

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE & MILITARY VETERANS**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**718. Mr A R McLoughlin (DA) to ask the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans:**

(1) On what basis is it stated in Chapter 10 of the South African Defence Review 2015, under the heading Air Force Migration Priorities, that priority emphasis must be given to meeting the full requirements for VIP air transport;

(2) what, precisely and comprehensively, is meant by full requirements;

(3) why is the air transport of VIPs listed as a higher priority than the air capabilities required for the safeguarding of the country? NW777E

**Reply**

1. The Defence Review Committee compiled the Defence Review 2015, based on a strategic assessment of the constitutional mandate of the Defence Force and an analysis of the African Battle Space.
2. **Principle 3** of the Defence Review (as listed in the Introduction) stated that the defence mandate, mission, goals and tasks will be focussed on the attainment of the Defence Force’s constitutionally mandated functions and government’s national strategic goals and priorities. Strategically the Defence Force will adopt a defensive posture, but will maintain offensive operational capabilities.
3. Furthermore, **Principle 4** states that the Defence Force must stand 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 - both domestically and regionally, man-made or natural. As an important pillar of the South African state, the Defence Force will contribute to national development.
4. The above principles, coupled to the strategic analysis, are expanded to what the Defence Review 2015 describes as the Strategic Defence Concept (Layered Defence Approach in Chapter 3) namely:
   1. **Layer 1**:
      1. Firstly, to influence the international security agenda through integrated diplomacy efforts and the pursuit of national objectives.
      2. Secondly, through strategic engagement of the United Nations and the African Peace and Security Architecture, to:
         1. Pursue defined multi-lateral security objectives.
         2. Promote the deepening of democracy on the African continent.
         3. Promote peace, security and development on the continent.
      3. Thirdly, the pursuit of strategic bi-lateral objectives.
   2. **Layer 2**:
      1. Firstly, to safeguard the South African State, its people and its territory.
      2. Secondly, to collaboratively or deliberately protect vital national interests.
      3. Thirdly, to contribute to South Africa’s developmental agenda.
   3. **Layer 3**: To defend and protect the territory, sovereignty and people of the Republic of South Africa.
5. In times of relative peace, and in order to strengthen and maintain that peace, the focus must be on Layer 1. Chapter 10 of the Defence Review 2105 also speaks to the importance of diplomacy *vis a vis* Layer 1:
   1. South Africa is committed to the promotion of peace and stability and to the resolution of conflict by peaceful means. Active participation in multilateral institutions and collective security mechanisms are an expression of this commitment. South Africa has also entered into a number of international agreements that entail reciprocal obligations and undertakings to engage in cooperation in various sectors, including defence.
   2. In the post-conflict reconstruction role, there is a vital linkage to be established between foreign policy, defence policy and that of trade policy. Whilst Defence is primarily concerned with the arena of security sector reform, other sectors of Government must become seized with important concurrent trade and investment initiatives.
6. Senior South Africa leaders are thus responsible to play an important role in the promotion of South Africa’s national strategic goals and priorities, including those of foreign policy, trade policy and defence policy objectives.
7. Nonetheless, the Defence Force must continually prepare for Layer 2 and Layer 3 as mandated by the Constitution. The Air Defence Priorities listed in the Defence Review 2015 are not individually ranked, and it would be incorrect to state that the role of VIP air transport is more important than the air capabilities required for the safeguarding of the country.
8. I support of the Layered Defence Approach, as part of the wider pronouncements of the Defence Review 2015, it was concluded that South Africa requires an Air Defence Capability that:
   1. Is responsive and agile to deliver air power to defend and protect the integrity of South Africa’s airspace and support the landward and maritime defence strategies. The air defence capability must provide deterrence and powerful interdiction during joint operations, specifically through comprehensive air domain awareness, air combat, combat support and air mobility capabilities.
   2. Can support deployed landward and maritime forces through appropriate airspace control, reconnaissance, close-air support, augmentation of firepower and inter-and-intra-theatre air mobility in complex operational circumstances.
   3. The air defence capability must also be capable of strategic reach and joint rapid response across the spectrum of conflict, and support the sustainment of protracted joint operations over long distances.
9. The Defence Review Committee further concluded (and not ranked in order of individual priority) that the Air Defence migration priorities must include:
   1. Meeting the full requirements for VIP air transport.
   2. Air capabilities required for the safeguarding of South Africa, with specific attention to dedicated air capabilities required for border safeguarding and maritime reconnaissance.
   3. Inter-theatre and intra-theatre lift in support of landward deployments, with specific attention to the air capabilities required for rapid reaction and Special Force operations, including strategic lift, intra-theatre lift and heavy lift rotary wing capabilities.
   4. Rotary wing combat support for landward operations with integrated anti-armour capability.
   5. Interception and interdiction and close air support for deployed forces, with integrated stand-off capability.
10. As can be seen from the above priorities, the main emphasis in the Air Defence Capability is the supportive role of the South African Air Force by means of military air mobility, inclusive, but not limited to VIP air transport.
11. The Defence Review provides for an inclusive military air mobility capability by emphasising all its components, again including and not limited to VIP air transport.
    1. A military air mobility capability is primarily required in the defence, protection and safeguarding of South Africa and to promote regional security. Diverse military air mobility operations are conducted, including support to the Police Service and other civil authority, humanitarian relief operations and search and rescue operations. The following military air mobility capabilities are to be provided:
    2. Heavy fixed and rotary-wing cargo and troop transport capability.
    3. Medium fixed and rotary-wing cargo and troop transport capability.
    4. Light fixed and rotary-wing command and control capability.
    5. An in-flight refuelling capability.
    6. A military air ambulance capability.
    7. A VIP air transport capability is required to provide:
       1. Presidential and Deputy Presidential intercontinental air transport capability;
       2. VIP, and other identified persons, intercontinental air transport capability; and
       3. VIP, and other identified persons, continental air transport capability.
       4. The capital and operating funds for VIP air transport should be ring-fenced and managed by the Chief of the Air Force.