

SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION (SAAFA)

INFORMATION BROCHURE



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SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION (SAAFA)

Reference A: SAAFA Constitution

Reference B: SAAFA Manual of Administration (MoA)

Reference C: SAAFA website: www.saafa.co.za

INTRODUCTION

The South African Air Force Association (SAAFA) is an all-ranks meeting place, founded in 1945. This eminently worthy cause not only recreates in a light-hearted atmosphere, the togetherness of its aviation-minded members, but also urges them to share responsibility for the needs of less fortunate ex-SAAF members and their spouses.

SAAFA, through the participation of its members:

- Maintains and fosters friendship and camaraderie among all its members and persons eligible for membership;
- Provides support for, and takes care of, the general well-being of needy members in the true spirit of benevolence;
- Perpetuates the memory of, and commemorates, those who have given their lives in the service of their country; and
- Promotes the interests, image and heritage of the South African Air Force Association, the South African Air Force and the members of both organisations.

ABOUT SAAFA

All persons who serve in, or once served in the SAAF (PF or CF), or in any other Allied Air Force, are eligible to join this unique fraternity.

SAAFA branches are active all over Southern Africa: Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Durban, East Rand (Benoni), Johannesburg, Kimberley, Lower South Coast (Margate), Laeveld (Hoedspruit), Outeniqua (George/Knysna), Pietermaritzburg, Port Alfred, Port Elizabeth, Pretoria, Weskus (Langebaan/Vredenburg) and Whale Coast (from Rooi Els along the coast eastward to Pearly Beach).

Strong SAAFA groups also exist in UAE and China. The SA Korean War Veterans Association also has branch status with the SAAFA.



ABOUT SAAFA (CONTINUED)

Membership brings participation in many activities, enjoying life, wining and dining, raffles, sports events, special outings and regular luncheons at which distinguished persons from industry and commerce may address the gathering and chat afterward. How about events such as golf, horse racing, bowls and "Fly-in-Braai" days and many more interesting options arranged by the different Branches?!

Members are entitled to wear the distinctive SAAFA tie, blazer badge, and other insignia, and to participate in all SAAFA activities at the Branch level. They are also encouraged to participate in the ongoing worthwhile projects of the Association. Less fortunate SAAFA members and their dependents are assisted in their well-being. Funds raised are channelled towards the Care of the Aged programs.

A national newsletter is distributed free of charge via email regularly, while several branches send out their own newsletters.

AFFILIATION WITH VETERAN'S ORGANISATIONS

The SAAF Association is affiliated with the Council of Military Veterans' Organisations of South Africa (CMVO) and is listed as a Full Member Body, being one of approximately 33 member organisations. The SAAF Association is represented at the CMVO by its National President. For more information, visit the CMVO website at www.cmvo.org.za

SAAFA HISTORY

One finds very little documented information on the forming of the South African Air Force Association. The original concept formulated in late 1944 was threefold:

- To continue the spirit and camaraderie of the South African Air Force generated during World War II;
- To perpetuate the memory of all brave Air Force men and women who paid the supreme sacrifice for their country; and
- In particular, to assist with the welfare of their widows and children.

Colonel Rod Douglas, a veteran pilot from the 1914/18 Great War, started the Christmas Cheer Fund in 1943, whilst serving as a senior staff officer at SAAF Headquarters. This Fund ensured that all SAAF squadrons and units serving outside the borders of South Africa would be treated to a sumptuous lunch or dinner on Christmas Day. Generous donations to this cause were received from SAAF units remaining in South Africa.



SAAFA HISTORY (CONTINUED)

Colonel Douglas had experienced the aftermath of World War I with the plight of the widows and children and demobilised airmen. He wanted to ensure that this would not happen again when World War II hostilities ceased. To this end, he gathered a group of like-minded airmen and set about creating the South African Air Force Association. Colonel Rod Douglas is acknowledged as the founder of the South African Air Force Association and he served as the first SAAFA National President guiding the Association during its formative years.

An initial meeting was held in Johannesburg on 11 December 1944. Many distinguished airmen were present to be elected as committee members. A draft Constitution was discussed and approved. Principles, objectives and projects were tabled and discussed. The first SAAFA meeting was held at the Inanda Country Club in Johannesburg on 26 January 1945. This date is recognised as the founding date of the Association. At an Executive meeting held on 24 April 1945 Branches were approved in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria, Benoni and Windhoek. The first annual National Congress was held in Johannesburg on 15 June 1946.

Over the years Branches were formed in cities and towns throughout South Africa, as listed above, but some have closed due to lack of support.

Close links are maintained with the SA Korean War Veterans Association, the RAF Association, the Council of Military Veterans Organisation and its affiliate military veteran's organisations, such as the SA Legion, the Warsaw Flights Commemoration Committee, the Berlin Airlifters Committee and the Alpine 44 Club.

Soon after the war ended, the young Association found itself deeply involved with numerous projects, some of which continue today.

Numerous children of airmen, who had paid the supreme sacrifice, were educated at schools. In some cases, funds were provided for a University or Teachers Training College education. Over the years the demand for children's education has diminished and programs to assist chronically ill members and care of the aged were put in place.

Welfare grants, food parcels and Christmas cheer have been made to dependants and members. Together with the SA Legion improvements in war pensions for ex-SAAF members and their dependants were negotiated. Successful applications for tax exemption for special flying allowances were negotiated, as were many other issues requiring the Association to lobby with the Government, Provinces and Organisations.



SAAFA HISTORY (CONTINUED)

The Air Force Fund was started during the War to provide funds to donate "Spitfire" aircraft to the Royal Air Force. At the cessation of hostilities, remaining funds were distributed to Branches and the RAF Benevolent Fund. The Association administered funds on behalf of the Air Force Fund, for the benefit of needy 1939/45 SAAF veterans. Housing memorials in the form of blocks of flats were built in Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town. Ex-SAAF men and women in need occupied the flats at sub-economic rentals. These flats are still supported by the three Branches.

At the suggestion of the Association, the first Air Force Memorial was built at the entrance to Waterkloof Air Force Station in 1957. The site proved unsuitable for a number of reasons and the Association suggested a national Air Force Memorial be built and agreed to contribute half the overall costs. Completed in 1963 the result is the magnificent Air Force Memorial situated on Bays Hill above the old Swartkop Air Force Station, now known as Air Force Mobile Deployment Wing.

The SAAF Memorial is dedicated to all who gave their lives in service of South Africa, in war and peace and was officially opened by the then State President, Mr CR Swart, on September 1, 1963.

A piece by Sydney Fryer, written for the SAAF Association, notes the memorial was designed to obtain a shape sculpturally symbolic of flight when viewed both from the ground and from the air. To this end the building was planned in three wings comprising the accommodation, a small non-denominational chapel for family services, a caretaker's office and a machine room for the fountain pump and filter plant, with a separate folded slab roof over each. These wings intersect over and enfold a central hall housing a Cenotaph, Rolls of Honour and illuminated scripts.

The Cenotaph, the centrepiece of the design, is three-sided to accommodate the SAAF motto, "*Per Aspera Ad Astra*" and two biblical quotations.

The SAAF Memorial is a living monument, with continuous upgrades and development. The surrounding gardens have grown significantly over the years and access roads and parking areas were changed to ease the flow of traffic during Memorial Days.

With the end of apartheid in 1994 and the subsequent amalgamation of the various air forces into the new SA Air Force, the memorial was found not to be representative of the relevant history, as it did not include all groups. To this end, a Commemorative Stone with an Eternal Flame was designed and built in the centre of the main entrance walkway to the SAAF Memorial. It lists the forces that became the new SA Air Force as: Azanian Peoples Liberation Army, Bophuthatswana Air Force, Ciskei Defence Force, Air Wing Mkontho We Sizwe (Armed wing of the ANC), SA Air Force, Transkei Defence Force Air Wing and Venda Defence Force Air Wing.



SAAFA HISTORY (CONTINUED)

Joint annual memorial services are held in May each year. At the suggestion of the Association to the SAAF, citizen force squadrons at Cape Town, Durban, Germiston, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Pretoria were formed.

The year 2025 marks the SAAFA's 80 years of existence, coinciding with 105 years of military aviation in South Africa.

Today the South African Air Force Association continues its legacy to support ex-Air Force aged and needy; to perpetuate the memory of SAAF men and women killed in the line of duty; to foster Air Force camaraderie; to preserve our Air Force Heritage and to continue dynamic Air Force/SAAF Association interaction.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership categories

Membership of the SAAF Association shall be one of three categories:

- Full membership
- Honorary membership
- Associate membership

Qualifications for Full Membership

All Air Force members and ex-members and their spouses or surviving spouses, shall be eligible for Full Membership. This includes all ranks, men and women, past and present, who served or are serving in any of the following Services or Corps:

- South African Air Force (SAAF)
- South African Women's Auxiliary Air Force
- Other Air Forces approved from time to time in General Meeting

SAAF members who are still in service will be recorded as such in the Membership Register.

Ex-members, who have been discharged from their Service or Corps for misconduct, are not eligible for membership.



MEMBERSHIP (CONTINUED)

Qualifications for Honorary Membership

The SAAF Association may invite eminent or distinguished persons to become honorary members for a period terminable at the discretion of the National Executive Committee without the payment of a SAAFA membership subscription or member's levy. Invitation to this category of membership by Branches shall be submitted to and approved by the National Executive Committee.

Qualifications for Associate Membership

Persons who do not ordinarily qualify for Full Membership, but, who in the opinion of the Branch Committee, can make a meaningful contribution to the SAAF Association, may be invited to become an Associate Member of the Branch.

Associate Members pay the same membership levies as Full Members.

Associate Membership is reviewed by the Branch Committee annually.

Associate Members may be co-opted to Branch Committees, but may not serve as Chairman or Vice-Chairman.

Associate Members shall enjoy all the rights and general benefits of a Full Member, except the right to receive any benefit or financial assistance.

Applications for Membership

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary of the Branch on the official application form which is available on the SAAF Association website www.saafa.co.za or from the Branch Secretary.

Each application shall be accompanied by the appropriate subscriptions and levies.

Any person accepted as a member shall be deemed to be a paid-up member so long as his name remains upon the membership register, and having paid annual levies.

Any member whose subscriptions and levies are not more than three months in arrears shall have the rights and privileges of a member.

Any member who is three months in arrears with his/her subscriptions and levies shall be liable to have his/her membership terminated by the decision of the Branch Committee of which he/she is a member.



MEMBERSHIP (CONTINUED)

Membership Transfers

Any member moving from one town or district to another and desiring to be transferred to another branch shall, after paying all arrear member's levies (if applicable) due to his/her current branch, be so transferred.

Introduction Membership Subscription

Members admitted as Full and Associate Members for the first time shall pay an Introduction SAAF Association Membership Subscription of such an amount as determined by the National Executive Committee from time to time and approved by the Annual General Meeting of the SAAF Association. Currently, this amount is R150.00 per member.

Annual Member's Levy

Thereafter, all Full and Associate Members will be required to pay the Branch an Annual Member's Levy as determined by the Branch Committee from time to time and approved at the Branch's Annual General Meeting. This Annual Member's Levy includes the Branch Capitation Fees payable to the National Executive Committee. Such Member's Levy shall become due and payable on the 1st January of every year. Any member joining for the first time after the 1st July of any year shall only pay half of the current approved Member's Levy for that year. Any member whose Annual Member's Levy is not more than 3 months in arrears shall have the rights and privileges of a member.

Branch Capitation Fees

Annual Branch Capitation Fees shall be paid to the National Executive Committee in respect of every contributing Full and Associate Member of the Branch. This fee goes towards covering NEC administrative costs, as well as any other special obligations e.g. the Air Force Memorial Maintenance Fund. Currently, the Branch Capitation Fee amounts to R50.00 per member.

SAAFA BENEVOLENCE

Background. When the SAAF Association was first founded in 1945 its member's main concern was the well-being of the families of airmen that had paid the supreme sacrifice during the war and the well-being of demobilized airmen. While other objectives were later added, benevolence has been the cornerstone of the Association throughout the years. For a very lengthy period, the management of financial support to those in need was centralised at the National Office.



SAAFA BENEVOLENCE (CONTINUED)

When the SAAF Association suffered huge financial losses around 2006 it was no longer possible to distribute financial support from the central account. The SAAF Association was forced to rely on Branches to raise their own funds to support those in need in their particular areas.

Evaluation. When a Branch is approached to provide assistance it is essential to conduct an evaluation of the financial situation of the potential beneficiary. While it may feel invasive, it is very important to protect the interests of the Branch and to ensure that the goodwill is not misused. If the services of a qualified social worker are available, such a person's input can be invaluable.

The elements that can be considered when determining the level of support needed include the following:

- Disabilities.
- Medical record (Medical condition and supply of Medication).
- Assistance or support from family members and friends.
- Special needs and circumstances i.e. suitable accommodation and personal safety and care.
- Supportive arguments to income and expenditure (financial position).

Funding. The main burden for generating funds for benevolence now falls on the Branch and various initiatives need to be launched to satisfy the requirement. Additional sources of funding are as follows:

- SAAFA National Office Annual Award. In recent years the SAAFA central fund has recovered to a point where NEC can allocate a modest annual financial allocation to all beneficiaries. This allocation is made to Branches in November each year.
- Johannesburg Branch Eagle Assistance Fund. This fund makes once-off payments to a beneficiary which has proven to be very useful when a Branch first acquires a beneficiary and can be used to address an immediate need.
- CMVO Benevolence Fund. The CMVO has a fund that is used for all veterans in need, but it needs to be noted that it can only make once-off modest allocations.



SAAFA BENEVOLENCE (CONTINUED)

While the SAAF Association does not qualify to issue tax certificates to entities that are willing to make welfare donations to Branches, it is registered as a Non-profit Organisation (083-072-NPO) and Public Benefit Organisation (18/11/13/4374).

These numbers are captured on the official SAAF Association letterhead and a copy of the NPO certificate is available from the National Office for donors that require this certificate. When payments are made to recipients, existing state old age pensions mustn't be compromised when making payments as there is a risk that these can be reduced due to the additional income.

Notes:

- (1) Beneficiaries are being assessed on an annual basis and monitored by means of regular contacts and visits by the Branch Committee member responsible for this portfolio.
- (2) CMVO Benevolence Fund: Benefits are available for Military Veterans registered on the database of the Department of Military Veterans (DMV).
- (3) The above-mentioned information and guidelines are included in Chapter 13 of the SAAFA Manual of Administration.

PATRONS OF SAAFA

Lt Gen A.M. Muller, SSAS, SD, SM, SALM (Retired)
 Lt Gen W.H. Hechter, SSAS, SD, SM, MMM, SALM (Retired)
 Lt Gen R.J. Beukes, SD, SM, MMM, SALM (Retired)
 Hon Col B.E. Hersov, DMS, JCM, LLD (hc) (Rhodes), MA (Cantab)
 Lt Gen C. Gagiano, SM, SAAF (Retired)
 Lt Gen F.Z. Msimang, psc (j), ensp, SAAF (Retired)
 Lt Gen W.S. Mbambo, psc (j), ensp

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) OFFICE BEARERS

National President	Trevor Slade
National Vice President	Bill de Pinho
Country Vice Presidents	Steve Bekker
	Derrick Page
	Marthie Visser
Honorary Treasurer	Carol Havenga
National Secretary	Marianne Mostert



NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PORTFOLIOS

National President	Trevor Slade
National Vice President	Bill de Pinho
National Office	Marianne Mostert
SAAFA/SAAF/PRO	Marthie Visser
MAAC Liaison	Colin Bowring
Finance	Carol Havenga
Constitution/MoA/Records	Mike Louw
Membership	Johan Pentz
Marketing	Roelf Rossouw
Benevolence	Trevor Slade
National Medical Liaison	Bill de Pinho
Remembrance/Memorial Services	Renier Feldtman
Heritage	Bruce Harrison
Newsletter	Roelf Rossouw
Kindred Organisations	Mike Louw
Awards	Jaap Rossouw
Regalia	Marianne Mostert
Veteran Affairs	Colin Bowring
Civil Aviation	Ray Ledlie
Webmaster/Social Media	Koos van Rensburg

NATIONAL CONTACT DETAILS

The National Secretary

PO Box 21223

Valhalla 0137

Telephone/fax:

(012) 651 5921

Website:

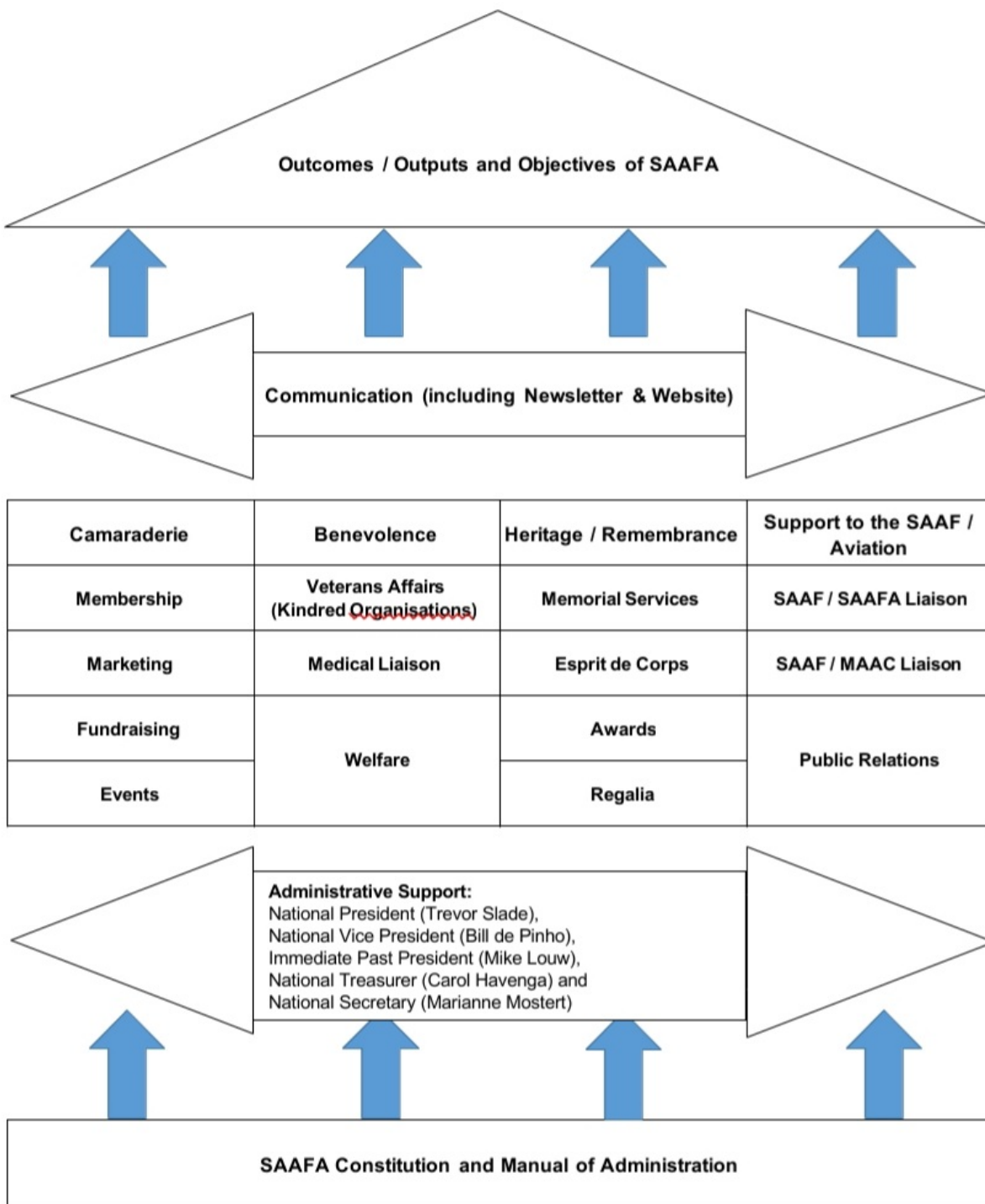
www.saafa.co.za

E-mail:

nationalhq@saafa.co.za



OUTCOMES/OUTPUTS AND OBJECTIVES OF SAAFA



RITUAL FOR THE OPENING OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

"As we meet once again to conduct the affairs of the SAAF Association let us be ever mindful of the objectives and purpose of the Association and participate in the proceedings with the interest of our members and their families uppermost in our minds.

Let us also remember those who have made the supreme sacrifice in past conflicts and those who have passed away since our last meeting."

"We will remember them"

TRIBUTE DURING THE ACT OF HOMAGE

"He/She has slipped the surly bonds of earth.
He/She shall mount up with wings as an eagle,
put out a hand and touch the face of God.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
we will remember him/her."

TABLE PRAYER

*(Adapted from the poem **THE AIRMAN'S GRACE** by Father John W. MacGillivray of the Royal Canadian Air Force)*

Lord of thunderhead and sky
Who placed in man the will to fly
You taught his hand speed, skill and grace,
To soar beyond man's dwelling place.

You shared with him the eagle's view,
The right to fly as eagles do,
The right to call the clouds his home,
And grateful through your heavens roam.

May we assembled here in your sight,
And all who love the thrill of flight,
Recall with three-fold gratitude
Your gifts of wings, fellowship and food.

