



the sandf

Department:
Defence
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: 06 December 2012

EMBARGO: None

**SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE (SAAF) C-47 DAKOTA AIRCRAFT
ACCIDENT IN THE DRAKENSBERG MOUNTAIN RANGE**

It is with regret and a great sense of loss that we confirm the loss of South African Air Force (SAAF) members in an aircraft accident which occurred on the 05 December 2012 in the area of Giants Castle within Drakensberg mountain range.

The South African Air Force (SAAF) aircraft, flying from Air Force Base Waterkloof at about 7.45am to Mthatha Airport on an official tasking went missing around 9.45 am local time. After the expected time of arrival and no communication from the aircraft, the SAAF activated a search and rescue mission. Severe weather conditions in the area hindered the continuation of the search and rescue effort.

At first light this morning the rescue team continued their effort and located the wreckage in the Drakensberg Mountains. On board the aircraft was a crew of six and five passengers and it was confirmed that there are no survivors. The SANDF has commenced with the process of informing the next of kin of the deceased members. The names of the deceased will be released when all the next of kin have been informed.

A board of inquiry has been convened to investigate the circumstances surrounding the cause of the accident.

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans Hon Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, the Chief of the SANDF, General Solly Shoke, and the Chief of the Air Force Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang would like to convey their sincere and deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of the deceased.

Ends.

Issued by: Defence Corporate Communication
(Defence Media Liaison)
Pretoria

Enquiries: Sipiwe Dlamini
Head of Communication
083 645 42964