

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE & MILITARY VETERANS**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**1518. Mr S J F Marais (DA) to ask the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans:**

(1) With reference to reports on 7 May 2018 (details furnished), how does the dilapidation of the SA Army Special Infantry Capability (SAASIC) unit impact on the defence abilities of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), taking into account that the objectives of the SAASIC are to contribute to land border patrol and safeguarding our borders;

(2) whether she has found that the SANDF breached the memorandum of understanding that was signed with the National Council of the Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 2013 and 2016; if not, what are the reasons that animals were allegedly subjected to severe neglect by the commander of the SAASIC base; if so,

(3) whether an investigation has been commissioned into the allegations of maltreatment and negligence of the care of the horses; if not, why not;

(4) whether any disciplinary steps have been taken against (a) the base commander and/or (b) any other SANDF member; if not, in each case, why not; if so, what disciplinary steps have been taken against the unit commander and other implicated staff members?

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**REPLY**:

1. The alleged dilapidation of the SAASIC Unit does not have any adverse impact on the Landward Defence of the Republic of South Africa as a total of 208 horses are currently maintained by SAASIC and only 40 horses are employed in Operation CORONA (Border Safeguarding) in the Musina vicinity (Limpopo Province). A portion of the rest of the horses at SAASIC is used for training purposes and a further platoon of horses (circa 40 horses) has been identified to relieve the horses currently on the border.
2. There is currently no proof that the Memorandum of Understanding between the SANDF and the NSPCA has been breached, by either party. The reason(s) for the alleged neglect is the subject of an investigation, recently concluded.
3. Positive. A Board of Inquiry was constituted and has concluded its investigation.
4. The Board of Inquiry was recently concluded and its findings and recommendations are under review. Disciplinary steps – if any – against (any) individual(s) will be taken if so warranted after the review.