



the sandf

Department:  
Defence  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**DATE:** 14 August 2014

**EMBARGO:** Immediate

**SUBJECT: SANDF READINESS TO MANAGE A SPREAD OF THE EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE OUTBREAK**

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has noted the public interest to know what measures does the SANDF have in place in relation to the outbreak of Ebola Viral Disease in West Africa and possible spread to areas where SANDF has troops deployed.

The SANDF would like to put it on record that there are no specific plans to evacuate the SANDF members deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The SANDF would like to reassure the people of South Africa that the Ebola viral disease outbreak is continuously monitored by the South African Military Health Service (SAMHS), in collaboration with the National Department of Health and the National Institute for Communicable Diseases. A contingency plan is in place to manage any outbreak of the disease in the country, as well as in the Mission Areas where the SANDF is deployed. This includes plans to evacuate a patient utilising a very sophisticated Transport Isolator System. All the military hospitals, but specifically 1 Military Hospital, are prepared to receive and isolate any suspected or confirmed cases of Ebola Viral Disease.

The SAMHS has the most sophisticated portable isolation capability available in South Africa and this Negative Pressure Room Isolating System has been prepared to be moved at short notice to any facility where it may be required.

A formal training programme for isolating the very serious risk patients has been running for several years and the South African Military Health Service (SAMHS) has a large group of trained health care professionals to implement high-level isolation.

A strategic stockpile of protective clothing has been released from the SAMHS Depot and was distributed by the SAMHS to all government hospitals identified by the Minister of Health in the country, the Military Hospitals and to the Mission Areas.

A screening process, in line with the process implemented at International Airports in the RSA, has also been implemented at Air Force Base Waterkloof and Air Force Base Bloemspruit for international flights returning from external deployments to the RSA.

In collaboration with the private sector, health care information on diagnosing Ebola has

been distributed within the SANDF, and sickbays managing members returning from external deployments has been cautioned to be alert to possible Ebola cases.

Within the government, private and military health sectors there are very close cooperation and joined readiness to manage an outbreak in the RSA or mission areas, should it occur.

The office of Surgeon General of the SANDF has further compiled and issued an internal information bulletin on Ebola which is distributed by means of its internal communication platforms to all SANDF members.

**Ends.**

**Issued by:** Defence Corporate Communication  
Pretoria

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