore patrol vessels specified for

Project Biro. This project has been deferred to the 2018/19 financial year but mechanisms have been put in place to ensure currency fluctuations and other possible influences on both contracts, particularly as regards price, do not come into play.

National Treasury’s 2017/18 Estimates of National Expenditure (ENE) do not specify the new hydrographic vessel in the maritime defence expenditure trends but it appears funding will come from the maritime combat capability sub-programme. Here an increase of over R350 million is budgeted for in 2017/18.

Similarly, the acquisition of the new in- and offshore patrol vessels are not named but there is an increase in the maritime combat capability for 2018/19 (R1.7 billion for 2016/17; R2 billion for 2017/18; R2 billion for

2018/19; and R1.47 billion for 2019/20). The ENEs point out the increased spend is for the new hull acquisitions.

Asked about offset because of government’s stipulation on 60% local content for both naval projects, Mzili would not be drawn other than to say “national industrial participation (NIP) and/or defence industrial participation (DIP) may apply”.

Projects from \$2 million (close to R26 million) up to just below \$10 million (R129,5 million) attract DIP while the threshold for NIP is \$10 million.

That there will be offsets were confirmed by her statement that “the split between defence related and non-defence related will be determined during negotiations”.

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## News from the SANDF – Just on two thousand MSD volunteers now doing BMT.

Written by defenceWeb

The three fighting arms of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) were on the receiving end of this year’s military skills development (MSD) intake with the landward force again taking the majority.

All told 1 972 volunteers were accepted for the two-year MSD period and more 80% of them reported for duty during January and are currently undergoing basic military training (BMT) at SA Air Force, SA Army and SA Navy bases around the country.

Brigadier General Mafi Mgobozi, SANDF corporate communications director, said the approved intake for the Army following the selection process was 1 650. A hundred and seventy-two of these did not report for duty on January 8 and the remaining 1 478 are now busy with the first phase of MSD – BMT.

The maritime arm of the SANDF was the second biggest benefactor of the 2017 MSD intake with 214 successful volunteers earmarked for service in the navy, at sea and on land, on completion of BMT. A hundred and seventy-seven young men and women reported for duty.

The SA Air Force is currently putting 92 successful MSD volunteers through BMT before they embark on specialised training in disciplines particular to the airborne arm of the South African military.

On completion of the two year MSD training, which includes fire and emergency services through to chefs and other support functions as well as various combat musters, the majority of volunteers leave and join the Reserve Force. A small number are offered short-term contracts in the regular force.

MSD applications for next year's intake have closed and the evaluation process has started.

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**News from the SANDF – Navy needs more money (and feet) to keep head above water.**

*Written by Dean Wingrin*

Trying to do the best they can with the little they have. This was the general theme of the Chief of the South African Navy presentation to the media at the end of March..



Rear Admiral Asiel Kubu, Chief of Naval Staff, says that the Navy's personnel levels are determined by the allocated budget, which defines how many people can serve at any one time.

The SA Navy has approximately 9 400 active posts, of which 7 280 are currently staffed. Kubu notes that this 77% staffing

Despite highlighting the successes and achievements of the SA Navy over the past year, the word 'challenges' was frequently used, as were quotes such as that of Dr Martin Luther King: "the solution of one problem brings us face to face with (yet) another problem."

Hence, Chief of the South African Navy Vice Admiral Mosuwa Hlongwane's statement that: "We try to do the best that we can with the little that we have."

The Navy is facing many challenges due to staffing and maintenance issues, all as a result of the economic challenges facing the country, leading to a reduced maritime defence budget as the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has had its budget reduced by R5 billion. This has had a direct impact on the Navy, with Hlongwane saying: "I think (the decreased budget) will surely affect the maintenance of the vessels."

The man tasked with command and control of all vessels and units of the Navy is Rear Admiral Bubele Mhlana, Flag Officer Fleet. He has to deal with the implications of the budget cuts.

Being faced with an ever diminishing budget is not a new phenomenon for the Navy or Mhlana, who says that "as we embark on each and every financial year, the budget we receive is getting less and less."

The Navy is not just about ships and other maritime platforms, for they would be nothing without the men and women who staff and maintain them.

level "indicates to you the gap that we've already had in terms of the capacity to staff the Navy to the level we want."

However, "with the 7 280 people we have, we are still be able to function as a navy, but not to the level that we'd want to have been staffed at," Kubu continued. "But the gap already is a challenge for us. So it will continue being a challenge because the budget is still not working for us."

As if that was not bad enough, the incoming 2017/18 financial year will bring in a 6.9% cut in Human Resource (HR) costs. "We are already over R150 million short of what we used to have in the last financial year. In the subsequent year, we are at a 10.6% cut on the HR budget. We are talking over R250 million short of HR budget," he lamented.

So it appears that the staffing levels will not be improving in the short term. Foreseeing a further reduction of staff personnel to about 6 900 (73.4% of the desired level) due to the reduced budget allocated to the Navy, Kubu says that "we have to live with what we've got."

Despite the reduced staffing levels, the Navy is managing to retain their scarce skills.

"We are actually doing better now compared to the last seven years," Kubu was pleased to say, "We are managing to retain our scarce skills that are already in the system because we have some initiatives that we put in place to retain our people."

Apart from improving service conditions, the retention of skilled personal has largely been accomplished by improved communication between the Navy and the private sector, who used to 'poach' the highly trained naval members.

"We cannot say we're not challenged in terms of HR, but the retention level has improved."

Other issues affecting manpower is that the Navy used to utilise a lot of people via the Reserve Force to augment some of the shortages in skills experienced in the Navy. This option is also presenting dual challenges.

Firstly, the new financial year will bring in a cut in calling up Reserve Force members, meaning a reduction of approximately 32% in man days available. This, Kubu says, "talks to operational readiness of the Navy."

The Navy has been using the Military Skills Development System (MSDS) to target only those personnel that meet their unique predetermined requirements. The Navy has also been fortunate in that they are in a position to retain all the MSDS that are recruited "because they have been to our requirement."

Kubu says that "we cannot say that the feeder that's coming in addresses all our requirements because we have to take less than what we could have taken before. We used to take approximately

650 to 700 MSDS in the last few years, but in the last two years the MSDS program has reduced where we take 200 to 250."

This gap between intake numbers and requirement to staff critical posts is linked to the budget.

"We don't just get them out of the system, we retain them," Kubu explains, "But the danger of it is that it is also a killer to your Reserve Force. The MSDS was there to be used as a tool to feed the Reserve Force. But now we retain all of them and don't have the feeder system to the Reserves. It is the challenge we are facing."

Being forever positive, Hlongwane says that "despite the challenges we are faced with we, the South African Navy, are doing our part because the people of South Africa have placed their trust in us. We must therefore work harder and smarter - doing more with less, and now more than ever, we need to challenge traditional constructs, employing innovation to propel our Navy into the future."

"In the meantime," says Mhlana, "we service with what we have and we are managing the situation as best as we can. The results are showing in terms of our ability to deploy ships overseas and also for internal deployments."

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**News from the SANDF – Shrinking budget hits SA Navy operations.**

*Written by Dean Wingrin*

The reduction in funding for the South Africa Navy is being felt in the operational budget, which is affecting fleet maintenance, but the Navy maintains it is determined to succeed in spite of budget and staffing cuts.

This emerged during the Chief of the South African Navy's (SAN's) presentation to the media ahead of the Navy Festival that took place over the weekend.

Vice Admiral Mosuwa Hlongwane said "I think (the decreased budget) will

surely affect the maintenance of the vessels," while Rear Admiral Bubele Mhlana, Flag Officer Fleet, said "as we embark on each and every financial year, the budget we receive is getting less and less."

Referring to the frigates, a major source of pride is the current deployment by SAS Amatola under Exercise Ketane. Having undertaken the Royal Navy's Basic Operational Sea Training (BOST) and attending the sinking of the SS Mendi centenary commemorations in the United Kingdom in February, Amatola participated in Exercise Good Hope VII, held for the first time in Germany. Amatola is scheduled to arrive back in Simon's Town on 22 April, having conducted diplomatic visits to various West African countries.

Amatola was the first of the Navy's four Valour-class frigates to undergo an extensive refit in 2014/15. "That was done through the operating budget and we are still today suffering the consequences of the decision we had to make at that time," Mhlana told defenceWeb.

SAS Spioenkop recently represented the Navy during Armed Forces Week in Durban, along with fleet replenishment vessel SAS Drakenberg, hydrographic survey ship SAS Protea, the off-shore patrol vessels SAS Galeshewe and SAS Makhanda and submarine SAS Queen Modjadji I. Despite the inclement weather and tragedies that saw several SANDF members die in accidents, in excess of 18 000 visitors toured the ships and submarine.

SAS Isandlwana is in the process of drawing up the Statement of Work for its pending refit. As there is no additional funding available, the Navy is looking internally to save costs, seeing what can be done themselves. Items outside their skills capacity will be given to industry.

The frigate SAS Mendi has been in the DED (Docking and Essential Defect Period) process for a number of years. Mhlana acknowledged that Mendi was not a priority in terms of the operational cycle. "But we have decided this year to prioritise the completion of the DED as we are preparing to refit Isandlwana."

It is hoped to complete Mendi's extended DED within the next six months.

Submarine SAS Queen Modjadji I has been getting some much needed sea time qualification of the submarine crews as the Navy has a dedicated project to build capacity within the submarine squadron.

As the Navy does not have enough qualified members to complete two submarine crews, operations and missions are allocated to either Queen Modjadji I or to SAS Manthatisi (which is also in DED), as required.

Although not specifically mentioned, it is thought that SAS Charlotte Maxeke is the next submarine undergoing refit.

SAS Drakensberg, the Navy's sole fleet replenishment vessel, is presently undertaking an Operation Copper anti-piracy mission in the Mozambique Channel following her participation in Armed Forces Week. Despite recent reports that SAS Drakensberg was lying at anchor in Pemba Bay, Mozambique, for the past two weeks, allegedly due to mechanical problems, Mhlana told defenceWeb that Drakensberg had returned to Durban due to a defect. A new spare part was delivered after four days and subsequently installed by the vessels' own crew in four hours before heading out to continue her mission. Drakensberg is scheduled to conclude her patrol next week and thereafter return to Simon's Town by the end of March.

However, other sources indicate repairs to the Drakensberg were carried out in Pemba and that she is currently making her way to South Africa, with ship tracking data showing she is in Maputo.

This will be the Navy's final Operation Copper patrol for the current financial year. As the Navy no longer maintains a continuous presence in the Mozambique Channel, they have been allocated three (to a maximum of four) patrols in the next financial year which commences on 1 April.

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## News from the

### SANDF – Personnel rightsizing shaping up to be a headache for DoD.

*Written by defenceWeb*

Parliament’s Joint Standing Committee on Defence ((JSCD) was last week briefed by National Treasury on implementation of the Defence Review 2015 with a major point of contention being how Minister Mapisa-Nqakula’s department and its operating arm, the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), is going to achieve the recommended personnel rightsizing.

The committee, according to research done by Parliament’s dedicated research unit and used by the JSCD, should ask the Department of Defence (DoD) about staffing levels in the national military machine as implied in Milestone One of the Defence Review.

“Milestone One,” it said in a brief tabled at the meeting, “implies the reduction of personnel from the current figure (in excess of 90 000) to a total of 72 000. How will this reduction be funded and managed? What will the total cost of the personnel reduction be and is this budgeted for in the planned R43 to R57 billion allocated to the first two milestones of the Defence Review? What system will be used to determine which soldiers should remain?” is a further question.

The brief also points out the 2017 Estimates of National Expenditure (ENE) note a reduction of personnel from 78 345, excluding Reserves, in 2016/17 to 69 609 in 2017/18. This, it says, is crucial to the achievement of Milestone One and “will require the employment of up to 8 736 permanent uniformed and civilian SANDF members to be terminated”. It suggest the JSCD ask the DoD how this reduction will be achieved in in the 2017/18 financial cycle, what it cost will be and, more importantly, will it impact on future recruitment.

Milestone One of the Defence Review, under the overall aim of arresting the decline in the SANDF, calls for a

reduction in personnel to 72 000, Milestone Two, on the other hand, calls for an increase to 101 000 the Parliamentary research unit said. The JSCD should find out from the DoD how this will be managed. Will individuals declared redundant in Milestone One be recalled or will 29 000 new troops be trained, it asks and also wants to know if there will be sufficient funding to manage the increase in personnel.

National Treasury’s Dr Rendani Randela told the JSCD meeting compensation (wages and salaries) for DoD and SANDF employees stood at 57% of the total defence budget for 2016/17, In the 2001/02 financial year it was 39%.

Randela also pointed out the current macro-composition of the defence budget is unsustainable given limited funds for “other discretionary items” to modernise the SANDF.

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## News from the

### SANDF – Minister confirms 35 Squadron grounded.

*Written by Kim Helfrich*

The SA Air Force (SAAF) is currently not able to perform any maritime patrol taskings because none of its C-47TP aircraft are operational.



This was revealed in reply to a Parliamentary question posed by Democratic Alliance (DA) shadow

defence and military veterans minister, Kobus Marais.

He was told by Defence and Military Veterans Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, in writing, that “none of the seven Dakotas are currently operational or serviceable due to the implementation of air worthiness directive on the primary flight controls”.

The directive apparently relates to a wiring corrosion problem, which has neither been confirmed nor denied by the SAAF, after questions going back to last year. This all but ensures current and future deployments for the Southern African Development community (SADC) anti-piracy tasking, Operation Copper, will be limited to maritime and electronic listening platforms.

With no apparent intent to acquire new maritime aviation platforms the airborne arm of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) will also not be able to contribute to maritime security, as expected in the blue economy sector of Operation Phakisa. It is also not able to deliver when it comes to search and rescue operations in South African waters and further.

The Ministerial answer appears to leave AFB Ysterplaat-based 35 Squadron grounded until such time as the corrosion problem can be eliminated and at least some of its more than 70 year-old aircraft made airworthy and returned to the flight line.

While not completely grounded, 28 Squadron finds itself in a precarious condition.

The AFB Waterkloof-based transport squadron’s fleet of nine C-130BZ aircraft are also –

understandably – showing signs of age. They have been operational for more than 50 years and according to Mapisa-

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Nqakula only three aircraft are currently serviceable.

Her written answer to Marais' question states: "six of the nine C-130s are operational with three of those six being serviceable".

She was not nearly as forthcoming in replying to another question asked by Marais.

He wanted to know whether the board of inquiry established to look into possible irregularities at 21 Squadron, the SAAF VIP transport unit, has completed its work and compiled a report on its findings. If not, Marais wanted the Minister to provide him with a date when the report would be available to the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans. As far as can be ascertained the board was established more than a year ago but this could not be confirmed.

The Ministerial response reads: "the board of inquiry is not completed yet".  
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**News from the SANDF** – Navy heroes who died attempting to save lives in Durban to be recognised.

*Written by Dean Wingrin/Kim Helfrich*

The three SA Navy members who died attempting to rescue workers from a gas-filled pit at Naval Base Durban last month will be recognised and honoured posthumously SA Navy Chief, Vice Admiral Mosuwa Hlongwane, said.

Speaking at fleet headquarters in Simon's town he said Leading Seaman Amrithlall Tothara Ramdin, Able Seaman Francois William Mundell and Seaman Henro Ter Borg had again shown there was no greater sacrifice than to give one's life for one's country or fellow countrymen.

The three dead sailors would be acknowledged posthumously with medals for their bravery and the process was already underway. Deon Fourie, Professor of Strategic Studies at Unisa and an authority on South African medals and decorations said the three

would in all probability be honoured with the Order of Mendi for Bravery.

"While it is a national order it is very much an order to do with bravery and saving lives which is what the sailors lost their own lives doing.

"The issuing of decorations and honours is not a rushed process anywhere and South Africa is no different," he said.

"It would involve three nominations to be written by someone in Navy HQ, presumably for the Order of Mendi. These would then be vetted and signed by the responsible officer or officer under who the sailors served and then vetted by the SA Navy honours board followed by Chief Navy. If I'm correct in my suggestion of the Order of Mendi, the recommendations would be signed by SANDF Chief and perhaps the Minister, who might serve as a link to the Presidency. The next step is for recommendations to be passed for vetting by the President's Orders Advisory Council and finally the awards would be made to, in this instance, the next of kin at the President's routine investiture."

The exception would be if CNavY "persuades" the president to make the awards at a SA Navy parade or investiture Fourie added with the rider that he would not hazard a timeframe.

The Chief of the South African National Defence Force, General Solly Shoke, has already committed to looking after the dependants of the three sailors and bursaries would be awarded to their children via the SANDF Education Trust.

Ramdin, Mundell and Ter Borg died when they went to assist Department of Public Works employees working on a sewage valve at the naval base. Gas fumes leaked out and affected their breathing, overwhelming them. A contractor ran for assistance and approached the

passing Maritime Reaction Squadron bus.

The three navy members immediately responded and descended into the pit, with a contractor from Riordor. Unfortunately, all four succumbed to the high levels of fumes in the pit and died. As more assistance arrived, rescuers descended using Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus recovered six bodies to surface.

Twenty-four other people who assisted with recovery of the bodies were taken to hospital where they were treated for shortness of breath.

Hlongwane was out of the country attending the SS Mendi centenary in the English Channel when the accident happened but indicated he will visit the families.

"While no word or deed can ever compensate the bereaved families for their loss or serve as recompense for their sacrifice, we are able to at the very least recognise and reward their bravery and courage; albeit posthumously."  
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**News from the SANDF** – Armed Forces Day events in Durban and Port Elizabeth cost R50 million plus.

*Written by defenceWeb*

Showcasing South Africa's military to the public is a major part of the annual Armed Forces Day celebration which has seen close to R50 million spent on the event this year in Durban and last year in Port Elizabeth.



This was revealed by Defence and Military Veterans Minister, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, in response to a Parliamentary question asked by Democratic Alliance (DA) shadow defence minister, Kobus Marais. He wanted to know the cost of the event and its objectives taking into account the budgetary constraints faced by the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

The first Armed Forces Day event was held in a wet Thaba Tshwane in 2010 on December 16. It then disappeared from the South African calendar of military events before resurfacing in 2013 again in the greater Pretoria area, this time Atteridgeville at the Mendi Memorial site on February 21, to tie in with the commemoration of South Africa's biggest naval tragedy ever – the sinking of the troopship SS Mendi in the English Channel in 1917.

Since then it has by presidential proclamation become an annual event. It is hosted each year by a different service of the SANDF and each of the country's nine provinces will host the event on a rotational basis.

The 2016 event saw Armed Forces Day grow into a week of military events and activities with Port Elizabeth selected as the venue and the SA Navy as the host service.

The 2017 event, with the added lustre of coinciding with the centenary of the SS Mendi sinking, was held in Durban last month with the SA Army the host service.

According to Mapisa-Nqakula the Port Elizabeth event cost R20,6 million and this year's Durban festivities saw R24,7 million spent.

In her reply to Marais, the Minister pointed out that the SANDF does not have an allocated budget for Armed Forces Day.

“The host service budgets for corporate costs while all participating services (SA Air Force, SA Army, SA Military Health Service and SA Navy) and divisions budget for participating members' subsistence and travel costs,” she said.

Apart from showcasing the country's military assets, in terms of both equipment and people, Armed Forces Day honours the men and women serving in the SANDF and affirms South Africa's support and gratitude to them for upholding the Constitution, defending the nation's territorial integrity and protecting its people. It has also grown into a showcase for the varied careers on offer in the SANDF.

The five major objectives of Armed Forces Day are, according to the SANDF, to unite all South Africans behind the country's defence force; to allow the defence force to interact with communities; to raise public awareness of the military and its purpose; to showcase SANDF capabilities in terms of equipment and technology and to celebrate the defence force's achievements in both internal and external missions.

Potchefstroom in North West hosted Armed Forces Day in 2015 with Free State capital, Bloemfontein, hosting the 2014 event. The venue for Armed Forces Day 2018 has not yet been announced.

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**News from the SANDF – Military camo is not for civvies and that's the law.**

*Written by defenceWeb*

Civilians are not – by law – allowed to wear any SA National Defence Force (SANDF) uniform including combat dress, better known as camouflage.



“The SANDF is concerned by a growing trend among the public who, knowingly or unknowingly, either wear or are in possession of complete SANDF combat dress or items such as jackets and shirts,” Brigadier General Mafi Mgobozi, Director: Corporate Communication, said.

The Defence Act of 2002 stipulates: “any person who, without authority, possesses or wears prescribed uniforms distinctive marks or crests, or performs any prohibited act while wearing such uniform or with such uniform, distinctive marks or crests, is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years”.

According to Mgobozi the SANDF camouflage uniform has been registered for use solely by authorised members of the SANDF and by members identified by Chief SANDF and appointed honorary members of various SANDF units and/or bases.

Colonel Ronald Maseko, SSO: Directorate: Corporate Communications, said the warning was not premised by any recent upturn in the wearing of SANDF camouflage by members of the public.

“Military Police and the SA Police Service are always on the look-out for people wearing camouflage,” he said adding the fine handed down was dependent on the magistrate hearing the case.

“There is no set amount for the fine in the Defence Act and all considerations are taken into account when a case is heard.”

This would presumably include camouflage clothing having been thrown out and collected by rag pickers at either garbage collection points or dumping sites and people wearing stolen camouflage.

People illegally in possession of either complete or items of SANDF combat dress

are encouraged to return them to their closest SANDF base or unit, Mgobozi said.

There have been many cases in the past of civilians wearing SANDF camouflage, especially for hunting.

Military analyst Darren Olivier notes the law only applies to the current SANDF-specific pattern and not all camouflage, thus it won't for example affect the ability of the EFF, ANC Youth League or MK Veterans Association to wear camouflage outfits at rallies.

It appears wearing the old South African Defence Force (SADF) brown nutria camouflage is permitted.  
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**News from the SANDF – Mgwebi stays on as MONUSCO Force Commander.**

*Written by defenceWeb*

To many in South African military circles he is the epitome of the professional officer and further testimony to this comes with the renewal of Lieutenant General Derrick Mgwebi's contract as MONUSCO Force Commander in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for a further 12 month period.



This was confirmed to defenceWeb this week by Charles Bambara, director of the MONUSCO public information division in Kinshasa, and follows the extension of the mission's mandate by

the UN Security council - albeit with reduced troop numbers – for another year.

Mgwebi took up the post at the start of last year after being appointed by then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for a year. Bambara told defenceWeb: "General Mgwebi is still in charge as MONUSCO Force Commander. I am not aware of any plan for him to leave the mission soon and, like all staff in a peacekeeping mission, contracts are renewed once a year".

The three star general, who headed up the SA National Defence Force's (SANDF's) Joint Operations Division before being named as the top man for the single largest peacekeeping operation being undertaken by the world body, said one of the major obstacles he saw as MONUSCO Force Commander was the existence and positioning of the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

He recently told the SANDF publication SA Soldier: "The FIB can know the base, for example, of one armed grouping is about 10 km away, but they cannot attack because that would be called target operations and this is not allowed because they can only protect civilians.

"This is frustrating. The Security Council, when they renewed our mandate, was informed by us of the clause that said the FIB will neutralise armed groupings. It should rather say the MONUSCO force will neutralise and conduct targeted and offensive operations".

As far as challenges facing the mission are concerned Mgwebi said both the MONUSCO mandate and the attitude of the host country to the UN are critical in making the mission successful.

Other challenges he listed were armed groups wearing the same uniforms as FARDC (the DRC defence force) "making it difficult in dealing with them"; the size of the country, absence of infrastructure such as roads and bridges restricting movement and affecting operations; the lack of political progress and armed groups entering villages to attack and kill civilians.

Mgwebi is nevertheless adamant that MONUSCO's military component has made "a tangible contribution" to implementation of the overall mission mandate.

"Military peacekeepers in Congo are deployed in areas where innocent civilians and displaced communities require the most protection. The FIB continues to support FARDC to maintain peace in Eastern DRC and to neutralise armed groups terrorising innocent civilians.

"In case of any emergency notification from our early response system, we are able to send troops to affected areas in advance to defuse violence. It is worth mentioning that military peacekeepers render emergency humanitarian aid to the conflict affected areas including the provision of food, water and medical aid as well as evacuation of the seriously wounded," he told the publication.

MONUSCO is not his first continental deployment in peacekeeping operations. Mgwebi previously served as Force Commander of the African Mission in Burundi.

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**News from the SANDF – No change in SANDF deployment numbers for MONUSCO.**

*Written by defenceWeb*

The more than 1 300 SA National Defence Force (SANDF) personnel and SA Air Force (SAAF) rotary-winged aircraft, including three Rooivalk attack helicopters, look set to remain in service with the United Nations mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The South African commitment to the MONUSCO mission is known as Operation Mistral with a second, far smaller SANDF deployment, involved in training the country's military under Operation Thebe.

A UN Security council resolution adopted last week is set to see troop numbers to the mission – the single largest peacekeeping and peace support operation undertaken by the UN - cut by around two thousand. At the same time the mission's mandate was extended by another year. MONUSCO remains the only UN mission with an offensive mandate through its Force intervention Brigade (FIB), staffed by South Africa, Tanzania and Malawi.

MONUSCO total deployment numbers are just below the 20 000 mark. This includes military and police personnel as well as civilians employed by the world body in the DRC.

Captain (SAN) Jaco Theunissen, SANDF Joint Operations spokesman, today said no instruction on possible withdrawal of any South African elements from MONUSCO had yet been received.

The former commander of the SANDF's Joint Operations Division, Lieutenant General Derrick Mgwebi, has been MONUSCO force commander since December 2015 and it appears he will remain in the post. A UN statement last week setting out the Security Council resolution to cut the number of blue helmets in the central African country made no mention of a new force commander.

16 Squadron's Rooivalk combat support helicopters have made major contributions to the MONUSCO FIB since first being deployed in late October 2013. Squadron Officer Commanding, Lieutenant Colonel Danie Bellingan, last year said the South African designed, developed and manufactured Rooivalk was more highly regarded than the Russian Mi-24 in the DRC.

He said this was partly due to pilot training and partly due to Rooivalk's superior range and endurance. Rooivalk

is usually first to attack a target, followed by Mi-24s after it has been marked. Bellingan said the Mi-24 crews regularly asked South African pilots for advice, which indicates "we are doing something right. It's quite a feather in the cap for us." He said Mi-8 helicopters specifically request to be escorted by the Rooivalk in the DRC.

There are also five SAAF Oryx medium transport helicopters deployed to MONUSCO at any one time.

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**News from the SANDF** – SANDF is the "apolitical force of the people" – Secretary of Defence Gulube.

*Written by defenceWeb*

Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube, used the official opening of the Rand Show on Good Friday to confirm to South Africans that the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) was "the apolitical defence force of the people" and its members were dedicated to defending the country and its people.



He told those present in the arena for the official opening, ahead of an energy-packed demonstration of SANDF capabilities and equipment, the SANDF was taking part in the Rand Show under the theme of "not just another hero".

"It is a theme that seeks to celebrate the selfless service our men and women in uniform render to their country even at the risk of their lives. We say 'not just another hero' because the sons and

daughters of South Africa who respond to the call to become soldiers are not ordinary heroes. They are a select few who choose to forfeit the glitz and glamour of other career opportunities and occupations making the brave choice of defending the land of their birth with their own lives. Such is the sacrifice our soldiers make.

"Our soldiers are true heroes who are activated in humanitarian efforts in aid of our fellow South Africans in times of distress as well as in peace enforcement and peace building operations across the African continent and the Rand Show affords us the opportunity to share our stories of success and challenges with our people while also displaying military hardware for our people to have the look at and get the feel of their country's wide-ranging inventory of battle equipment."

Gulube said soldiers from all four services of the SANDF – air force, army, navy and military health – would be at the show to interact with South Africans and give them an insight into "the responsibility they have to defend and protect".

He added the SANDF had been an integral part of the Johannesburg show, generally accepted as being the largest consumer exhibition in South Africa, since 2011 and it had become a platform for the military to "reach out to South Africans and showcase its capabilities and vast career opportunities the country's sons and daughters are invited to embrace".

Men and women in uniform on the SANDF stand were, the Secretary for Defence said, on hand to share their stories of successes and challenges in, among others, peace enforcement and peacebuilding as well as in times of disaster and distress. He had urged the public to speak to the soldiers saying previous experience has seen "a high level of patriotism inspired" among people who interacted with airmen, military medics, sailors and soldiers.

## News from the SANDF – Minister praises soldiers deployed on border protection.

*Written by Kim Helfrich*

Defence and Military Veterans Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula got up close and personal with soldiers deployed on border protection in Mpumalanga this week and said more than R10 million worth of contraband was confiscated since March.

The seizure of contraband, usually cigarettes, liquor, clothing and footwear, is an almost daily occurrence for soldiers on patrol along the Mozambique/South Africa border.

She is reported by SAnews to have told journalists in Komatipoort the soldiers, part of the national border protection tasking Operation Corona, are also active in curbing the flow of illegal immigrants into South Africa and preventing cross-border crime. Soldiers deployed in the Kruger National park assist rangers and other law enforcement agencies in the ongoing battle against rhino poaching.

Another arrow has been added to the law enforcement quiver that aims to stop rhino poachers with the opening of a regional court in Skukuza, the “capital” of Kruger, late last month.

Environmental Affairs Minister Edna Molewa said at the opening “the court is one of a plethora of measures taken in terms of the Integrated Strategic Management approach to combat rhino poaching”.

“Having a regional court in Skukuza will ensure case turnaround times for rhino poaching and related cases are expedited thus making a significant contribution to tackling the illicit trade in rhino horn and related activities.”

According to Mapisa-Nqakula one of the bigger problems facing soldiers attempting to keep illegals out are dilapidated fences and – as ever – a lack of funds.

“An increase in the defence budget would go a long way to address the challenges. We are well equipped to protect the country regardless of the challenges faced,” an upbeat Defence Minister said. “We are also working with our counterparts in both Mozambique and Swaziland in making sure that we fight the crimes together.”

She added that the need for more resources to be allocated to defence was not because “we want to militarise. It is because we want to protect our country”.

The budget shortfall is the main contributor to there currently being 15 companies, the majority of them from Reserve Force units, deployed on Operation Corona duties. The Department of Defence plans to deploy 22 companies in total on border protection over the medium term, but no extra funding has been allocated for the current financial year.

“Operation Corona would have been even more successful if the defence force had had adequate resources so that it can deploy the full complement of companies, which are on standby, to be part of this operation,” she said.

“The intention of being here is to expose South Africans to what the South African National Defence Force is doing, that which it is able to do and that which it is not able to achieve and that all has to do in the main of the cutting down the budget of the SANDF. There is no country in the sub-Saharan region which receives the sort of budget we receive and yet we are supposed to be having a strong SANDF with enormous resources...but we are unable to sustain that which we already have”.

During her visit, the Minister interacted with the Mbuzini community bordering Mozambique and Swaziland and assured them that working together with the soldiers, they will be able to tackle cross-border crimes.

"We came here to talk to you and let you know that as the defence force, we are trying by all means to protect you.

“We know that your cars and livestock are being smuggled through these borders either to Swaziland or Mozambique. We want you to be eyes and ears of the state. Let’s fight these crimes together,” she said.

According to Private Sibusiso Tshunungwa of Johannesburg Regiment, between 20 March and the end of April, 206 unregistered people were arrested and two rhino horns were seized.

“There are areas where you have no visible patrolling by the South African National Defence Force but equally you have areas where you have the full complement of the South African National Defence Force who are patrolling in those areas and in those areas there have been major success stories,” Mapisa-Nqakula told News24.

In an apparent extension of the SANDF's commitment to rural development she indicated food and other necessities for soldiers should be acquired from local communities in Mpumalanga. Currently the national military rural development effort is limited to a pilot project in North West, centred round the Potchefstroom defence community.

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## News from the SANDF – SANDF troops gearing up for DRC rotation.

*Written by defenceWeb*

Around 700 soldiers from 5 South African Infantry (SAI) Battalion are in the Port St Johns area of the Eastern Cape for jungle warfare training ahead of their deployment with the United Nation’s Force Intervention Brigade in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

After completing their jungle warfare training in Port St Johns, the soldiers will be sent to Bloemfontein for final training before a few weeks of leave and then deployment to the DRC at the beginning of June.

The 5 SAI soldiers have been in Port St Johns since the beginning of April.

Spokesperson, Captain (SAN) Jaco Theunissen, said that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) must, in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations, supply forces for deployment under the UN flag in the DRC.

“To better equip the deploying forces, the soldiers are prepared in a forest environment where it is necessary to adapt the current battle tactics to suit the circumstances that they will operate in the DRC. The only area in South Africa that allows the SANDF to achieve this objective is the Port St Johns area,” he said.

“From Port St Johns 5 SAI Bn will move to the SANDF Mobilisation Unit in Bloemfontein to receive Mission Readiness Training and to mobilise before they will start the rotation to the DRC around June 2017,” said Theunissen. “They will be deployed for a twelve month period”.

In Port St Johns they are being trained by Colonel William Dixon, who was the force commander in the Central African Republic in 2013 and who was in charge during the Battle of Bangui.

Training does not cover just jungle warfare, but also fighting in built up environments, medical evacuation and protecting civilians. Some of the training uses Saab’s Gamer Manpack live simulation training system.

5 SAI has been deployed to the DRC before, and replaced 6 SAI in mid-2014 for a year-long deployment. Although most previous UN deployments are for six months it is more economical and effective to deploy forces for a year, as less time is spent acclimatising with one deployment per year than two.

In addition to soldiers, the SANDF has aerial assets and vehicles deployed with the UN mission in the DRC, including three Rooivalk attack helicopters and five Oryx transport helicopters. The South African aviation unit is an operational tool of the UN force commander, meaning that the helicopters are under UN, not South African, control.

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### News from the SANDF – Military veterans by the numbers.

*Written by defenceWeb*

The oft mentioned database of South Africa’s military veterans shows the country currently has 67 718 veterans from at least 10 different forces registered.

According to the Department of Military Veterans’ Annual Performance Plan 2017/18 – 2019/2020 they are the people it is providing services, including healthcare, housing and education assistance, to.

The 74 page publication had a table titled “Community of Military Veterans” which shows the single largest contributor to the national population of military veterans is the former SA Defence Force (SADF) with 35 189 registered retired airmen, military medics, sailors and soldiers on the national database.

Second, by a long distance is the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) with 12 836, and Umkhonto we Sizwe, what was the armed wing of the ANC, following in third place with 10 745 registered on the military veterans database. Apla (the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army) ranks fourth with 4 316 registered veterans. Seventh place goes to AZANLA (Azanian National Liberation Army) with 560.

The former Bophuthatswana and Transkei defence forces each have, according to the publication, 1 609 registered military veterans while the former Ciskei has 445 and former Venda defence forces 173.

In age terms the single largest group are former soldiers between the ages of

45 and 54. At 27 553 they make up around 40% of the total. Other age groupings where there are more than ten thousand registered veterans are 35 to 44 (14 927) and 55 to 64 with 13 221. Just over eight thousand are 65 and older with just under four thousand 35 and younger.

Late last year Parliament’s Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans (PCDMV) questioned the reliability of the military veterans’ database. Malusi Motimele, PCDMV chairman, said the committee is on record as wanting a “reliable and verifiable database and is concerned this still remains a challenge”.

“It is negatively affecting the delivery of houses at provincial level leading to under-performance and must be urgently addressed,” he said.

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### News from the SANDF – DR Congo deployment to cost just on a billion Rand.

*Written by defenceWeb*

South Africa’s fulfilment of “international obligations toward the United Nations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)” for the next 12 months will cost just short of a billion Rand.



The cost of the next year’s deployment for the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) to the largest UN

peacekeeping and peace support mission, MONUSCO, will be R979 253 751. This information is contained in a letter signed by President Jacob Zuma, Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, and due to be tabled at a meeting of Parliament’s Joint Standing Committee on Defence (JSCD) today (Friday, May 12).

The Presidency issued a statement on Friday, May 5, saying Zuma was extending the involvement of the South African military in MONUSCO and its Force intervention Brigade (FIB) for another year. The statement gave personnel numbers involved – 1 371 – and the dates – from April 1 this year to March 31, 2018 – but made no mention of cost.

The Presidential letter, dated May 4, was, according to the JSCD notice of the meeting, added as the second – and new agenda – item for the meeting. The only other item on the agenda is a briefing by Defence and Military Veterans Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula on the “implementation and funding model of the Defence Review 2015”.

Zuma’s letter indicates he will communicate the contents to the National Council of Provinces and the JSCD. It also requests National Assembly Speaker, Baleka Mbete, to bring the matter to the attention of MPs.

The expense incurred by the SANDF in meeting this continental foreign policy obligation, via the UN, will be paid back to South Africa, following performance evaluations of the various components of the South African military deployment. It is not known how long it takes for this process to be completed but then the UN payment goes into National Treasury’s B7 account.

This, military analyst Helmoed Heitman, said is on the basis the funds were added to the defence budget specifically for the deployment and any reimbursement “must come back to Treasury”.

“The problem is a proportion of the reimbursement is intended to cover wear and tear on equipment, not just

allowances and direct expenses, so the defence force is effectively left out of pocket,” he added.

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### News from the SANDF – South Africa’s dog soldiers.

*Written by defenceWeb*

Dogs have long been part and parcel of the military and South Africa is no different with a specialist dog training facility coming into being as far back as 1964.

The Dog Training School in what was then Voortrekkerhoogte and is now Thaba Tshwane had its main aim to train dogs and handlers for mine detection work. The unit was also, according to retired lieutenant colonel Chris Oosthuizen, responsible for acquiring suitable dogs and researching canine diseases, nutrition and breeding. Dogs acquired for training were German shepherds. Dobermann pinschers, Labradors and border collies were found to be the best breeds and training could be as long as two years.

In 1979, the dog centre was moved to Bourke’s Luck in what is now Mpumalanga and four years later the SA Army’s dog and equestrian capabilities were combined into 12 SA Infantry Battalion. Dogs and infrastructure for these animals was moved to the control of what is now the SA Military Health Service with motorcycle and visual tracking capabilities transferred to the Infantry School outside Oudtshoorn.

In due course the landward arm of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) set up with the SA Army Specialised Infantry Capability (SAASIC) dog unit at Potchefstroom in the North West. Training in canine utilisation and distinct areas, such as patrol work, guarding and sentry work, detection and search and rescue is done at the unit.

As is the case with people, tactical and security dogs cannot be expected to be effective unless they are in peak physical condition. This means, Oosthuizen said, in addition to a correct feeding regime and medical care, dogs

must be exercised “regularly, repeatedly and diligently”.

“Obstacles are an excellent medium as dogs will in all likelihood be required to overcome obstacles while on operational duty. It is thus necessary for the dog to learn – under orders and control – how to overcome obstacles.

“Like humans not all dogs are swimmers with some scared of water. Reluctance to get into water must be overcome by progressive training. While the dog is in the water it must be encouraged to take floating objects thrown by its handler. A gradual increase in distance and depth will usually see the dog swimming after the object without problems.”

According to Oosthuizen, obedience work is the benchmark for the dog handler’s skills with a spirited, happy and accurate performance by the dog working in unison with its handler demonstrating the skills of both.

Dogs are deployed on the border protection tasking, Operation Corona, as well as in detection and guarding duties at bases and other military facilities nationally. The number of working dogs deployed or those in training is not made public for security reasons.

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### News from the SANDF – No expanded deployment for Operation Corona due to lack of funding.

*Written by Kim Helfrich*

Indications are any plans to expand the presence of soldiers on South Africa’s landward borders will not happen if the current status quo as far as financing is concerned remains in place.

According to an analysis done for Parliament’s Joint Standing Committee on Defence (JSCD), there is “a significant reduction” in the number of Reserve Force mandays from 2,7 million in the 2016/17 financial year to 1,8 million in the current financial year.

With by far the majority of soldiers deployed on Operation Corona border protection duties coming from Reserve Force units, it appears the military will be hard-pressed to maintain the present commitment. This sees 15 companies, sub-units, in parliamentary jargon, currently deployed along South Africa's borders with Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

Planning was for the number on companies deployed to increase by one, possibly two, a year to a maximum of 22. Senior Reserve Force officers have privately told defenceWeb "it is and will remain a problem".

Other areas of concern raised in the analysis, tabled at last week's meeting of the JSCD are personnel numbers. The meeting took place ahead of the Department of Defence's budget presentation to the National Assembly, scheduled for May 25.

The lack of a suitable exit mechanism will not see retrenchment of any SANDF personnel, uniformed or civilian, in the 2017/18 financial year. This goes against the grain of recommendations in the Defence Review, started as far back as 2012 and renamed the Defence Review 2015, as far as milestone one is concerned.

The analysis points out the Department of Defence (DoD) is unlikely to be able to reduce personnel figures by "roughly 9 000 in one year" and advises JSCD members to ask if there are plans in place to effect the personnel reduction noted in the Estimates of National Expenditure (ENEs).

"If so, how will it be done and what will the cost be. If personnel are not reduced how will the shortfall in salaries be addressed?" are other questions the oversight committee should seek answers to.

Earlier this month, defenceWeb posed questions to the DoD head of communications on similar issues and was told the Minister "would address the issues" during her budget vote.

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## News from the SANDF – SA Army holds massive capability demonstration.

Written by Guy Martin

The South African Army, supported by other branches of service and the defence industry, held a spectacular capability demonstration at the De Brug training area outside Bloemfontein, involving dozens of armoured vehicles, jets and helicopters, which showed that the Army is a force to be reckoned with.



The main focus of the SA Army Capability Demonstration, with the main event on 18 May, was to demonstrate the Army's state of combat readiness and show that the military stands ready to defend and protect South Africa, safeguard South Africa and its people, contribute to regional and continental security and provide support in times of crisis and disaster.

The demonstration saw airborne and firepower demonstrations, mechanised attacks and the static display of weapons and vehicles. It began with pathfinders parachuting in from cloudless blue skies and paratroopers being dropped from a C212 light transport aircraft. After various demonstrations, such as by tanks, infantry and artillery, it was all brought together in a massive offensive involving troops, armour, artillery and a

Rooivalk that stirred up huge clouds of dust and smoke.

The Army in very explosive fashion put almost all its weapons in action, including 80 and 120 mm mortars, G5 and G6 artillery, Badger 20 mm and 90 mm variants, Rooikat armoured cars and Olifant main battle tanks. Bateleur rockets made an eerie whine as they streaked across the sky while ZT-3 and Milan missiles hissed as they crossed the range to their targets.

Although primarily an Army demonstration, the Air Force was not

left out and provided two Gripen fighter jets, which dropped bombs onto the range. Oryx and A109 helicopters dropped and picked up troops and equipment while a Rooivalk provided close air support to forces on the ground with its 20 mm cannon and 70 mm rockets. Two C212 light transport aircraft dropped troops and cargo.

The engineering formation set off a 450 kg crater charge, which sent up huge clouds of dust, and a water spout charge, used to propel a jet of water under a bridge to demolish it. An attempt to clear a simulated minefield with the Plofadder breaching system did not go according to plan - due to a technical problem it had to be manually detonated.

A wide variety of technologies used by the SANDF was demonstrated, including laser-based firearm training

**The Shamrock**

systems supplied by Saab. This is integrated with other training and simulation systems such as the Chaka command and control system and Battletek simulation training system. These form part of the Battle Lab systems the SANDF is rolling out in Oudtshoorn, Bloemfontein and Potchefstroom.

Apart from huge array of military hardware present, the local industry also had a chance to demonstrate their weapons in action and exhibit their solutions. Rippel Effect fired their twin 40 mm grenade launchers from a Mamba while Denel Vehicle Systems fired their 7.62 mm SD ROW turret from their Africa Truck prototype. Sister company Pretoria Metal Pressings demonstrated their Inkunzi and automatic Inkunzi Strike weapons, firing 20x42 mm rounds.

Raising the South African Army's profile is high on Army chief Lieutenant General Lindile Yam's priority list, as he wants to ensure the public know the important work the Army does, and for South Africans to feel safe and secure.

However, Yam said he was not satisfied with the current frequency of training for the Army. Due to funding shortages several events have had to be converged into one. He said he would like more and larger exercises for the comfort and security of the people of South Africa.

The chief of the landward arm of the SANDF also said a lack of funding meant the tasks it is given are out of synch with its funding level and that the defence force has half the budget it used to have. At around 1% of GDP, Yam said this is uncommonly low. Even if it was 2% of GDP, the Army would still be behind. He said the Army feels the budget shortfall the most.

The lack of budget is also hampering the implementation of the Defence Review and Yam said no progress will be made implementing the Review until funding is addressed.

Some good news was the continued revival of the Army's capabilities under Project Thusano, with Cuban mechanics

bringing hundreds and hundreds of unserviceable vehicles back to life and saving millions of Rands in the process.

Yam said at the moment the SANDF is preparing to rotate troops with the United Nations mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and will soon see 4 South African Infantry (SAI) battalion return home. Ladysmith-based 5 SAI is currently preparing to join the Minusca mission in the DRC at the beginning of June, having completed most of its training, including jungle warfare training in Port St Johns. 5 SAI is currently at De Brug ahead of its rotation.

Yam said lessons learnt by 4 SAI in the DRC were being incorporated, and centred on personal protection. He said deployments like the DRC are tough as soldiers not only have to fight rebels but the terrain and climate too - boots last only three weeks in the tough tropical climate, for example, and there are many hidden challenges that people don't comprehend.

The Defence Service Commission visited the DRC earlier this year and was impressed with what it saw, praising the performance and conditions of soldiers in the DRC. Chairperson of the Defence Force Service Commission

Professor Edna van Harte told Yam that soldiers have a high reputation while South African pilots are regarded as heroes. When South African soldiers in the DRC move, the civilian population moves with them. She said it was important for the public and the government to know this.

The deployment to the DRC is one of the Army's biggest commitments but Operation Corona to protect South Africa's borders is another big one. Yam said there is a requirement to increase the number of troops on the border from 15 to 22 companies but he doesn't know with what as resources are

scarce and it takes a long time to train soldiers.

Yam said that in spite of limited resources the Army, along with the rest of the SANDF, is committed to the advancement of the African Union's Agenda 2063 which seeks to deliver a peaceful, prosperous and integrated Africa.

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**News from the SANDF – Royal Bafokeng King becomes 44 Squadron Honorary Colonel.**

*Written by defenceWeb*

The South African Air Force (SAAF) on 11 May held a ceremony to accept Kgosi Leruo Tshekedi Molotlegi, the 36th King of the Royal Bafokeng Nation, as Honorary Colonel of 44 Squadron.



The ceremony took place at Air Force Base Waterkloof outside Pretoria. The SAAF said Molotlegi is a fixed wing and rotorcraft pilot and in 2010 was appointed Honorary Colonel of 16 Squadron at AFB Bloemspruit. In 2017 he accepted the position of Honorary Colonel of 44 Squadron.

Molotlegi is the 36th King of the 150 000 strong Royal Bafokeng Nation and has served as King since 2000. The Royal Bafokeng Nation covers 1 000 square kilometres approximately 100 km northwest of Pretoria.

The appointment of Honorary Colonels is an established South African National

Defence Force (SANDF) tradition, as they help build relationships for the units at which they are attached through the Honorary Colonel network and assist in ensuring the maintenance of various customs and traditions. They also build and develop community support for their units by providing a public profile for the unit, the SAAF said.

Molotlegi is a graduate of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He currently serves as the Chancellor of North West University.

44 Squadron flies CASA 212 light transport aircraft and is based at AFB Waterkloof. During the ceremony on Thursday, two C212s performed a flypast for the assembled guests.  
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**News from the Regiment – The Regiment remembers former RSM John Fitzhenry.**

*Written by the Editor*

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, current and former members of the Regiment held a wake for former RSM John Fitzhenry who passed away

WO1. Fitzhenry served as RSM of the Regiment from 1967 to 1977 and later became a Brigade Sergeant-Major.

In True Irish fashion former comrades raised their glasses in a toast to their fallen friend. The Irish Pipes and Drums added colour to the event by playing some of the former RSM’s favourite tunes, which included the Regimental march, Killaloe.

Old friends reminisced, while paging through albums and recalled the good and sometimes funny times of their service with RSM Fitzhenry.

We will remember him...  
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**News from the Regiment – Shooting team improves at the combat rifle championships.**

*Written by Capt. G.W. Knott*

The shooting team from the South African Irish Regiment embarked on their adventure to the SA Combat Rifle Championships to Bloemfontein on 18 April.



They participated in a two day shooting competition to compete for the coveted Gold Cup awarded for reserve force shooting prowess.

The team had improved significantly since last year and ended up 9<sup>th</sup> overall in the team event. With the overall winners being Natal Carbineers

In a rare compliment, senior Permanent Force members congratulated the reserves as a whole mentioning that the reserves was a force to be reckoned with, with regards to musketry.  
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The SAIR shooting teams for this year were:

S/No	Force No	Rank	Init	Surname	Posting	Final Scores
1	89747596BV	WO 2	C	Saayman	Team Manager	
2	88602537BV	Capt	G.W.	Knott	Shottist	273
3	10902099BV	Capt	S.Z.	Mokoena	Shottist	262
4	93719870BV	Sgt	S.K.	Thole	Shottist	272
5	85509651BV	Cpl	A.J.	Van Den Heever	Shottist	214
6	01047893BV	L/Cpl	A.	Mclean	Shottist	358
7	91009381BV	Rfn	A.	Maritz	Shottist	257
8	84586437BV	Rfn	E.J.	Maritz	Shottist	412
9	98295256KV	Rfn	P.M.	Makhalanyane	Shottist	255
<b>DEVELOPMENT TEAM</b>						
10	95002648BV	Cpl	M.G.	Jonase	Team Captain	
11	01021161MR	CO	E.	Mametja	Shottist	139
12	82072976BV	Cpl	R	Hoosein	Shottist	220
13	97230163BV	Cav	A.D.	Constandse	Shottist	141
14	90072323KV	L/Cpl	C	Fink	Shottist	190

# From the Chaplain

Written by: Captain M C Pelser (Our honorary Field-Chaplain)

Are you a Jonah?

In the military, we are used to receiving and executing orders. This is part of the life of a soldier or a military man or woman. We do not always like our orders or enjoy executing it, but we must do it... But most of the time we rather do it because we know that our actions, or sometimes inactions, have consequences! In order to avoid negative consequences, we rather execute those orders! Whether we like it or not...

As a Christian, we also receive orders daily. You just have to read your Bible and you will see it. Sometimes we also don't want to execute these orders because we sometimes feel that the price we have to pay is too high. Sometimes we just don't feel like doing it.

I recently read the story of Jonah again. Whilst I was reading it I suddenly came to realize that a lot of us are exactly like Jonah! Let's read the first four verses of Jonah and have a look at what it says.

*Jonah 1:1-4 (NKJV) Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me." But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. But the Lord sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.*

In this scripture, we see that God sent out Jonah to go to Nineveh. But, low and behold, our man Jonah decided not to listen and follow his own mind! Does that not sound familiar? Don't we do just that almost daily? We tend to turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the orders and commands of God and follow our own minds!

But just as in the military, as in life, actions have consequences! So did the actions of Jonah! In the case of Jonah, the Lord sent out a great storm. This storm was so serious that the ship that they were on were nearly destroyed.

Now let's look at our own lives as Christians. We receive orders and commands from the Lord daily. Sometimes we choose not to listen to the orders and we decide to follow our own minds and hearts. As in the case with Jonah, our choices also have consequences. Most of the time we also end up in the storms that we create and cause due to our own choices. Most of the time these storms in our live are so severe that they feel like they are going or is about to destroy our little lifeboats! But let us not despair, because there is always hope...

Let's once again look at our man Jonah as see what happened to him...

*Jonah 1:17 (NKJV) Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.*

Now, just look at this scripture! How wonderful is it! Even though Jonah did not listen to what God told him to do, and the fact that he followed his own heart and mind, God did not let him be destroyed! Instead, God prepared in advance and "escape route" in the form of a great fish. The fish swallowed Jonah and spew him out three days later.

Now, let us look at the lesson we can learn from the story of Jonah. The Lord is sending us out to do his work daily. We might not have to go to a different city to warn them of coming destruction. Sometimes it is as small a thing as helping someone in need, to stop smoking or drinking, to swear a little less... Then we choose to do things our way! Not to listen to the Lord!

As we saw with Jonah, and as we know from life experiences, actions have consequences! Our lives turn into storms. The storms look like they are about to destroy our lives. But this is not necessary. God has already prepared an "escape route" for us. All we need to

do is to look onto the Cross and ask Jesus to help us out of the mess we are in, because by our own actions.

We must realize that as with Jonah, the relieve might not be instant. It might also take some time before we are spew out again in the calm waters of our lives. But the outcome and relieve is there! We just need to ask.

I want to challenge you to, first of all, not be a Jonah. Listen to the voice of God and follow his commands, orders and instructions.

Secondly, I want to challenge you, that if you are in the midst of a life storm, to call on Jesus in prayer and ask Him to help you and to assist you. God has prepared your escape route. Just call on Jesus to show you the way...

Let's pray: God, we come to You in the realization that we are more like Jonah than what we would like to admit. God, help us to hear Your voice, but more than that, help us to listen to Your voice and do what You command us. Jesus, we also want to pray that in those times and instances where we did not listen and our lives turned into storm, that You will come into our lives and help us out of these storms. God, we want to thank you in advance for the wonders that You are willing, able and wanting to do in our lives! We thank you Lord! We pray this in the name of Jesus, our only Savior! Amen!

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## Guide on the older medals of the SANDF

In 1968, the Commandant General of the South African Defence Force instituted the Commendation by the Commandant General, which was an emblem awarded for service of a high order which did not qualify for a decoration.



Recipients were entitled to wear a bronze protea flower emblem on a strip of tunic cloth, mounted like a medal ribbon and placed in the last position on their ribbon bars.

About 500 awards were made and, from the appearance of the emblem, it became irreverently known as the "Mielieblaar" (Corn leaf). When the title of Commandant General was changed to Chief of the Defence Force, after Admiral Hugo Biermann was appointed in that post in 1972, the name of the award was changed accordingly to the Chief of the Defence Force's Commendation.



On 9 October 1974, the Chief of the Defence Force's Commendation was replaced by the Chief of the Defence Force's Commendation Medal, which was still awarded by the Chief of the Defence Force for service of a high order. All the members of the "Mielieblaar Club" received the new medal, to replace the protea flower emblem. Even though it was officially sanctioned, the medal was considered unofficial and assumed the lowest position in the order of precedence, since it was not instituted or awarded by the State President

It could be awarded to all ranks of the South African Defence Force for service of a high order.

In 1993 it was ratified and formally instituted by the State President as the Military Merit Medal with the post nominal letters of MMM.

Conferment of this decoration was discontinued in respect of services

performed on or after 27 April 2003, when the Military Merit Medal was replaced by the iPhrothiya yeBhronzi (PB) [Protea Decoration Bronze].

**Source list:** Wikipedia  
SA Medal Site  
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## The National Flag Guide

*A guide to the correct usage of South Africa's National Flag, compiled by the Southern African Vexillological Association.*

Treat your flag with respect. The National Flag must at all times be treated with dignity and respect. In the Regulations Regarding the Flying of the National Flag, published just before the flag was adopted in 1994, the do's and don'ts are clearly spelled out.

### The flag must never:

- Be allowed to touch the ground or floor.
- Be used as a table cloth, or draped in front of a platform.
- Be used to cover a statue, plaque corner stone etc. at unveiling or similar ceremonies.
- Be used to start or finish any competition, race or similar event.
- Be manufactured or used as underclothes, bath and floor mats or any similar demeaning application.
- Be used for any commercial advertising in a manner that will distort or show disrespect to the flag. Use of the flag in artefacts and products is subject to the approval of The Presidency and, in the case of manufactured items, the Department of Trade and Industry.

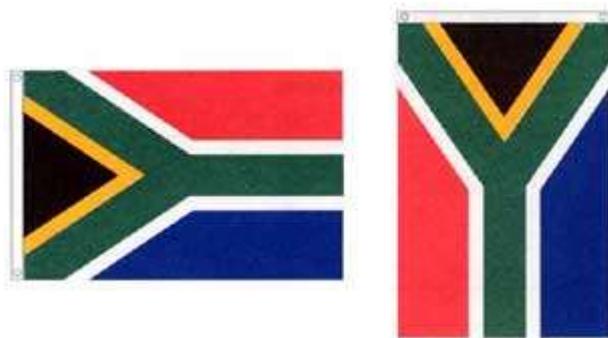
### Traditional rules for handling the flag:

There are a number of traditional rules of respect that should be observed when handling or displaying the National Flag:

- The flag should always be hoisted at the start of the working day and lowered again before or at sunset. It

is not to remain flying at night unless suitably illuminated. In South Africa, this rule still applies to government-designated flag stations, while through common usage the flag can be displayed 24 hours a day outside of official stations.

- The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.
- Whenever a person sees an official flag hoisting or lowering ceremony in progress, he or she should come to a halt and stand respectfully to attention for the duration. If a hat is worn, it should be removed and the right hand should be placed over the heart in salute. Persons in uniform should salute in the manner prescribed by their service. (The same rules apply when the National Anthem is being played or sung.)
- The flag should never be depicted, displayed or flown upside down. Flying a flag upside down is the traditional sign of surrender! When displayed horizontally, the black triangle should be to your left and the red band uppermost.

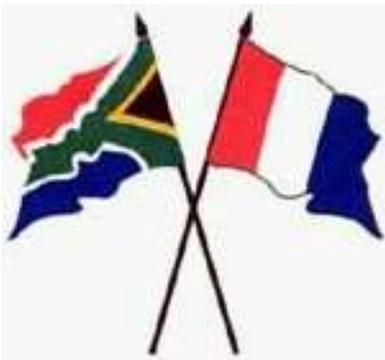


- When draped vertically, a flag should not merely be rotated through 90 degrees, but also reversed. In the case of the South African flag, the black triangle must be uppermost and the red band to your left. (One "reads" a flag like the pages of a book – from top to bottom and from left to right – and after rotation the results should be the same.)
- It is also insulting to display the flag in a frayed or dirty state. The same rule applies to the flagpoles and halyards used to hoist the flag – they should always be in a proper state of maintenance.
- The flag may never be defaced by placing slogans or any writing or design directly on the field of the flag. Correct display of the flag

## The Shamrock

- When two flags are fully spread out horizontally on a wall behind a podium, their hoists should be towards each other with the red stripes uppermost.
- When the flag is displayed on a short flag pole, this should be mounted at an angle to the wall with the flag draped tastefully from it.
- When two national flags are displayed on crossed staffs, the hoists must be towards each other and the flags must be fully spread out.
- The flag should never be used as a cloth to cover tables, lecterns or podiums, or be draped from railings.

## In company with other national flags



When the National Flag is flown outdoors in company with the national flags of other countries, the following rules apply:

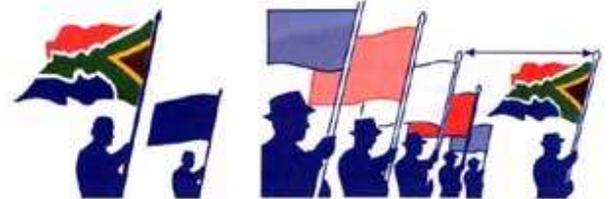
- It must always occupy the position of honour. This means it must be the flag furthest to the right (observers' left) of all the flags on display, with the flags of other countries being arranged alphabetically.
- All the flags should be approximately the same size, with no flags being larger than the South African flag.
- Each country's flag should be on a separate pole, with no national flag being flown on top of another from the same pole.
- The South African flag must always be hoisted first and lowered last.
- If the South African flag is displayed on crossed poles, the South African flag's pole should be in front and the flag to the right (observers' left) of the other flag.

## In company with non-national flags



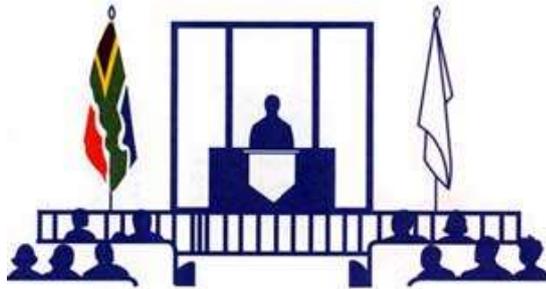
When the National Flag is displayed in company with other flags that are not national flags, such as corporate flags and advertising banners:

- If on separate staffs, the National Flag should be in the middle, or the furthest left from the viewpoint of the onlookers, or at least one flag's breadth higher than the other flags in the group, or its flagpole must be in front of the other poles in the group.
- If on the same staff, it must be the uppermost flag.
- If carried in procession with other flags, it must be at the head of the marching procession.
- If carried with a row of flags in line abreast, it must be carried to the marching right of the procession.



## Displaying the flag indoors

Whenever the National flag is displayed



indoors in halls at public meetings or gatherings of any kind, it should:

- Always be on the right (observers' left), as this is the position of authority. So when the flag is displayed next to a speaker in a hall or other meeting place, it must be placed on the speaker's right hand; when displayed elsewhere in the hall, it should be to the right of the audience.

- The flag should be displayed completely spread out with the red stripe on top. If hung vertically on the wall behind the podium, the red stripe should be to the left of the onlookers facing the flag with the hoist cord at the top.

## Parades and ceremonies

The flag, when carried in a procession or parade or with another flag or flags, should be on the marching right or alone in front in the centre.

The flag may form a distinctive feature of the unveiling of a statue, monument or plaque, but should never be used as the covering for the object.

As a mark of respect to the flag, it should never be dipped to a person or thing. Regimental colours, organisational or institutional flags may be dipped as a mark of honour.

During a ceremony where the flag is hoisted or lowered, or when the flag is passing in a parade, all persons present, except for those in uniform, should face the flag while standing at attention with the right hand over the heart. Hats should be removed and held in the right hand at the left shoulder with the hand over the heart. Those present in uniform should salute. The same rules apply when the National Anthem is played.

## Half masting

The South African flag should be half-masted as a sign of mourning only on instructions from The Presidency, who will also give a date ending the mourning period. When the flag is to be flown at half-mast, it must first be raised to the top of the mast and then slowly lowered to half-mast. Before being lowered at sunset or at the appropriate time, the flag is first raised to the top of the pole and then lowered. ONLY the National Flag is half-masted. All other flags remain at normal height.



**Disposal**

When no longer in a fit condition to be used, a flag should be disposed of in a dignified manner, preferably by burning.

Source: Southern African Vexillological Association

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Photos from the Regiment



The Pipes and Drums at the KZN Tattoo

The Shamrock

The wake for Former RSM John Fitzhenry



The final salute

