2

**MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NA)**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 458**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 25 FEBRUARY 2022**

**REPLY RECOMMENDED BY:**

**MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS:MP**

ooxWord://word/media/image1.jpeg

3

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NA)

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO: 458

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 25 FEBRUARY 2022

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

(1) Whether, with reference to the approximately 250 members of the SA National

Defence Force (SANDF) who were flown to the Republic of Cuba for training at the

end of August 2021, any training was available in other countries, especially where

the use of English is available on the training courses; if not, what is the position in

this regard; if so,

(2) whether the specified countries were considered; if not, why not; if so, what

are the relevant details;

(3) what were the reasons that it was resolved to send pilot trainees to Cuba in

view of the fact that our fleet of Gripen aircraft is of Swedish origin and the Hawk

aircraft is of British origin;

(4) whether any alternatives for training other than the Cuban training

opportunities were made available to the SANDF members; if not, why not; if so,

what are the relevant details;

(5) (a) what was the total cost of the Cuban training in each year since it started,

(b) what is the full duration of training for each group, division and/or formation, (c)

what was the total cost of chartering the SA Airways aircraft to fly the return flights

to Cuba and (d) from which budget item are the flight costs being funded?

**REPLY:**

(1.) The SANDF continues to expose its members to various Foreign Learning

Opportunities (FLOs) in many countries including in Africa, the Americas, Asia and

Europe where various languages are spoken. The purpose of utilizing FLOs has

primarily been to enable the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) to

adopt 'best practice' approaches to military doctrine based on exposure of other

Defence forces' practices, with the premise that those members identified for such

exposure are well versed in SANDF doctrine.

Yes, members of the SANDF did training in African countries such as Zambia,

Uganda, the Americas and Asia, to mention a few. It must be noted that most nation

states had restricted training opportunities during COVID-19 periods.

4

(2.) Yes all the specified countries were considered to empower members of the

SANDF through its bilateral-lateral military relationships with the international

community. During 2019/2020FY we had senior officers in the specified countries.

(3.) The South African Air Force is facing shortages of reliable training aircraft and

relies on FLOs to keep up with the demand to have trained and skilled workforce in

the aviation sphere. The Cuban FLOs provide a value chain training in aviation such

as pilots, aviation technicians, aviation engineers, Air traffic controllers and Aircraft

Preservation, including simulator developer and software developer programmes

that South Africa and the SANDF are highly in need of. The Cuban Pilot Training is

using the L 39 Albatross Fighter Jet, which is used in several countries as a versatile

Jet trainer for their fighter pilots.

(4.) As indicated above, the SANDF, within its means, continues to expose its

members to various FLOs in many countries including Africa, the Americas, Asia

and Europe. It is in the interest of the SANDF that its members are empowered in

various militaries.

(5.) (a) The following is the total cost of the Cuban training in each year since it

started:

(i) 2014 - R15 838 547, 00

(ii) 2015- R24 485 149, 62

(iii) 2016- R15 967 981, 88

(iv) 2017 - R83 477 610, 24

(v) 2018 - R73 625 956, 67

(vi) 2019 - R72 697 854, 04

(Vii) 2020 - Training was suspended due to Covid 19.

(viii) 2021- R73 074 191, 20









