



COUNCIL OF MILITARY VETERANS' ORGANISATIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA

RAAD VAN MILITÊRE VETERANEORGANISASIES VAN SUID-AFRIKA

POLICY & GUIDELINES

CMVO POLICY I.R.O COMMEMORATION SERVICES

Appendix A: Ceremonial Guidelines Handbook of the SANDF (Extract)

B. Official Order of Precedence in South Africa

C: SANDF Protocol List

D: Military Veterans' Protocol List

E: Issuing of Invitations

F. Dress Regulations for Veterans at Memorial Services

G: Wreath Laying Instructions

H: Battles and Events Commonly Commemorated

I: Memorial Services where the SANDF has Direct Involvement

J: Memorial Services Supported by the SANDF

K: Description of Selected Memorials

Introduction

1. Military memorials and memorial services, as symbols used to honour soldiers who sacrificed their lives on behalf of their country, are part of a country's heritage and a clear indication of the historical significance of the military in a country.

2. To render ceremonial support to activities in honour of fallen soldiers is an inextricable part of military culture. It is also an important contributor to the morale of not only soldiers but also their loved ones and the citizens of the country in whose name they risk their lives. It is also important to surviving veterans.

3. South Africa's military history is a long and complex one. Almost every population group has, at one time or another, experienced conflict. Further, the country's citizens and soldiers have participated in many conflicts beyond the country's borders as well as beyond those of the continent of Africa. This



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latter situation continues to this day with South African soldiers deployed in peace support operations.

4. The commemoration of the centenary of World War I (1914-1918) has commenced in 2014 and is progressing as planned.

5. Clear guidance is therefore required to ensure that the lives of soldiers, who died in the execution of their duties, are commemorated in a dignified, transparent and fair manner, regardless of their colour, creed or political dispensation.

Purpose of the policy

6. The aim of this policy is to provide:

- a. Details of battles, events, memorial services and where applicable, relevant memorials of interest to SA military veterans.
- b. Guidance on the processes and procedures to be followed at memorial services as well as protocol lists and dress regulations.
- c. Guidance on the commemoration of World War I by CMVO members.
- d. A description of selected memorials.

Applicability of this policy

7. All commemoration services presented by member organisations of the CMVO should be conducted in line with this policy, which has been drafted in consultation with the ceremonial staff of the SANDF. The policy is furthermore based on the instructions and guidelines contained in the following references:

- a. The SANDF Ceremonial Handbook.
- b. The Official Order of Precedence in South Africa.

8. An indication has been received from the SANDF that non-adherence to the principles contained in this document, could lead to the suspension of any official involvement in, and logistic support by the SANDF to the event organisers. Deviations, if any, must therefore be cleared beforehand with the SANDF's ceremonial liaison personnel for the specific event, if any SANDF participation/support is required. SANDF support could in any event be more limited, in view of budgetary restrictions, other obligations and the lack of a procedure manual to be followed to procure such help. This manual is still to be produced by the Department of Military Veterans.



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9. The nature and number of commemoration events will be revised from time to time, to ensure concentration of effort and impact, and to prevent as far as possible unnecessary duplication of services and unwarranted costs. This will be done in consultation with all relevant interested and affected parties.

10. Member organisations are encouraged to organise and/or support the memorial services covered in appendices H, I and J as well as the other services organised by the SANDF or military veterans' organisations. These cover WWI, WWII, the Korean War, the Border War, The Freedom Struggle and engagements subsequent to 27th April 1994.

11. Early invitations should be sent to out in accordance with Appendix E.

12. By September of the preceding year, the CMVO should be informed by all member organizations of memorial services planned for the next year. This will assist with avoiding diary conflicts. These services will be published on the CMVO website in a calendar of events.

13. Every effort should be made to ensure that memorial services at which senior SANDF members are to be invited are included in the SANDF calendar preferably in the December of the preceding year. This is required to ensure early warning but also to better coordinate such invitations, and to prevent ad hoc actions.

14. At all commemoration or memorial services correct official military protocol should be observed. Paragraphs 24.3 to 24.6 of the Ceremonial Guidelines of the SANDF (Appendix A) should be used to the extent practical and relevant.

15. The Dress Regulations for Veterans at Memorial Services contained in appendix F should be complied with.

16. The Official Order of Precedence in South Africa, as well as SANDF and the Military Veterans protocol lists contained in Appendices B, C and D and the wreath laying Instructions (Appendix F) should be adhered to. The positioning of the heads of military veterans' organisations vis-a-vis members of the SANDF will be as follows:

- a. At veterans' memorial services after the Service Chiefs.
- b. At unit memorial services, after the officer commanding.

17. These protocol lists also provide guidance for the seating arrangements. It is however the preference of C SANDF that uniformed guests sit together in a block. Persons who in terms of the Official Order of Precedence are entitled to a specific precedence, should at all time be treated accordingly.



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How this policy will be applied

18. The Vice Chairman of the CMVO, or another member appointed to do so, will take responsibility for the ceremonial and historical portfolio on the Management Committee (Manco) of the CMVO.

19. The Vice Chairman or the alternate Manco member will be responsible for the overall liaison with the CSANDF re all ceremonial and commemoration events planned by the CMVO, including the associated calendar to be finalised in November of the preceding year to avoid conflicts of dates.

20. The Vice Chairman or alternate Manco member can call on experienced, knowledgeable veterans to assist him to answer specific enquiries re commemoration events, to draft guidelines in this regard and to help with quality control of such events.

21. The respective member organisations remain responsible for the planning, funding and execution of commemoration events initiated by them, where applicable in close cooperation with the liaison personnel appointed by the SANDF.

22. The Manco can appoint a specific member organisation to arrange one or more commemoration events of its behalf, in close cooperation of the Vice Chairman or the alternate Manco member, especially in respect of invitations and protocol affairs. The CMVO has formally withdrawn from and will no longer render any assistance to the Pretoria Memorial Services Council. The Department of Military Veterans and the SANDF have been informed accordingly.

23. Civic commemoration events are to be handled by the local authority concerned, as assisted by a nominated military representative to ensure that it is done in accordance with the principles set out in this instruction. To ensure adequate quality control, to the satisfaction of the CSANDF, it must be done in close cooperation with the ceremonial section of the SANDF. The CMVO will not accept co-responsibility for such civic commemoration events, unless the hosts abide by the provisions of this policy.

Special considerations re World War I commemorations w.e.f. 1914

24. As can be seen from appendices H - J, South Africa, together with many Commonwealth countries will be commemorating the centenary of World War I between 2014-2018. These events include, but are not limited to:

- a. The Commencement of WWI – August 2014.
- b. Battle of Sandfontein – September 2014.



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- c. Battle of the Somme – July 2016.
- d. Battle of Delville Wood (linked to services at Arques-la-Bataille and Tyne Cot) – July 2016.
- e. Sinking of the Mendi – February 2017.
- f. Battle of Passendale – September 2017.
- g. Battle of Square Hill – September 2018.
- h. Armistice Day – November 2018.

25. The CMVO encourages its member organisations and thus their members, to support as many of these events, especially those held locally, as possible. With regard to international events, budget constraints however require that a limited number of events be focused on.

26. The following international events will form the focus for the CMVO:

- a. Battle of Delville Wood (linked to services at Arques-la-Bataille in France and Passendale [Tyne Cot] in Belgium) – July 2016.
- b. Sinking of the SS Mendi, Portsmouth UK – February 2017.

27. The implication of the above is that in 2016 and 2017 the focus will be on World War I. Veterans' organisations are however encouraged to continue with the commemoration of other battles and events (see Appendices H - J) during this period.

Consequences for non-compliance of policy

28. Suspension of DMV and/or SANDF participation and logistic support, where applicable, in cases where the event organisers deviate from the provisions of this policy, or other requirements as set beforehand by DMV and/or the SANDF, unless prior permission has been obtained for such deviation.

29. The CMVO could withdraw its recognition of or re-assign a specific commemoration event to another member organisation, if the organisers deviate from the provisions of this policy, unless prior permission has been obtained for such deviation.

30. The CMVO may at any stage withdraw the mandate given to any delegated instance to act on its behalf, if said instance does not adhere to the provisions of this policy.

Legal mandate for this policy

31. The SANDF Ceremonial Handbook.

32. The Official Order of Precedence of South Africa.



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Definitions

As contained in the attached Appendices.

Owner of the policy

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Mil Vet Funeral | CMVO National Council |
| Position | Chairman |

Version Control

| Date | Version | Description of update | Author / Reviewer |
|------------|---------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 2013/10/11 | 1.0 | First draft | |
| 2016/07/19 | 2.0 | Document revised | Gert Opperman |

APPENDIX A

PROCEDURES FOR PALLBEARERS

PROCEDURES BEFORE AND DURING THE SERVICE AT THE CHURCH

1. The following procedure is followed:
 - a. Prior to the commencement of the service, the undertaker will take the coffin to the church.
 - b. The pallbearers, led by the person in charge, will carry the coffin to a place previously indicated by the officiating chaplain/minister in accordance with the



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regulations of the local clerical authority. (Usually in front of the pulpit or in the vestibule).

- c. They then assume their position to the right of the pulpit as seen from the pulpit, in the front row on reserved seats. Positions will be taken up in the order in which they will carry the coffin, thus enabling them to move directly into the correct positions at the coffin when their names are read out at the conclusion of the service.
- d. The pallbearers will be seated on their reserved seats, in the church, before the service commences, in the sequence in which they will take up their positions in front of the pulpit, at the conclusion of the service.

PROCEDURE OF THE CONCLUSION OF THE SERVICE INSIDE THE CHURCH

2. The following procedures to be followed:

- a. At the conclusion of the service, the names of the pallbearers will be read out by the officiating chaplain or minister.
- b. The pallbearers should remain seated while their names are being read.
- c. When the name of the last member is read, the pallbearers will take up their positions in front of the pulpit.
- d. When the members are in position the officiating chaplain or minister will leave the pulpit and will move down the aisle towards the vestibule, if the coffin has been placed there, followed by the pallbearers. If the coffin has been placed in front of the pulpit, the pallbearers will take up their positions around the coffin. The pallbearers will lift the coffin by the handles. The coffin will be carried out of the church building, foot end foremost, by the pallbearers with the family behind the coffin in slow time with the officiating chaplain or minister leading. The coffin may also be placed on the trolley and pushed to the vestibule.
- e. The pallbearers replace their caps on the command of the Military veterans in charge once they have placed the coffin in the hearse.

PROCEDURE AT THE GRAVESIDE

3. The following procedures to be followed:

- a. As soon as the pallbearers reach the grave, they pass the grave on both sides and halt on the order.



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“PALLBEARERS – HALT”

When the coffin is over the grave, the Military Veteran in charge of the pallbearers orders

“PALLBEARERS, INWARDS – TURN”

The pallbearers will now place the coffin on the straps over the grave. The Military Veteran in charge then orders:

“ON CAPS”

- b. The pallbearer on the right side at the head of the coffin will remove the folded National/Association flag and hand it to the Military Veteran in charge.
- c. Thereafter the order will be given:

“PALLBEARERS – SALUTE”

and on conclusion of the salute

“LEFT AND RIGHT –TURN”

“QUICK – MARCH”

The pallbearers will turn to the foot of the grave.

The pallbearers will withdraw and fall out. They will not pay their last respects individually again when the other Military Veteran mourners pay their last respects.

Note: If practical, the pallbearers should be rehearsed before the commencement of the funeral.