



12 May 2015

**PARLIAMENTARY DEFENCE COMMITTEES:  
OVERSIGHT VISIT AND STUDY TOUR OPTIONS**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Both the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans (PCDMV) and the Joint Standing Committee on Defence (JSCD) exercise oversight over the Department of Defence and Military Veterans, and concomitant entities. This brief summarises a number of options for oversight visits and study tours for consideration by the two committees.

**2. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED OVERSIGHT VISITS AND STUDY TOURS**

<b>Proposed July 2015 Oversight</b>		
Gauteng military headquarters: (Joint PCDMV and JSCD oversight)	Department of Military Veterans HQ	Pretoria
	Defence HQ and Armscor	Pretoria
	Defence Intelligence HQ	Pretoria
	Joint Operations HQ	Pretoria
	Defence Works Formation	Pretoria
Western Cape military areas: (PCDMV oversight visit)	4 Special Forces Regiment	Langebaan
	SAS Saldanha (Naval Base)	Saldanha
	Air Force Base Overberg	Bredasdorp
	2 Military Hospital	Cape Town

<b>Future Oversight Visit Options</b>		
SANDEF Borderline deployments	Borders	Borders with Zimbabwe/ Lesotho/Botswana
External SANDEF deployment	UN/AU mission areas	Democratic Rep. of Congo
Kwa-Zulu Natal military areas	Naval Base Durban	Durban
	Air Force Base Durban	Durban
	121 Infantry Battalion	Mtubatuba
Free State military areas	44 Parachute Battalion	Bloemfontein
	AFB Bloemspruit	Bloemfontein
	3 Military Hospital	Bloemfontein
	Armour Battalion	Bloemfontein
Operational readiness	Lohatla (and ExSeboka)	Kuruman (September 2015)

<b>Study Tour Options</b>	
Implementation of the Defence Review:	Australia//Uganda/Brazil//Fr.
Participation in peacekeeping operations:	France
Regional Peace and Security HQs:	Germany/Netherlands/UK
Revitalisation of the Reserves:	Botswana/Ethiopia
	Norway/United Kingdom



### 3. PROPOSED JULY 2015 OVERSIGHT VISITS

#### 3.1 Western Cape military areas

The Western Cape hosts a number of military bases of all arms of service that would provide the PCDMV with a valuable overview of the state of affairs throughout the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). Their proximity to the Parliament of South Africa will also assist in making this a viable option on short notice. Firstly, the **4 Special Forces Regiment** in Langebaan is of importance as the Special Forces will see significant expansion under the Defence Review<sup>1</sup>. Members will thus be familiarised with current capacity, challenges faced and the capability of expanding the service. An oversight visit to **SAS Saldanha**, a naval training base, will allow Members insight into the Military Skills Development System (MSDS) as the majority of students at the base joined the SANDF through this initiative, and the National Youth Service members that are trained on behalf of other Departments. In January 2015, SAS Saldanha also featured in the news regarding the transfer of a large number of staff from the base to other naval bases.<sup>2</sup>

In the recent past, the PCDMV visited the Air Force Base Langebaanweg and it is thus of value to diversify oversight. It is thus proposed to visit the **Overberg Air Force Base** which houses 525 Squadron and the Test Flight and Development Centre. Members will also be able to visit the Denel Overberg Test Range and be familiarised with the latest developments in terms of Air Force technology and advancement. Finally, it is proposed that Members do oversight at **2 Military Hospital** in Wynberg (Cape Town). During a previous oversight visit to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria, a number of problems were highlighted. It would be of value to determine whether these problems also apply to 2 Military Hospital. Furthermore, the impact of the addition of patients through the Department of Military Veterans' (DMV) health card system can be evaluated.

#### 3.2 Gauteng Military Headquarters

A joint oversight visit by the PCDMV and JSCD to a number of Department of Defence and related headquarters is proposed. Firstly, it is proposed that the **DMV Headquarters** in Hatfield (Pretoria) be visited. A number of challenges were identified during previous DMV presentations to the Committees and Members will be able to follow up on this. Of specific importance will be to gain information regarding the Centre for Advanced Training, the Military Veterans Database and the operationalisation of the Call Centre. It is also advisable to visit the **Defence Headquarters** as this will provide Members with a strategic overview of the departments functioning. A visit to the **Armcor Headquarters** will allow Members to familiarise themselves with the new Armcor CEO and follow up on the challenges identified

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<sup>1</sup> Defence Review. (2014). p. 10,19

<sup>2</sup> DefenceWeb. (2015)



during the presentation of the Corporate Plan in April 2015. It would also be advisable if the Committees can visit the **Defence Intelligence Headquarters**. Here members will be able to follow up on matters related to the Cyber Security initiative currently being developed by this Division. Members will also be able to follow up on previous challenges related to the office accommodation of the Defence Intelligence division. For an update on operational capacity and challenges related to internal and external SANDF deployments, Members should request a briefing from the **Joint Operations Headquarters**. Finally, it would be of value for Members to visit facilities related to the **Defence Works Formation** to determine its effectiveness and general functioning.

#### 4. PROPOSED FUTURE OVERSIGHT VISITS

A number of further oversight visits are proposed. Two of these (border safeguarding and regional peace and stability) are closely related to developmental aspects highlighted in the National Development Plan (NDP). Other proposals relate more to the general functioning of the SANDF. The proposals for future consideration include:

- **SANDF borderline deployments with Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Botswana.** The PCDMV is set to have a meeting on borderline safeguarding in June 2015. It is proposed that this be followed up by a visit to the actual deployment areas along the borders. An oversight visit will allow the PCDMV/JSCD to identify strategic alterations required for overall improved border control. This is of specific relevance given the fact that poor border control was identified as one of the contributing factors to cross-border crime, smuggling and, indirectly, violence against foreign nationals in South Africa. More importantly, the visit will allow Members to gain valuable insight to be able to engage with the Border Management Agency, as the future structure to coordinate border safeguarding and control.
- **External SANDF deployments.** The SANDF currently forms part of UN/AU missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur (Sudan). The SANDF has been involved in United Nations Peace Support Operations (PSOs) in the DRC since April 1999. Currently, the SANDF contributes approximately 1 244 members to this operation.<sup>3</sup> SANDF contingents operate predominantly in the eastern regions of the DRC, near the town of Goma. In addition to the SANDF long-term presence in the DRC, South Africa has also played a leading role in the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade (FIB). This force, comprising the SANDF, Malawian and Tanzanian contingents, was provided with an offensive mandate and successfully dislodged the M23 rebel group from its strongholds in the eastern DRC. Despite this success, insecurity in the region remains and it is expected that the SANDF will

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<sup>3</sup> Martin, G. (2012).



maintain a presence in the DRC in the medium-term. An oversight visit/study tour to the DRC would assist with the following:

- To inspect the conditions of facilities where SANDF forces are deployed;
- To be provided with accurate information regarding the security situation in the DRC;
- To determine the current challenges and vulnerabilities faced by the SANDF forces;
- To determine possible challenges that future SANDF forces may face;
- To view cooperation between the SANDF, the UN and other role players in the area; and
- To develop an understanding of South Africa's role in the current UN mission and how the mandate of this mission may change.

*[Note: An oversight visit to an operational area can be combined with a study tour to other countries involved in operational deployments – See the last section of this paper for proposals in this regard].*

- **Kwa-Zulu Natal military areas.** It is proposed that the PCDMV and JSCD visit Naval Base Durban, Air Force Base Durban and 121 Infantry Battalion (Mtubatuba). This will inform Members of the general challenges faced by these bases. The upgrading of the Naval Station at Durban Harbour to Naval Base Durban can also be followed up on.
- **Free State military areas.** Within Bloemfontein, a number of military bases are situated. Of specific importance is the elite 44 Parachute Battalion which took part in the Battle of Bangui. Given the importance and capability of such an elite unit to conduct, for example, rapid deployment, it will be valuable for Members to familiarise themselves with this unit and its challenges. Furthermore, the Armour Formation is situated in Bloemfontein and forms the backbone of the SA Army's mechanised warfare capability. This formation has been subjected to budget cuts in recent years and the impact thereof can be investigated by the PCDMV/JSCD. As such, it is proposed that the Committees visit 44 Parachute Battalion, Air Force Base Bloemfontein, 3 Military Hospital and the Armour Battalion.
- **Operational readiness.** Lohatla (near the town of Kuruman in the Northern Cape) is the SANDF's largest training area. Every year around September an integrated training exercise, codenamed Exercise Seboka, is held. This exercise consist of all the arms of service. It is advised that Members visit Lohatla during this exercise to see operational readiness and to do broader oversight of the training facilities at the base.



## 5. STUDY TOUR PROPOSALS

### 5.1 Implementation of the Defence Review

2014 marked the submission of the SA Defence Review to Parliament and, in May 2015, Parliament approved this strategically important document. What will follow from this process is the implementation of the Defence Review through the Defence Review implementation Plan. The Defence Review process is, however, not unique to South Africa and a number of other countries have recently gone through similar processes. It may thus be of value to consider a study tour to such countries to determine (1) how they are managing the implementation of their Defence Reviews, and (2) the role that their Parliaments play in overseeing the implementation of the Defence Reviews. The following countries may be considered for such a purpose:

**Australia.** The Prime Minister and the Minister for Defence announced on 4 April 2014, that Defence would produce a new White Paper to be released in 2015. The 2015 Defence White Paper is being developed in a deliberate and methodical manner as these decisions will guide Australia's defence capability for the coming decades. It will align defence policy with military strategy and deliver an affordable Australian Defence Force structure. Following the release of the 2015 Defence White Paper, Defence will publish a 10-year Defence Capability Plan and a Defence Industry Policy Statement to provide defence industry with greater certainty about the Government's key priorities and timeframes.

**Uganda.** In 2004, Uganda released its White Paper on Defence, titled 'Defence Transformation'. This white paper represented a plan on how the government of Uganda will tackle the challenges to transform, modernise and professionalise the defence forces. Although it is now more than ten years later, it may be of value to investigate which challenges Uganda experienced in modernizing their force. It is of particular relevance as Uganda faced numerous operational challenges in this period, notably in Somalia. As such, the interplay between operational needs and the role of the White Paper on Defence can be investigated.

**France and/or Brazil.** Both these countries released the latest versions of their White Paper on Defence in 2013. Representing different developmental trajectories, a visit to one or both of these countries could highlight strong and weak points in terms of long-term defence planning in vastly different regional settings. Actual implementation plans of the White Papers on Defence can be analysed as well as practical difficulties/successes to the implementation thereof.



## 5.2 International Roleplayers with active participation in African Peace Support Operations

A number of countries around the world contribute to PSOs in Africa. While this is mostly conducted through the United Nations platform, some countries have been involved in their own capacity. Given South Africa's ongoing role in PSOs in Africa, valuable lessons can be learnt from other countries involved in the continent. It is advised that a study tour to any of these countries be followed by an oversight visit to an area of deployment as noted above.

**France.** France is currently involved in PSOs in a number of countries in Africa, with focus on Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR). In Mali France launched Operation SERVAL, a 5 000-strong mission aimed at pushing Islamist extremists from its strongholds in the north of the country.<sup>4</sup> The mission followed a UN resolution and a call by the Malian government for assistance. French forces have been involved in a number of operations in Mali and have applied the principle of Joint Operations to their mission, involving air, ground and naval forces. In the CAR, France also has a number of forces deployed in support of the African-led International Support Mission to the CAR (MISCA). A study tour to France may assist the Defence Committees in:

- Evaluating French legislation guiding the deployment of forces as part of PSOs.
- Evaluating French parliamentary oversight of foreign deployments.
- Identifying unique challenges faced in African deployments.
- Determining cost, planning and managing of large deployments throughout Africa.
- Establishing how France manages cooperation with other roleplayers.
- Investigating France's Joint Force deployments to African PSOs.

**Multiple European nations: Germany, the Netherlands and/or the United Kingdom.** Although not involved in African PSOs to a large extent, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (UK) have forces deployed around the world. All these countries have, for example, been contributing to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.<sup>5</sup> Whereas France's deployments in Africa are often conducted in isolation (albeit with UN or regional approval), the deployments of the aforementioned countries require cooperation with other contributing nations, which may bring new challenges. In addition to the practical deployment challenges, a multiple-destination tour will allow for the PCDMV and JSCD to study variation in legislation and parliamentary oversight. Further aspects to be addressed by the proposed study tour include:

- A comparison of legislation guiding the deployment of forces as part of PSOs.
- Identifying practical challenges faced during foreign deployments.

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<sup>4</sup> Le Monde. (2013).

<sup>5</sup> ISAF. (2014).



- The roles of parliamentary committees in assisting the effective deployment of forces abroad.
- Cost, planning and management concerns of large foreign deployments.

### 5.3 Regional Peace and Security Headquarters

The AU plays an important role in directing PSOs in Africa. Where military involvement is required, this is often done through the regional bodies, including Southern African Development Community (SADC) and its established military structures. In this regard, a study tour to the following areas is proposed:

**SADC Brigade headquarters in Gaborone, Botswana.** The SADC Brigade operational headquarters are located in Gaborone, Botswana. A number of cooperative exercises between troop-contributing member-states have been held in the past, including in South Africa, to ensure the combat readiness of this force. However, as was clear from the 2013/14 Annual Report, the SANDF faces continued challenges to fully capacitate itself for participation in, for example, the SADC Standby Force.

A study tour to the operational headquarters would assist with the following:

- Contextualising South Africa's role in the SADC Brigade;
- Identifying challenges facing the SADC Brigade;
- Identifying expectations from other role players with regards to South Africa's role in the SADC Brigade.
- Assessing South Africa's role in the SADC Standing Maritime Committee, particularly the Maritime Security Strategy, amid the ongoing anti-piracy efforts.
- Identifying South Africa's role and expectations on the future naval deployments to the West African coast. This is important given the fact that South Africa has launched Operation PHAKISA, which focuses on the ocean economy.
- Identifying stumbling blocks to cooperation between role-players.

**African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.** The AU plays a crucial role in directing PSOs on the continent. Crucial to this role is the AU Peace and Security Council which was established in May 2004. Interaction by the Committee(s) with the Peace and Security Council will be important in determining the following:

- The current and future role of South Africa in the Peace and Security Council;
- The role of South Africa in the Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy 2050;
- Possible future areas of desired involvement of the SANDF;
- The status of and challenges facing the African Standby Force; and
- South Africa's role in the African Standby Force.



In addition, the AU recently added its support to the African Capacity for the Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) in which the SANDF is expected to play a leading role. Should a study tour to Addis Ababa be considered, it should include briefings on the ACIRC, discussions with the AU Peace and Security Council on possible deployments and challenges to be faced and interactions with military dignitaries from other participating countries. The latter will assist in identifying challenges to cooperation.

#### 5.4 Revitalisation of Reserves

The revitalisation of the reserves has been identified as a **Ministerial Priority** for several financial years. SANDF reserves are playing an increasingly important role not only in internal deployments such as border control, but also in active participation in foreign deployments. 2013/14 saw the deployment of a significant number of reserves to the DRC. A number of countries has shown success in managing and expanding their reserve forces and the PCDMV/JSCD can learn from these countries.

**Norwegian Defence Reserves<sup>6</sup>.** In terms of the approach to its Defence concept, Norway utilises all resources of the society for total defence. There is a standing Navy and Air Force. However, the focus of the Army is to produce a large Reserve component of sufficient quality. In terms of legislation, Norway has tailor-made legislation, and a high percentage of Reserve officers occupy key civilian positions. The Norwegian Defence Force is currently working on a transformation concept to deal with an outdated reserve structure that is not addressing current challenges. The new plan will focus on:

- Reducing garrisons and training facilities.
- Scraping old materiel.
- Reducing employees.
- Reinvesting in better training, equipment and technology, doctrine and facilities.
- Maintaining a “basic” Home Guard for limited tasks.
- Ascertaining if there is still a need for reserves.

The PCDMV/JSCD can gain valuable insight into the challenges faced and future plans of the Norwegian Defence Reserves and how this can be applied in South Africa.

**United Kingdom Reserves<sup>7</sup>.** The UK Army Reserve (previously known as the Territorial Army) is the volunteer active-duty reservist force of the British Army. During periods of war, the Army Reserve is incorporated into Regular Service under military law for the duration of hostilities or until de-activation is decided. In 2011, the UK conducted a review of its Reserve

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<sup>6</sup> Manganyi (2014).

<sup>7</sup> Manganyi (2014).





Forces, titled *Future Reserves 2020*. The review set out to explore options to ensure that the UK Reserve Forces are correctly structured and supported to meet future challenges. Some of the conclusions included that Reserve Forces are in decline; the failure to modernise reservist roles, the lack of exploiting the potential of reserves, and the under-utilisation of Reserves. Various recommendations in this regard were made.

By engaging with the UK Armed Forces on their *Future Reserves 2020* product, the PCDMV/JSCD can gain valuable insight into the challenges faced and future plans of reserves. Furthermore, given the similarities between the South African and UK Parliaments, focus can be placed on the role of Parliament in directing the reserves.

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