



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS
Republic of South Africa

STATEMENT ON THE INTERIM REPORT OF THE NDFSC

The Ministry of Defence and Military Veterans has received the interim report of the Interim National Defence Force Service Commission (INDFSC) which the Minister appointed to investigate the establishment of a separate dispensation outside of the public service to address challenges within the SANDF.

The Ministry notes that in its preliminary report, the Commission has added its voice to many other stakeholders who have been saying for years that the conditions of service, among them the salaries and the living conditions require urgent attention.

Having been briefed by the Commander in Chief and the leadership of the SANDF; the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans declared the improvement of the conditions of service of soldiers her first priority in the budget speech delivered in Parliament on July 3, 2009 and also repeated this in many other public pronouncements. In the same speech, the Minister called for the establishment of a separate dispensation to address the service condition of soldiers and the INDFSC is the first step towards that dispensation.

The Minister established the current Interim Commission with a specific mandate to prepare for the new dispensation in the SANDF. This requires them to advise and make recommendations on a unique service dispensation outside the ambit of the Public Service; advise on the regulatory framework for the unique service dispensation; and investigate and provide advice on remuneration and conditions of service of members of the SANDF.

The recommendations must include the establishment of a permanent National Defence Force Service Commission and details on how it is to be appointed; its terms of reference; its functions; its staff component; its relationship with the Public Service Commission; its relationship with Parliament; its reporting responsibilities to the President and the Minister; its oversight role over the SANDF in respect of the INDSFC's mandate.

The Interim Commission is also finalizing a framework for determining the salaries and conditions of service for the SANDF that NDFSC will be able to develop and implement.

Noting the preliminary report the Minister has called on the Commission to finalise the necessary research and administrative work required to establish a permanent NDFSC and also achieve all the terms of reference and ensure that the systems are developed to address the challenges in the SANDF.

The Ministry will receive a final report from the Commission at the end of December 2009 which will include details of how to implement a permanent National Defence Force Service Commission to take the SANDF to new heights. The Minister and the leadership of the SANDF are finalising a road map to address the conditions in the SANDF and the new dispensation will allow for the fast tracking of those changes.

The Ministry encourages the Commission to meet with all relevant stakeholders to achieve its objectives.

Issued by Ndivhuwo Mabaya
Head of Media Services

Ministry of Defence and Military Veterans

Cell: 083 645 7838

Email: defmedia@mweb.co.za

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