



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS
Republic of South Africa

PRESS RELEASE: DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS MINISTER DEMANDS RESPONSIVE ACTION ON ALLEGATIONS OF ASSAULT AT THE OUDTSHOORN INFANTRY SCHOOL

DATE: WEDNESDAY 08 MAY 2013, CAPE TOWN

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula has reacted strongly to reports of allegations of assault on recruits at the Infantry School at Oudtshoorn. The Minister was particularly concerned as this recent incident follows after she had ordered two investigations into other incidents at the Infantry School. The initial investigation was ordered in October last year after the suicide incident of a female recruit.

When the report of this investigation was received, it was found to be inadequate, and the Minister ordered a second probe and that this probe be conducted by that Inspector General and must be widened to cover all the incidents of death, including those in the past. The report on the broader investigation was received by the Minister on Monday, 6 May 2013, coinciding with reports on the latest incidence that appeared in the media a day later.

“I am concerned that just before we could announce the findings of the initial investigation, another incident has now occurred. The report received on Monday already points to lack of adherence to safety measures during training and the inability of unit’s Boards of Inquiry (BOIs) to conduct quality and conclusive investigations. Many BOIs were inconclusive, and cases were left open or under review, some dating back to 2009.” said the Minister.

The Minister has directed that the Chief of the SANDF and the Chief of SA Army conduct a preliminary investigation on the system failures identified in the report, with a view to correct the deficiencies that have exposed recruits and instructors to hazard and a generally unsafe working environment. This must include, but not limited to adherence to policy, leadership, medical support, implementation of directives as well as effectiveness of the grievance management. This exercise will also contribute to the current review of training procedures for the whole of the SANDF which is already underway.

In addition the Minister has directed the office of the Military Ombudsman to launch a full investigation into complaints by members as well at the Infantry School as the general conditions under which recruits live and train at Oudtshoorn. The deadline for these reports is Friday, 17 May 2013

Issued by the Ministry of Defence and Military Veterans
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