South African Defence Policy and Capability: The Case of the South African National Defence Force

by

Gerhard Martin Louw

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Supervisor: Prof Abel J. Esterhuyse
Faculty of Military Science

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Declaration

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Abstract

Armed forces the world over have three primary functions — force development, force deployment and force employment. Defence policy plays a guiding role in all of these, but is especially important in establishing the *rationale* for the creation of those military capabilities that force development brings about. The end of the Cold War, which coincided with a new political dispensation in South Africa, also gave rise to a new security paradigm: a theory implying both a reduction in the utility of military force, and an adjustment in the use of military forces. This phenomenon changed the context within which states generate modern defence policy, but did not affect the causal relationship between policy publications and the outcomes of a military's force development activities. Usually, a defence policy presupposes the development of armed forces that are effective and efficient at executing their mandate — a condition that is measurable in terms of the organisation's levels integration, skill, quality and responsiveness. The thesis uses this concept, both as a point of departure and as a structural organising device, to describe the variance between defence policy and military capabilities. A general analysis of South Africa's defence policy publications indicates that, indeed, the policymakers had thoroughly considered the armed forces' effectiveness when they wrote the White Paper (1996) and the Defence Review (1998). By 2006, the South African Army has interpreted national defence policy and formulated a future strategy of its own, very much in alignment with the 'modern system' approach of the original policy publications.

However, further analysis of the actual capabilities of the South African National Defence Force indicates a major variance between the relevant defence policy publications, the military's force development outcomes, and the present demands of the South African security environment. There appears to be quite serious deficiencies in the attribute of integration, which arise primarily from political influences; furthermore, the military's quality is under strain, mainly because of the defence force's seeming inability to formulate a strategy that is not only acceptable, but also suitable and feasible. While the armed forces appear to be skilful enough to execute their present (peacetime) missions, success in the type of operations that policy demands is unlikely. In summary, the study suggests that the principal reason for the large variance between defence policy, military capabilities, and real operational demands stems from defence's lack of responsiveness to its resource constraints and operational realities. The thesis therefore concludes that the defence force has been largely unsuccessful in complying with the demands of defence policy, irrespective of the fact that the policy by itself may be obsolete and/or inappropriate for the South African context; furthermore, that military effectiveness in meeting current operational demands is also doubtful. Finally, the defence force's schizophrenic organisational culture may be the primary cause of it moving ever closer to reneging on its constitutional mandate.

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Opsomming

Gewapende magte wêreldwyd het drie primêre funksies — magsontwikkeling, magsontplooiing en magsaanwending. Verdedigingsbeleid vervul ‘n rigtinggewende rol in al hierdie funksies, maar is veral belangrik om die skepping van die militêre vermoëns, wat deur magsontwikkelingsaktiwiteite daargestel word, te *regverdig*. Gevolglik beoog hierdie tesis om die mate van ooreenkoms tussen die voorskrifte van Suid-Afrikaanse verdedigingsbeleid en die werklike militêre vermoëns van die Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Weermag te beskryf, soos dit ontwikkel het tussen 2000 en 2011. Die einde van die Koue Oorlog (samelopend met die totstandkoming van ‘n nuwe bedeling in Suid-Afrika) het geboorte gegee aan nuwe denke betreffende veiligheid, wat ook ‘n afname in die nuttigheid van militêre mag en ‘n aanpassing in die aanwending van militêre magte tot gevolg gehad het. Hierdie verskynsel het die omgewing waarbinne moderne state verdedigingsbeleid ontwikkel verander, maar nie die kousale verband tussen beleidspublikasies en die uitkomste van ‘n weermag se magsontwikkelingsaktiwiteite aangeraak nie. Gewoonlik veronderstel ‘n verdedigingsbeleid die ontwikkeling van gewapende magte wat doeltreffend en doelmatig is in die uitvoering van hul mandaat — ‘n toestand wat meetbaar is in terme van die organisasie se vlakke van integrasie, vaardigheid, kwaliteit, en hul vermoë om toepaslik op omgewigsinvloede te reageer. Die tesis gebruik hierdie konsep, beide as ‘n vertrekpunt en as ‘n strukturele ordeningsmeganisme, en om die verskille tussen verdedigingsbeleid en militêre vermoëns te beskryf. ‘n Algemene ontleding van Suid-Afrika se verdedigingsbeleidspublikasies toon dat, met die skryf van die Witskrif (1996) en Verdedigingsoorsig (1998), beleidmakers wel deeglike oorweging geskenk het aan die weermag se doeltreffenheid; so ook die Suid-Afrikaanse Leër, wat teen 2006 sy eie toekomsstrategie die lig laat sien het.

Desnieteenstaande getuig verdere ontleding van die Suid-Afrikaanse Nasional Weermag se werklike vermoëns van diepgaande verskille tussen verbandhoudende beleidspublikasies, die weermag se ontwikkelingsuitkomste, en die huidige eise van die Suid-Afrikaanse veiligheidsomgewing. Dit wil voorkom asof daar ernstige integrasie-leemtes is, komende hoofsaaklik vanuit die politieke omgewing; verder is die gewapende magte se kwaliteit onder druk, hoofsaaklik vanweë die weermag se onvermoë om ‘n strategie te formuleer wat gelyktydig aanvaarbaar, geskik en uitvoerbaar is. Die gewapende magte mag dalk vaardig genoeg wees om hul huidige (vredestydse) take te verrig, maar dit is te betwyfel of hulle suksesvol sal wees in die voer van die tipe operasies soos beleid voorgeskryf. Ter opsomming dui die studie aan dat die groot verskille tussen verdedigingsbeleid, militêre vermoëns en werklike operasionel eise voor die deur van ‘n gebrek aan doelmatige aanpassing by hulpbrontekorte en operasionele werklikhede gelê kan word. Die tesis maak dus die gevolgtrekking dat die weermag grootliks onsuksesvol was om aan die vereistes van verdedigingsbeleid te voldoen, ongeag die feit dat verdedigingsbeleid op sigself verouderderd en/of ontoepaslik binne die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks mag wees; verder, dat militêre effektiwiteit ter voldoening aan huidige operasionele eise tans ook verdag is. Ten slotte is die weermag se tweeslagtige organisasiekultuur moontlik die belangrikste oorsaak van die neiging na die versaking van verdediging se grondwetlike mandaat.

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Preface

Acknowledgements

This research report is a product of studies that had commenced in June 2010; initially, in an effort to allay the boredom of an extended hiatus in a military career, and later as a simple matter of attending to unfinished business. Consequent to these changes in personal focus (brought about by the vagaries of employment in the armed forces), my levels of motivation and commitment to the project fluctuated accordingly. The unwavering support of the following persons was therefore instrumental in bringing this project to fruition:

- Rear Admiral (Junior Grade) Cobus Visser, who has been my patient workplace supervisor since January 2011, and who has granted me more room for manoeuvre than I could ever have hoped for.

- Professor Francois Vreÿ, who provided invaluable content to the studies, and whose quiet dedication and depth of insight never ceased to inspire and astound me, respectively;

- Most of all, Professor Abel Esterhuyse, whose obvious passion and irrepressible enthusiasm turned thoughts into action, theory into enterprise, and vacillation into purpose;

Although the detail that follows flowed from my own pen, its sequence and shape reflect only my limited version of the worlds that they so generously allowed me to glimpse. For that, I owe them an eternal debt of gratitude.

Gerhard M. Louw
Elardus Park
Pretoria
August 2013

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Politics is war without bloodshed
while war is politics with bloodshed

Mao Tse-Tung, 1893 — 1976.

War is much too serious a matter
to be entrusted to the military

Georges Clemenceau, 1841 — 1992.

I have come to the conclusion that politics are too serious a matter
to be left to the politicians

Charles de Gaulle, 1890 — 1970.

The whole art of politics
consists in directing rationally the irrationalities of men

Reinhold Niebuhr, 1892 — 1971.

Politics, n. "Strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles"

Ambrose Bierce, 1842 — 1914, *The Devil's Dictionary.*

You cannot simultaneously prevent and prepare for war

Albert Einstein, 1879 — 1955.

Luck in the long run
is given only to the efficient

Helmuth Von Moltke, 1800 — 1891.

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Key Terms

Term	Definition
Attrition Warfare	A doctrine or approach to the conduct of war that emphasizes the general, systematic destruction of an opponent, aimed at diminishing the adversary's material power to resist over time, through the application of superior force.
ANC	African National Congress: a revolutionary movement turned political party, and having the majority in South African parliament since 1994.
Capability	The capacity to execute a specified course of action, usually expressed in terms of the means and competencies to do so. A capability may, or may not, be accompanied by an intention.
Cold War	A state of tension between adversaries in which measures, short of sustained action by regular forces, are used to attain national objectives. These measures may include political, economic, technological, sociological, paramilitary, and small-scale military efforts. The term 'Cold War' is commonly used to describe relations between the United States and the USSR from the late 1940s until the late 1990s.
Collateral Damage	Damage to areas not specifically targeted, caused by the effects of weapon strikes extending beyond the immediate area of the target.
Compellence	The process of influencing, through one instrument or a variety of instruments, another party either to initiate or to cease some specified action, which would not otherwise have been taken. Compellence is positive in nature, while deterrence is negative.
Conflict Spectrum	A continuum of hostilities that ranges from sub-crisis manoeuvring in containment, compellence, or deterrence situations, to the most violent form of general war.
Containment	Formerly, it was the United States' policy to prevent communism from spreading; after the end of the Cold War, any policy to prevent armed violence from spreading.
Contingency Plans; - Operations	Preparation for major events that can reasonably be anticipated and that probably will have a detrimental effect on national security objectives; actions in case such events occur.
Conventional (or Regular) War	Military operations conducted among the regular forces of states, employing mainly heavy weapons in force-on-force combat, and using standard doctrine.

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Term	Definition
Defence Policy	The authoritative allocation of values for the national defence community, designed to give direction, coherence, and continuity to courses of action for which the decision-making body is responsible. Public policy could be proclaimed in law and then it would be authoritative and enforceable, or it could be issued as guidelines in which case it would be an imperative but not legally enforceable.
Deterrence	Measures taken to prevent aggression by opponents and to inhibit escalation if combat occurs; the prevention from action by fear of the consequences; a state of mind produced by one's perception of a threat of unacceptable counteraction by an opponent.
DOD	South African Department of Defence and Military Veterans
Escalation	Intensification or broadening of a conflict through the use of more powerful weapons, larger number of forces, or geographic spread of the conflict.
Force Deployment	Placing developed military forces appropriately in time and space
Force Development	Establishing and enhancing organisational structures, equipment, doctrine, training and other preparations to execute military missions
Force Employment	Executing military missions
Graduated Response	The incremental application of national power to meet a security threat, allowing for gradual escalation and accommodation of each element of power.
Guerrilla Warfare	A doctrine or approach to the conduct of war that entails military and paramilitary operations in hostile territory, executed by irregular forces employing mainly light weapons and using hit-and-run tactics.
Infrastructure	Generally used for all fixed and permanent installations, fabrications, facilities or communication networks for the support and control of military forces.
Intelligence	A product resulting from the collection, evaluation, analysis, interpretation, and integration of all information concerning one or more aspects of foreign countries or areas, which is immediately or potentially significant to the development and execution of policies, plans, and operations.
Interoperability	The ability of armed forces of different nations to operate each other's equipment and to interchange the components of such equipment.
Irregular War	Combat between the armed forces of states and other belligerent entities, both foreign and domestic, which may have no fixed abode, and employing the most suitable weapons.
Lead Time	The amount of time between the start of the development of a capability until its operational deployment.
Manoeuvre Warfare	A doctrine or approach to the conduct of war that emphasizes the specific, systemic disruption of the opponent, aimed at suddenly collapsing the adversary's will to resist over time, through the application of superior stratagems.
Military Doctrine	The fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of military objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application.
Military Strategy	The art and science of employing military power under all circumstances to attain national security objectives by applying force or the threat of force.
MK	*Umkhonto we Sizwe*, or 'Spear of the Nation': The armed wing of the ANC, and integrated into the SANDF since 1994.
Mobilization	The act of preparing for war or other emergencies through assembling and organising national resources; the process by which the armed forces or part of them are brought to a state of readiness for war or other national emergency. This includes assembling and organising personnel, supplies, and materiel for active military service.

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Term	Definition
National Interest	A highly generalised concept of elements that constitute a state's compelling needs (including self-preservation, independence, national integrity, military security and economic well-being), the protection or expansion of which may result in the threat or employment of military force.
National Objectives	The fundamental aims, goals or purposes of a nation (as opposed to the methods of achieving those ends) toward which a policy is directed and the nation's energies are applied.
National Policy	A broad course of action or guiding statements adopted by a government to help meet national objectives.
National Power	The combined resources (political, economic, technological, social, military, and geographic) of a nation that comprise the totality of its capabilities or potential.
National Strategy	The art and science of developing and applying the political, economic, psychological, and military powers of a nation during peace and war to meet national objectives.
People's War	A strategy of protracted armed revolutionary struggle, based on the teachings of Mao Zedong, which recognizes the simultaneous political- and military conflict, but in which the focus is on organisation (drawing large numbers of people into the range of revolutionary structures) and communication (propaganda).
Revolutionary War	Efforts to seize political power by illegitimate and/or coercive means, destroying existing systems of government and social structures in the process.
SA Army	South African Army
SA Air Force	South African Air Force
SADF	South African Defence Force (prior to 1994)
SA Navy	South African Navy
SANDF	South African National Defence Force (since 1994)
Strategic Credibility	The perception by a nation that an opponent has both adequate military forces and the national will to act in accordance with its declared strategy.
Strategic Defence	The strategy and forces designed primarily to protect a nation, its outposts, and/or its allies from the hazards of general war.
Strategic Offence	The strategy and forces designed primarily to destroy an enemy's war-making capacity during a general war, or to so degrade it that the opposition collapses.
Sufficiency	A level of military strength that is adequate to achieve the objectives of a given country. Depending on various factors, superiority, equality, or inferiority of military strength compared to a rival may be considered sufficient.
Tactical; Tactics	Referring to battlefield operations in general; the detailed methods used to execute strategic- and/or operational designs.

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1

Introduction

1. Background

The domain of international relations have undergone profound changes since the last decade of the 20th Century, giving rise to (among others) fresh thinking about the development, deployment and employment of armed forces. It was during this time that South Africa, too, embarked upon a socio-political transformation: a venture that not only occurred within the country's most severe economic recession since the 1930s,[1] but also resulted in the country's demilitarisation. In the absence of a military threat to the state, the decision-makers of those early days should have had a relatively free hand to draft appropriate defence policy, from which the DOD would have been able to derive a 'good' military strategy conforming to the criteria of suitability, feasibility, and acceptability.[2] Defence policy, in turn, was obliged to account for the higher imperatives of the new *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, which stated the following regarding national defence:[3]

> "(1) The defence force must be structured and managed as a disciplined military force.
>
> (2) The primary object of the defence force is to defend and protect the Republic, its territorial integrity and its people in accordance with the Constitution and the principles of international law regulating the use of force."

Within four years of democratisation, defence policy was therefore formalised by the publication of (among others) the *White Paper on National Defence (1996)*[4] and the *Defence Review (1998)*,[5] in quick succession. Three policy prescripts, in particular, were significant for the development of the armed forces' capabilities that was to follow: first, the injunction that the South African National Defence Force's force levels, armaments and military expenditure shall be determined by defence

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1 Batchelor, P., Dunne, P. and Saal, D. 1999. *Military Spending and Economic Growth in South Africa.* SADCI Defence Digest, Working Paper No 6, p 1 and 2. While GDP growth averaged less than 1% per annum in real terms, the GNP per capita declined every year and inflation averaged 13.6% per annum.

2 Yarger, H.R. 2006. *Strategic Theory for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy.* Carlisle: US Army War College, p 16.

3 Republic of South Africa. *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, *1996* (2011 edition), Chapter 11 Section 200.

4 Republic of South Africa. *White Paper on Defence, May 1996* (available at http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/SouthAfrica1996.pdf).

5 Republic of South Africa. *South African Defence Review 1998* (available at http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/SouthAfrica1998.pdf).

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policy as it is derived from (among others) an *analysis of the external and internal security environment*. Second, it was envisaged that the "SANDF shall be a balanced, modern, affordable and technologically advanced military force, capable of executing its tasks *effectively and efficiently*"[6] and, third, that the primary role of the SANDF "shall be to *defend* South Africa against *external military aggression*"[7] (accent by the researcher). To summarize: in terms of policy, the development of the armed forces was ultimately to be driven by real security needs, premised upon their cost-effectiveness in the execution of military tasks, and to be exclusively employed in a defensive, non-coercive role. Before getting there, however, the SANDF had the obligation — also in terms of the new defence policy — to integrate the various statutory- and non-statutory forces into a single entity.

For the first decade after 1994, the SANDF as an organisation therefore had an internal, structural focus. The services dedicated themselves to the organisation's deliberate transformation,[8] aimed primarily at legitimising the national defence function rather than ensuring the military's capability to execute its constitutional mandate.[9] This focus was especially true for the SA Army, since it was not only the largest and least technology-dependant service — and therefore destined to absorb the vast majority of integrating personnel from their former forces — but also because it has not benefited from any new equipment that the SANDF was to acquire through government's Strategic Arms Package (SAP) deal.[10] Accordingly, the Army was not obliged to implement changes to its doctrine or to absorb new technology in the short term; it was instead allowed to concentrate on transforming its structure and organisational culture, through a process of innovation in its broad sense:[11] introducing a new leadership, command and management paradigm; relinquishing the former staff compartment system in favour of a novel, joint support system; and surrendering its primary mission of the conduct of military operations to a Joint Operations division, while rating the force preparation responsibility.

From a military-strategic point of view, there could have been additional reasons for the political focus on the SA Army. The new government would have been aware of the fact that, historically, armies and states of the past have created each other; that only land armies can ensure sustained

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6 White Paper on Defence, *op cit* p 7.

7 *Ibid*.

8 Transformation: A marked change in nature, form, or appearance (Concise Oxford Dictionary, Tenth Edition, 1999); also, a change from one qualitative state to another (better) condition. In South Africa, the word usually connotes the political transformation of a society or institution, having proportional racial representation — and not organisational effectiveness or efficiency — as a primary outcome.

9 Esterhuyse, A. 2010. *Getting the Job Done: Transformation in the South African Military.* Strategic Review for Southern Africa, Vol XXXII No 1, June 2010, pp 1 - 30.

10 Sylvester, J. and Seegers, A 2008. *South Africa's Strategic Arms Package: A Critical Analysis.* Scientia Militaria, South African Journal of Military Studies, Vol 36, No 1, p. 53.

11 Innovate: Make changes in something already existing, as by introducing new methods, ideas or products (Concise Oxford Dixtionary, *op cit*).

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control over geographic borders and territory, which is an essential attribute of sovereign statehood; that only ground forces can hope to gain control of populations or effect regime change; finally, that an otherwise-capable army may prevail over a technologically advanced adversary, much more so than in the case of a poorly-equipped air force or navy.[12] In any event, the SA Army's initial, generalist strategic focus on the integration of the former forces, and its accompanying inculcation of a human rights culture, had officially petered out prior to the year 2006; consequently, the Army introduced the first iteration of what was to become its 'Future Strategy' at this time.[13] While the strategy remained without any authority outside of the Army — and had, by the end of 2011, not passed muster at the Military Command Council (MCC)[14] or Plenary Defence Staff Council (PDSC)[15] — it was to serve as the Army's guiding light towards organisational- and military capability development for a number of years thereafter, albeit not in isolation of other policy guidelines.[16]

2. Motivation for the Study

The thesis topic arose from a pragmatic interest in the measure of alignment between South African defence policy (at national level, but also including the SA Army's 'future strategy' at service level), and the actual military capabilities that policy has consequently spawned. The fact that approved defence policy is well-documented, and that a new consultative draft Defence Review was published on 12 April 2012, implied that sufficient and appropriate data was available for analysis. It is therefore also possible to compare the Defence Review of 1998 and its latter iteration over time, making deductions and conclusions on the evolution of defence policy in general. However, some reservations accompanied the choice of the research topic: the capabilities of the SANDF represent the outcomes of its force development efforts, which is currently politically sensitive and on which open, unclassified literature for an academic study is in short supply. While this challenge was bound to affect the validity of the research report, the researcher attempted to mitigate this particular risk by the application of standard methodological process, taking cognisance of other sources of bias as well; to whit, the researcher is a serving member of the SANDF, has first-hand experience of developments in the Army since 1975, and has a personal interest in the South African military's evolution over the past two decades.

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12 Baylis, J., Wirtz J.J. and Gray,C.S. 2010. *Strategy in the Contemporary World.* New York: Oxford University Press, 3rd ed, p 126.

13 SA Army June 2006. *Strategic Profile of the SA Army 2020.* Pretoria: SA Army Office, 1st ed.

14 The Military Command Council, comprising of the service- and divisional chiefs, and chaired by the Chief SANDF.

15 The Plenary Defence Staff Council, dealing with policy matters and comprising of the MCC and the defence secretariat; jointly chaired by the Chief SANDF and the Secretary for Defence.

16 Colonel H.P. Grobler, Future SA Army Strategy Project Officer, noted on 25 July 2013. The Future Strategy fully acknowledged the meta-policy injunctions of the Constitution, the White Paper, and the Defence Review.

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At a higher level, the thesis may even be of practical benefit to South African policymakers. More than a decade has elapsed since the first and only publications of democratic South Africa's White Paper and the Defence Review, assuredly making its content dated, and possibly obsolete. Accusations of institutional dereliction in producing a new iteration of the defence review have accordingly received much coverage in the national media. Since the defence policy had first been promulgated, government has, indeed, attempted to adjust South Africa's defence policy on at least two previous occasions, with 'Update 2005' being the first[17] and the department's efforts since the ministerial announcement on 03 July 2009 the second.[18] The most recent attempt at a definitive defence policy started in 2011, and has had some criticism levelled against the process that was being followed right from the start: first, an apparent disregard for consultative and parliamentary processes, coupled with a vested interest in procurement decisions and a weakened oversight by civil society; second, the conduct of a defence review in the absence of an overarching national security policy framework.[19] (Unbeknown to analysts at the time, the minister also instructed the 2012 Defence Review Committee to adopt a 'budget-independent approach': a method that has serious implications for the resultant policy's feasibility, as the study will later allude to.)

At a departmental level, the study concerns itself with the risk of the SANDF — and especially the SA Army — reneging on its policy mandate. Following on the obligations of the Constitution, as well as the imperatives of the White Paper on Defence, the Defence Review and the demands of the SA Army's Future Strategy, the SANDF is required to be militarily competent. However, given the fact that the defence force is not currently engaged in combat, and that empirical evidence as to its actual performance on the battlefield is therefore absent, the armed forces' effectiveness in their 'primary role' is presently unproven and arguable. Adding to the uncertainty is the fact that, in common with other defence forces worldwide, the South African Department of Defence will make neither the raw data nor the collated results of its own assessments on the SANDF's preparedness available to the public. Nevertheless, the capabilities of the SA Army, in particular, are of importance for at least three reasons: it is by far the largest component of the SANDF, it is currently the most heavily committed in military operations (as it has been in the past, and will probably be in the future), and an invasion over South Africa's landward border was deemed the most plausible without involvement of a superpower or coalition of major powers.[20] The research may therefore also be of some value to the SA Army, since it has recently experienced a change of command and may

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17 Briefing to Defence Portfolio Committee on 14 June 2005 (available at www.pmg.org.za/minutes/2005/0613-white-paper-defence-review-restructuring-briefing-special-defence-account-amendment)

18 Appropriation Bill : Debate on Vote No 19 – Defence (available at http://www.pmg.org.za/hansard/20090703-appropriation-bill-debate-vote-no-19-defence)

19 Mills, G. 2011. *An Option of Difficulties? A 21st Century South African Defence Review*. Discussion Paper 2011/07, The Brenthurst Foundation, Johannesburg, p 5.

20 Defence Review 1998 *op cit* p 13.

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appreciate new insights into its capability development paradigm. Last, the Army is but part of a larger system, implying that other stakeholders may interpret, and selectively apply, the research results to the remaining services of the SANDF as well.

3. The Research Problem

After careful consideration of the discourse on the relationship between defence policy and military capability, the following research question is posed: *what is the current variance between South Africa's declared defence policy and the actual military capability of the SANDF?* The thesis therefore aims at describing the delta[21] between the *intended objectives* of defence policy and the *actual outcomes* of the SANDF's capability development[22] programmes, as the latter had evolved between the years 2000 and 2012. The following framework illustrates the logic of the study's progression towards the resolution of the research problem:

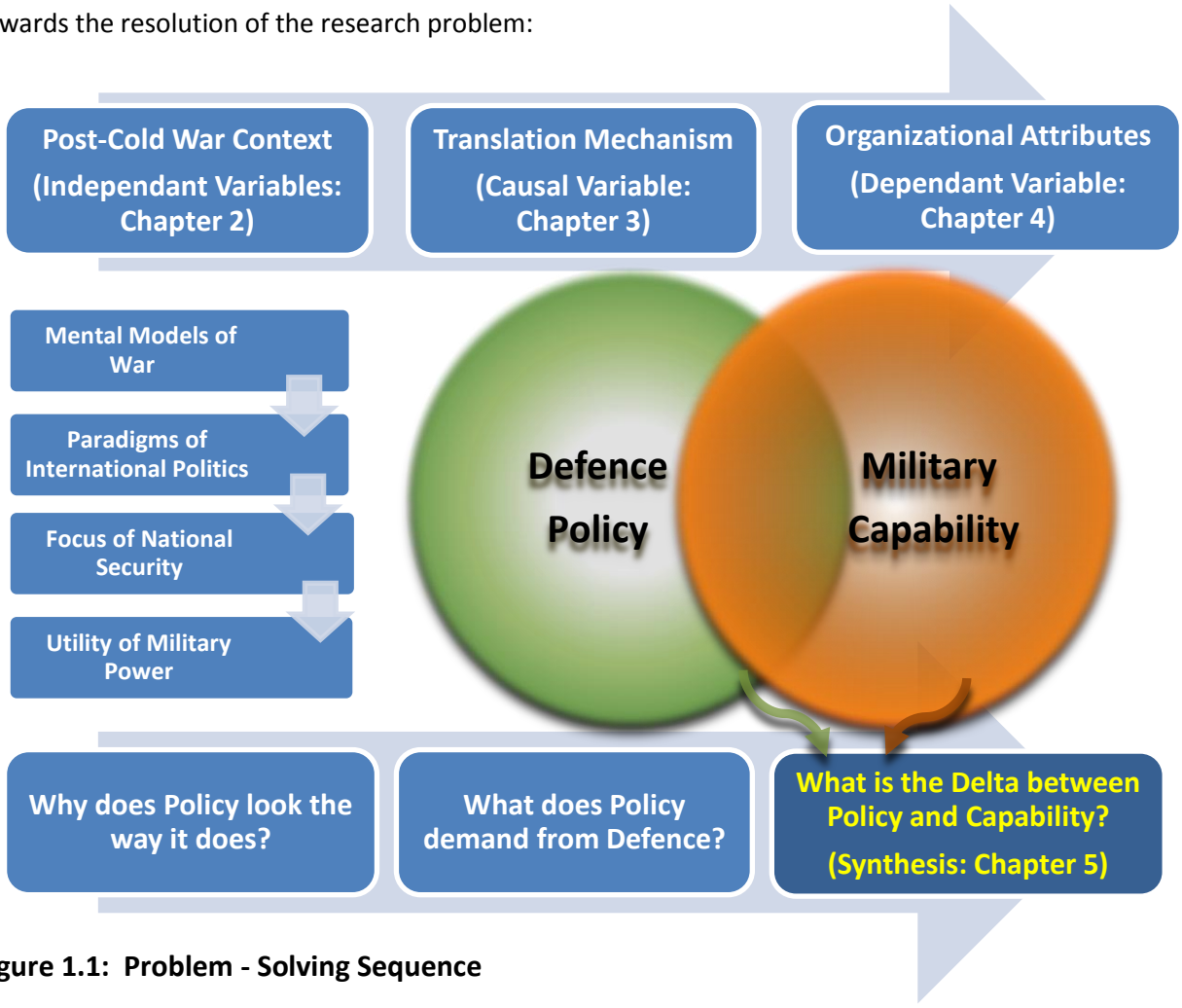

Figure 1.1: Problem - Solving Sequence

21 Mathematicians describe a 'delta' as the symmetric difference between sets of elements that are in either of the sets and not at their intersection. In the case of this study, it would mean a description of the conceptual union between defence policies and the actual strategic capabilities of the SANDF, excluding the commonality between them.

22 The RSA does not presently face an armed threat, either from within or from beyond its borders. Empirical evidence of its armed forces' current effectiveness in combat operations is therefore inadequate. However, one may derive sufficient substantiation for an assessment of the SANDF's *predicted* military effectiveness from the outcomes of its force development activities.

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The thesis is a product of applied research, which — given the surfeit of background knowledge on the research topic — fits best into the mould of a confirmatory- rather than an exploratory study. However, categorizing the study as either 'descriptive' or 'explanatory' is less obvious, since it is bound to employ both kinds of knowledge: on the one hand, the data, facts, and empirical generalisations that affirm the actual state of affairs, and on the other those theories and interpretations that suggest causes — or plausible explanations — for why the objects of scrutiny appear the way they do.[23] The study focuses on examining the prescripts of defence policy and the competency attributes of the South African military; ultimately, though it will conclude on the *meaning of the relationship* between the two data sets. One can therefore typify the study as a qualitative, descriptive analysis, with risk accruing to its theoretical- and inferential validity in particular. During the conceptualisation phase, the study had to overcome the first-mentioned hazard by conducting a thorough literature review, and by obtaining clarity on the definitions that it will use; as for the mitigation of the second threat, the study will address rival explanations as part of its analysis and data interpretation in each successive chapter hereafter. First, though, the study has to establish a foundation for its arguments.

As with strategy, one would not be able to draw valid conclusions from a particular example of defence policy without considering the context — the relevant set of circumstances surrounding a particular situation or event — in which the originators conceived it. Colin Gray, for example, believes that the dimensions of military strategy may be generically eternal, but that the character and conduct (the tactics) of military activities is invariably adapted to the governing political, social, economic, and technological conditions.[24] (To this set of considerations, Gray later added the military, geographical and historical factors.)[25] The study therefore commences by providing the policy context after the Cold War, and initially employs an inductive process that changes focus from a generalised description towards specific theories that are relevant to the subject of the analysis. With an understanding of the policy paradigm thus established, the study turns towards a description of South African defence policy publications, followed by the perceived capabilities of the SANDF (with greater accent on the SA Army), and concluding with a description of the alignment between the two variables. The framework above also provides the sequencing of objectives that the research report seek to achieve, as follows:

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23 Mouton, J. 1996. *Understanding Social Research.* Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik Publishers, pp 107 – 118.

24 Gray, C.S. 1998. *RMAs and the Dimensions of Strategy.* In: Joint Forces Quarterly (JFQ), Autumn/Winter 1997 – 98, p 51.

25 Schnaubelt, C.N. 2011. *Strategy and the Comprehensive Approach*. In: Neal, D.J. and Wells, L. (eds). *Capability Development in Support of Comprehensive Approaches: Transforming International Civil-Military Interactions.* Washington DC: NDU Press, for the Center for Technology and Security Policy, p 56.

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1. First, to acquire a thorough understanding of the modern context within which a national state's defence policy is compiled, and its military capabilities developed in accordance with policy directives. The theory that is developed in this section would assist in the design of a broad framework for the analysis of the South African example;
2. Second, to analyse the declared South African defence policy (as it stood between the years 2000 and 2012), in order to determine its implications for the theoretical competencies of the SANDF in general and the SA Army in particular;
3. thereafter to describe the perceived capabilities of the SANDF, being the actual outcomes of defence policy; and
4. in the last instance, to interpret the data and to arrive at valid conclusions that would answer the research question.

4. Operational Definitions

This study is concerned with the military, as an element of national security. Barry Buzan *(2009)* describes the security domain as comprising of five principal areas: the environmental (biospheric); the social (cultural); the political; the economic; last, the military.[26] Referring to the concept of *security* within the context of the international system, Buzan maintains that it connotes primarily with the freedom from threat: "…security is about the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity. … Its bottom line is about survival, but it also includes a substantial range of concerns about the conditions of existence."[27] When this study therefore talks about a *revolution in security affairs*, it does so under the premise that defence and security are not synonymous, and that a revolution of this kind points to a notable discontinuity in the relevance of military power overall.[28] In further expansion of the relationship between defence and security, David Chuter *(2011)* provides a description of national security *strategy* that is of value to the study: "National security strategy is the process of maintaining, coordinating and employing the assets of the security sector so that they contribute optimally to the nation's strategic goals." [29] The armed forces are a major component of the security sector; therefore national security imperatives, whether explicated in a security strategy or not, should be primary drivers for defence policy. However, the study is also interested in the utility of military force *per se*, and in the utility of military forces in other security applications.

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26 Buzan, B. 2009. *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era.* Colchester: ECPR Press, 2nd edition, p 38.

27 *Ibid*, p 37.

28 Gray, C.S. 2005. *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare.* London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, p 117.

29 Chuter, D. 2011. *Governing and Managing the Defence Sector.* Brooklyn Square, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, p 13.

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When it therefore speaks of a *revolution in strategic affairs*, the study is concerned with those broad and profound changes that affect the usefulness of threatening, or employing, military force in operations.[30] As with the employment of military force, the development and deployment of military forces, too, are subject to the prescripts of *defence policy* — a term that the study uses in its narrow sense, as it pertains primarily to the military-political concerns of the state.[31] A dictionary describes *policy* either as a course or principle of action, adopted or proposed by an organisation or individual, or — in its archaic connotation — as prudent or expedient conduct or action.[32] In turn, the South African Department of Defence describes policy as "…a specific course of action that provides guidelines, prescripts, rules and regulations, which are obligatory in nature, for certain defined circumstances. Policy is usually selected from various options, based on fixed principles, is authoritative and obligatory in nature and normally a determinant of current and future decisions."[33] Consequently, a policy without implementation or action will have no authority in the society that it is supposed to manipulate — a point that Baylis *et al (1987)* reinforces by asserting that policy connotes not only with what it intends to achieve, but also with what occurs during its actual implementation. In practice, then, one can think of government policy as a stream of purposeful action over time, incorporating not only what government is known to have done, but also what it intends doing, and what it is currently trying to do.[34]

Policy therefore gives rise to activities, purposed at achieving the particular policy's intent, and these activities render *outcomes*. Furthermore, if the actions arising from the policy are of a design- and developmental nature, a policy analyst may very well — depending on the aims of the particular policy — describe these outcomes as *capabilities*, which is how the study employs the term. The Oxford Dictionary *(1999)* describes a capability, in its core sense, as the power or ability to do something.[35] (When used in its subsense, it may also mean "an undeveloped or unused faculty.")[36] Two additional (and related) concepts are worthy of elucidation at this stage. The first is that of

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30 Gray, C.S. 2005 *op cit* p 117.

31 Murray, D.J. and Viotti, P.R. (eds) 1982. *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, p 7.

32 Pearsall, J. (ed) 1999. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary: Tenth Edition.* New York: Oxford University Press, p 1106.

33 Department of Defence 2012. *Department of Defence Instruction Pol&Plan/00008/1999 (Edition 4): Policy on the Development, Promulgation and Maintenance of Defence (Level 1) Instructions*. Defence Policy, Strategy and Planning Division, p A-3.

34 Baylis, J., Booth, K., Garnett, J. and Williams, P. 1987. *Contemporary Strategy II: The Nuclear Powers.* London: Croom Helm Ltd, 2nd edition, p 2.

35 Pearsal, J. (ed), *op cit* p 206.

36 Note that the dictionary does not qualify the 'power or ability' with adjectives such as declared, perceived, predicted, proven, practiced, or actual. The arguments of the thesis, however, could not avoid such qualifying statements; in fact, moderating judgements in this vein were essential to arrive at a valid description of the delta between policy and capability.

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being *efficient*, which means working productively with minimum wasted effort or expense.[37] In this case, the focus is on the economical utilisation of resources. While this attribute is certainly important in both the process and the outcomes of the SA Army's force development activities (and also receives more than a passing mention in defence policy), it is the concept of *effectiveness* that is usually associated with capable militaries. Being effective means producing a desired or intended result,[38] which description — for the military — connotes with the successful execution of the organisation's mission, in reasonable disregard of absolute resource cost. In spite of its potential importance for state security, the literature on military effectiveness does not provide a generally acceptable definition for the concept.[39] Brooks and Stanley describe it as "…the capacity to create military power from a state's basic resources in wealth, technology, population size, and human capital."[40] This definition accentuates military power in its totality, and therefore joins military potential and military employment in one concept. On the other hand, Millett, Murray and Watman *(1990)* define military effectiveness as "…the process by which armed forces convert resources into fighting power",[41] thereby confining military effectiveness to its expression in armed combat only. In their focus on military effectiveness as a resource conversion process, both definitions introduce the element of efficiency (as opposed to the related concept of effectiveness) in the management of human resources, morale, the intellectual qualities of military leaders, financial budgets, technology and equipment, policy and doctrine, and others. This approach to military effectiveness seems to be more concerned with *executing activities correctly* (as opposed to *effecting the correct activities*).

Other authors therefore argue that Millett, Murray, and Watman's definition is inadequate, because it neglects to account for the particular military force's purpose: its object or 'ends', in the parlance of military strategy.[42] On the same topic, Bernasconi *(2007)* appears to be correct when he indicates that military effectiveness is dynamic and changes with time; consequently, that one should always consider a military's competence within its historical context — which is what Chapter 2 of this study is all about.[43] In addition, the study is concerned with the implementation of defence policy and the employment of military capabilities in the mitigation and/or elimination of security *threats* and *risks*. The researcher applies these two concepts in the sense that Chuter uses it, with a threat denoting "a person or thing causing a risk or regarded in relation to risk", while a risk is "a situation involving

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37 Pearsal J. (ed) *op cit* p 456.

38 *Ibid*.

39 Millett, A.R. and Murray, W. (eds) 1990. *Military Effectiveness. Vol 1: The First World War*. London: Unwin Hyman Ltd, p 1.

40 Brooks, R.A. and Stanley, E.A. (eds) 2007. *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness.* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, p 9.

41 Millett, A.R. and Murray, W. (eds) *op cit* p 2.

42 Bernasconi, J. 2007. *Military Effectiveness: A Reappraisal.* School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, p 1.

43 *Ibid,* pp 2 – 7.

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exposure to danger".[44] Institutions such as governments and armed forces usually address risks in order of priority, which they calculate as a combination of two primary factors: the probability of the risk being realised, and the impact on the organisation's purpose if it does.

Last, the study also bases its conclusions on the ubiquitous influence of *culture* on all things social, whether it is the making of institutional policy or its style of policy implementation. To this end, the study utilises Schein's enduring definition of organisational culture: "Culture can now be defined as (a) a pattern of basic assumptions, (b) invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, (c) as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, (d) that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore (e) is to be taught to new members as the (f) correct way to perceive, think, or feel in relation to these problems."[45] From this point of view, a defence policy — comprising of its policy publications, the actions that it generated, and the outcomes that it subsequently achieved — may be no more, and no less, than a cultural artefact.

5. Overview of Chapters

The forthcoming chapter therefore details the theoretical foundation of the study, focussing on the modern (post-1990) conceptualisation of military power. It covers theories of international politics, state security and military force; further, it delves into the relationship between defence policy and military capability, and concludes by developing a framework for analysis in the South African context. The following chapter then continues with an analysis of salient South African defence policy publications, which includes the SA Army's future strategy, and closes with a description of the observed defence policy paradigm. In further pursuit of a solution to the research problem, the subsequent chapter then provides a broad description of the SA Army's perceived military capabilities — the actual policy outcomes, which the thesis also discusses under the headings of the framework previously developed. Finally, the thesis presents a summary of the main conclusions, being its synthesis from the preceding evidence and the analysis thereof.

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44 Pearsall, J. (ed) 1999. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary: Tenth Edition.* New York: Oxford University Press, p 1 235.

45 Schein, E. 1990. *Organizational Culture.* In: American Psychologist, Vol 45(2), February 1990, p 110 (available at http:/psycnet.apa.org/journals/amp/45/2/109/)

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2

A Modern Conceptualisation of Military Power

1. Introduction

When a theory fails to explain an observed phenomenon, the world of science replaces it by another that does. Such a paradigm shift occurred within the fields of (among others) the political- and military sciences after the end of the Cold War, in a period when South Africa migrated towards a constitutional democracy and compiled its current defence policy. Regarding the management of defence in particular, some analysts even thought that two concurrent reforms were underway: first, rapid changes in the means and methods of warfare, and second a transformation of the socio-cultural context of war itself.[46] However, there was much less agreement on the characteristics of a viable replacement theory for the conduct of war: to all, it appeared that inter-state war had become obsolescent as an instrument of state policy, but only some took this to be the result of conscious policy decisions. Others considered it a temporary consequence of policymakers failing to adapt to new realities, and adhering to an inappropriate theory of interstate industrial war when a new-style employment of military force was workable.[47] Nevertheless, it was highly unlikely that any state's defence policy would have been able to account completely for the changing international security paradigm within a short space of time.[48] The archetype of the Cold War had served many purposes and interests, which national states could not simply abandon without realising the risk of structural instabilities in both their domestic- and international relations environments. With its two armed conflicts concluded – the war on the Namibia/Angola border and the internal 'people's war' - South Africa, too, had to deal with the legacy of a defence policy, a military doctrine, organisational structures, and military equipment from an era that has ended, and that the state now had to reinvent.

Given the history of the ruling party's liberation struggle from 1961 onwards, South African policymakers should have been more aware than most that modern armed conflicts contain

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46 Gray, C.S. 2006. *Recognizing and Understanding Revolutionary Change in Warfare: The Sovereignty of Context.* In: *Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) Monograph*, US Army War College, Carlisle, pp 19 – 20 (available at http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?PubID=640).

47 Smith, R. 2006. *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World.* London: Penguin Books, p 26.

48 The *Human Development Report* of 1994 provides a good indication of the changed scope of security studies theory (available at http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1994/).

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contradictions to industrial-age conventional war, such as the fact that the actors are mostly non-state, often with a multi-national alliance on one side and sub-state groupings on the other. With the political victory of the pre-eminent liberation movement – the African National Congress (ANC) - on 27 April 1994, defence policymakers should have been cognizant of the fact that military forces no longer fight to obtain decisive victories on the battlefield: rather, to preserve their forces, and to create security conditions in which the political outcome may be decided.[49] It is from this point of view that conventional military force (previously the primary *way* in which states exercised military power) and its associated military structures (the *means* employed in armed conflict) no longer appeared suitable to support the achievement of political objectives.

The argumentation in this chapter is the first step in arriving at the study's synthesis. It seeks to provide a universal, validated setting, within which context the thesis can situate the relationship between South Africa's defence policy and the outcomes of the SANDF's force development activities, with the SA Army singled out for special attention. The remainder of the chapter will therefore set the scene for the eventual discussion of the causal variable (defence policy) and its dependent variable (military capabilities), by addressing a number of related and convergent concerns in a particular order: from the esoteric, philosophical, and general to the concrete, practical and specific. The discussion intends to provide an adequate understanding of the changes that the paradigms of international politics and military power have undergone since the end of the Cold War, as well as an appreciation for the traditional aim of defence policies: effectiveness in the execution of the military mission.

2. Archetypical Philosophies of War

This chapter argues that humans are inclined to hold deep and pervasive beliefs regarding the phenomena such as war, armed conflict, and relations among societies. However, since it is not even remotely possible to capture the full scope of such abstract notions, even knowledgeable individuals reduce and simplify their perceptions of reality into conceptual maps or frameworks: archetypes that are invariably distorted and only partial reflections of reality.[50] In time, the mental frameworks become convictions that influence the way human actors acquire, process, and interpret information from the material world. Preconceived perceptions of reality, rather than objective facts and pure reason, tend to guide our response to situations in our physical environment. Policymakers, for example, will invariably use information shortcuts "…to make political judgements and to relate their

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[49] Smith, R. *op cit* p 269. Smith also emphasizes that armed conflicts are interminable, and are fought among the people, not on a battlefield – all of which would be familiar to a student of revolutionary- and guerrilla warfare.

[50] Kegley, C.W. (Jr) and Wittkopf, E.R. 1995. *World Politics: Trend and Transformation (Fifth Edition).* New York, St. Martin's Press, p 11.

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preferences toward specific policy issues to their general beliefs."[51] The mental framework of policymakers, along with the particular paradigm's implicit values and norms, collectively define the essence of the 'truth' from which governments derive their international relations- and defence policies. These convictions become more visible, among scholars and policymakers alike, when sudden changes in socio-political circumstances force them to re-examine their foreign policy priorities and national security objectives.[52] Kegley and Wittkopf *(1995)* are of the opinion that World War I, World War II, and the Cold War "…(e)ach stimulated a search for the causes of war and the foundations of peace; each reshaped policymakers' images about the principles that organize world politics and the policy programs that could best preserve world order; each caused the dominant world order view to be jettisoned and encouraged the search for new theoretical orientations."[53] Identifying policymakers' beliefs regarding international relations and war would therefore be akin to recognising the *motive* for the country's defence policy.

Since the beginning of the 20th Century, the role of armed forces has changed: from the conduct of war, to the management of defence following the Second World War, and subsequently to the management of peace after the Cold War.[54] Regardless of the expansion of defence objectives into other territories, though,[55] the ultimate *raison d' etre* of armed forces remained in their capacity to manage violent conflict and war. What a society believes about war — its nature, causes, purposes, consequences, and so on — will consequently have a bearing on how it prepares for armed conflict, wages war or otherwise employs its armed forces.[56] A state's defence policy will therefore reflect its dominant philosophy of war as well, albeit to a variable extent. One often–mentioned teleological categorization of the philosophies of war is that of Anatol Rapoport, which appeared in his introduction to the otherwise eschewed J.J. Graham translation of Clausewitz's *On War.* Williams *(2008)* provides a summary of these three philosophies that is concise enough for the purposes of the current study. The primary difference between the various philosophies hinges on the analyst's views of determinism or free will.[57] If war is inevitable and beyond human control, then society becomes a victim of circumstance and man is absolved from responsibility for waging it; on the other hand, if war is a product of free will, then humanity has choices in preparing for conflict and employing armed force in pursuit of its collective objectives. An analyst can therefore place each of

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51 *Ibid*, p 15.
52 *Ibid*, p 17.
53 *Ibid*, p 18.
54 Burk, J. *Expertise, Jurisdiction, and Legitimacy of the Military Profession.* In: Snider, DM & Watkins, G (eds) 2002. *The Future of the Army Profession.* New York: McGraw-Hill, p 29.
55 For example: "to contribute to freedom from fear and want, including the promotion of human security, both nationally and internationally." (Department of Defence, *Strategic Plan (MTEF FY 2010/11 to FY 2012/13)*, p 10 (available at http://www.mil.za)
56 Williams, P.D. *War.* In: Williams, P.D. (ed) 2008. *Security Studies: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge, p 152.
57 Moseley, A. *The Philosophy of War,* p 2 (available at http://www.iep.utm.edu/war/).

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the philosophies at some point between the theoretical absolutes of unlimited choice and unavoidable fate. First, the *political* philosophy of war considers armed conflict to be a rational activity, undertaken by political authority in pursuance of legitimate national objectives.[58] Societies in this orientation view the armed forces as an element of national power, wielded as an instrument of foreign policy; rational actors cause war, professionals manage it, and perpetrators – sovereign states - seek a military victory is as a precondition for a political settlement. Making war (and writing policy and preparing armed forces to wage it) would therefore be an act of free will entirely. This Clausewitzian approach is also in alignment with the political-rationalist school of thought,[59] according to which one could expect defence policies biased towards effectiveness and efficiency, with states developing armed forces tailor-made to execute their selected mandates.

In contrast, the *eschatological* philosophy takes the view that all major wars are steps in a process that will ultimately result in a final conflict, from which a new society will arise, for better or worse. In the messianic version of the philosophy, the underlying cause of war is the unfolding of an underlying, metaphysical master plan of divine- or natural origin.[60] The global version of this particular philosophy, on the other hand, emphasises a struggle between political ideologies, in which one side will be victorious and establish its own version of the truth among humankind, thus ending conflict and war forever. The driving forces of the Cold War contained strong eschatological overtones, as do the 'holy wars' and 'jihads' of the modern age.[61] Policy choices arising from this philosophy would possibly attach less importance to, among others, the economics of military power, the morality of war, and the negative consequences of force employment. Last, the *cataclysmic* philosophy perceives war, whether sensed as a bane of God or as an indifferent consequence of an anarchic global system, to be an event without purpose besides causing loss, destruction, and suffering.[62] As with the previous philosophy, this one also comes in two varieties. In its limited form, the ethnocentric class of cataclysm allegedly befalls specific ethnic groups, races or nations only. War is defined as an ineluctable act of another (group, race, nation), often under divine influence, that brings about disaster among 'us'; 'we' have neither control over it, nor can it be averted. We can only defend ourselves as best we can, and try to alleviate the worst consequences once war has happened. The global variety, on the other hand, ascribes war to irresistible international forces that, in an anarchic and nihilistic manner, visits indiscriminate disaster upon the whole of humanity. Societies within this paradigm (the United States during the Cold War, for

58 *Ibid*.
59 *Ibid*, p 3.
60 Williams, P.D. *op cit* p 153.
61 Moseley, A. *op cit* p 3.
62 Williams, P.D. *op cit* p 153.

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example)[63] live in constant fear of full-scale war, developing militaries that may be required to deal with risks that would have the worst impact , rather than with contingencies that have the highest probability of occurrence.

3. Converging Values amidst International Anarchy

While one could not judge any of the philosophies to be either constructive or debilitating in principle, scholars may attach such value judgements to the actions that that these philosophies inspire. This is because a society will capture elements of its governing philosophy of war in its political- and moral theories,[64] which will consequently guide that state's approach to international relations and international law. For example: those societies and states steeped in the international political lore of realism, which was dominant in the Cold War era and is possibly still so today, believe that there is little scope for the effective international regulation of inter-state politics and armed conflict.[65] Such thinking would indicate strong leanings towards the political- and global cataclysmic philosophies of war. Other polities may differ with this attitude, since empirical evidence indicates that coercion by means of military conflict is lately the exception rather than the norm, and that international law has now come to regulate most aspects of the relations among states.[66] This perception of the conscious, common management of armed conflict has therefore been reducing the credibility of both the eschatological- and cataclysmic philosophies of war, with modern normative concepts seemingly encroaching on the traditional military stomping ground of international relations. However, this does not imply that stakeholders are deliberately transforming the structure of the anarchic international system.

One does not have to look very far to find evidence of international anarchy, in the sense that the system is comprised primarily of sovereign national states that have relations with each other, but are essentially without a central political authority. Barry Buzan *(2009)* affirms: "(s)ince the claim of sovereignty automatically denies recognition of any higher political authority, a system of sovereign states is by definition politically structured as an anarchy."[67] Buzan also considers the international anarchy as a decentralized form of order, implying that the system of national states had evolved to higher levels of coherence and responsibility than had hereto been attainable within societies comprised of individual human beings. While anarchy *within* states could easily result in the

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63 Waltz, K.N. 1982. *The International System: Structural Causes and Military Effects.* In: Murray, D.J. and Viotti, P.R. (eds) 1982. *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study.* Baltimore, Maryland, The John Hopkins University Press, p 19.

64 Moseley, A. *op cit* p 7.

65 Baylis, J., Wirtz J.J. and Gray,C.S. 2010. *Strategy in the Contemporary World.* New York: Oxford University Press, 3rd ed, p 105.

66 *Ibid.*

67 Buzan, B. 2009. *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era.* Colchester: ECPR Press, 2nd edition, p 39.

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Hobbesian vision of disorder and mayhem (and therefore be an indication of a failed- or dysfunctional state), the condition of anarchy *among* strong national states seems to produce the opposite effect. "Indeed, no greater indication of the difference between anarchy at the individual and international levels is possible than the fact that the former requires the abolition of the state, whereas the latter finds its most perfect expression the state."[68] States, in fact, perpetuate and reinforce the anarchic international system by their individual actions to maintain their independence and sovereignty. While this contributes to the persistence and durability of the anarchic condition, it also ensures that states remain self-sufficient and competitive in their relations towards each other. Nevertheless, empirical evidence indicates that the growing pressure of global interdependence is mitigating the risks of violent conflict between national states, and therefore changing the way that both realists and idealists view the world.[69] Why, then, do states — supposedly unconstrained by supra-national governance — increasingly appear to act in conformance with international law?

The first explanation is that sovereign states – still the dominant political units of the world – now generally consider the consequences of military employment on their international reputations and legitimacy, before engaging in armed conflict of any kind. Having the need to appear trustworthy and reliable, they base their judgements on enlightened self-interest and prudential calculation, anticipating that other states will reciprocate in future joint ventures. In the second instance, it seems that the notion has developed since the end of the Cold War that policymakers consider adherence to the tenets of international law as a value *in itself*.[70] Behavioural styles that conform to international rules, having acquired a substantive value, are now apparently deserving of universal respect and support. The third reason for states' observance of international law seems to be the recognition that, while adherence to some of the regulations may be irksome, the community of states should not condone the selective application of rules that suit partisan interests best. Legal regulation as a whole has obtained a functional value, in that it ensures the maintenance of order and restricts maverick behaviour within the anarchic international system.[71] The last reason for compliance with the international regimen may be simple conditioning, whereby states fall into the habit of adopting policies that are in accordance with international law. Some states go even further and incorporate international obligations into domestic law, thus making their governments liable for prosecution in domestic courts if their policies violate international agreements.[72]

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68 *Ibid.*
69 *Ibid*, p 33.
70 Baylis, J., Wirtz J.J. and Gray,C.S. *op cit* p 109.
71 *Ibid.*
72 *Ibid.*

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In the absence of military threats to national survival, the purpose of states now seems to be the creation of conditions for socioeconomic development and welfare, allied with individual rights, equality and justice.[73] States focus inward, becoming servants of their peoples in ways that align with universal models for democratic involvement, socioeconomic development and human rights. Systems of universal mass education enhance the process at the individual level, by constantly reinforcing concepts of individuality and humanity of citizens within larger collectives. Some also believe that all societies are attempting to transform themselves into archetypical, autonomous nation-states, which are mobilised within and among themselves by the common principles of human rights and individual liberties. These states not only employ mutual definitions of their goals, but also consistently survey their environment in an effort to standardise the ways in which they mobilise resources, apply the tools of national sovereignty – including military force - and exercise control over their destinies.[74]

However, the hypothesised interdependence and universal sharing of values would not have come about without modern information technology, which "…has the pernicious potential of altering, in a matter of years, basic values and cultural beliefs that take generations to create."[75] States have lost control over the flow of information, which gradually diminishes their sovereignty; consequently, jurisdiction over geographic territory – and the military power that was previously required to maintain it - is becoming much less significant as a driver of international competition than it used to be.[76] Since the end of the Cold War, the rapid generation and dissemination of information also continued to mould mental models in a variety of domains, and at a global scale. Analysts first saw increasing political- and military interdependence among groups of sovereign states, continuing to expand and grow in power. Second, the world experienced the rising economic interdependence of a suite of national or subnational economies, associated with public- and private organizations that function internationally; and third, ample evidence is available of an inflated flow of instrumental culture around the world, whereby societies are validating shared models of social order.[77] These three dimensions, in combination with each other and with the arguments already discussed, seem

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73 Meyer, J.W. 2000. *Globalization: Sources and Effects on National States and Societies.* International Sociology, June 2000, Vol 15 (2), p 234.

74 *Ibid*, pp 235 - 237.

75 Jablonsky, D. *National Power.* In: Boone, J. and Bartholomees, J. (eds) 2010. The U.S. War College Guide to National Security Issues, Vol 1, 4th Edition, p 133.

76 Nation, R.C. *National Power.* In: Boone, J. and Bartholomees, J. (eds) 2010. The U.S. War College Guide to National Security Issues, Vol 1, 4th Edition, pp 143 - 149.

77 Meyer, J.W. *op cit* p 233. Other dimensions, having a lesser influence upon the phenomenon under discussion, are the increasing numbers of migrants that are internationally mobile and considered as citizens of the world, rather than of nations; and last, the enhanced interdependence of expressive culture through expanding global communication.

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to provide a coherent theory for changing attitudes towards the utility of war and military power, not only among states in particular, but also within world society in general.[78]

Most of the advocates of socio-political regulation in the international arena are not intent upon the establishment of a world state bureaucracy, though; instead, they are predisposed towards developing a global system of shared norms and models.[79] The trend is therefore towards the construction of common sets of principles and values – virtual universal cultures, in fact – that guide the actions of actors on the world stage. The aggregating effects of globalisation may be most apparent horizontally, across the world's spectrum of individuals, organisations and national states, but should also be visible by the direction that each country's defence policy took. One should therefore be witnessing standardised behavioural patterns in the domains of (among others) economics, politics, psychology *and* the employment of military force, which would all be indications of the increasing convergence of cultures and their associated values. This is a consequence of isomorphism, by which institutions emulate those that are the most successful and bear the highest order of legitimacy.[80] Hence, a brief investigation of the changing paradigms of international politics provides more evidence of the reasons why major powers with comparatively powerful militaries (and economies) constrain their defence policies in the ways described above.[81]

4. Changing Paradigms of International Politics

During the whole of the Cold War, realist thinking dominated both the academic theory of international relations and the actual policymaking associated with it.[82] Indeed, the period from the 1950s until about 1990 was mainly shaped by the realist conviction that the anarchic system of national states, driven by man's lust for power (a central construct in the realist world-view), formed the foundation of societies' behaviour. Competition among states defined the global reality, while the risks arising from foreign threats took precedence over domestic problems and policies. For realists, conflict among national states - and therefore military preparation for it – is inevitable. The purpose of statecraft, and the ends of national strategy, is the survival of the national state in a hostile environment, while the principal means to achieve the goal is power.[83] The development of military capabilities, sufficient to deter attack from potential adversaries, is essential to ensure the security of the state in this paradigm. While allies may enhance the state's ability to protect itself,

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78 In Europe, for example, this development has apparently resulted in a cultural distaste for warfare, giving rise to a "post-military society" (see Gray, C.S. 2005 *op cit* p 177).

79 Meyer, J.W. *op cit* p 236.

80 *Ibid*, p 243.

81 See Table 1 for a bird's eye view of the major perspectives on international politics.

82 Kegley, C.W. (Jr) and Wittkopf, E.R. *op cit* p 23. Also see: Lynn-Jones, S.M. 1999. *Realism and Security Studies*. In: Snyder, C.A. 1999 (ed). *Contemporary Security and Strategy.* London: Macmillan Press Ltd, pp 53 - 76.

83 *Ibid*, p 22.

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their commitment and loyalty should not be regarded as a given. A capable state strives for self-sufficiency first, and does not entrust its security to international organizations or to protection under international law;[84] therefore, only the achievement of a *balance of power* can sustain a viable international system that is relatively free from inter-state war, albeit not from armed violence in general.

However, the construct of realism was not, in spite of its evident utility and universal application during the Cold War, without its influential critics. Under pressure from scholars and practitioners alike, realists were obliged to reform the image of realist theory since the 1990s into that which political scientists know as 'neorealism' or 'structural realism'.[85] While neorealism continues to embrace the dominance of the national state and the anarchic nature of the international system, the more recent approach no longer considers the irrepressible human need for power to be dictating the behaviour of states in international politics. Instead, neorealists are of the opinion that the structure of the international system (whether bipolar, unipolar, or multipolar) affects the foreign policy choices of national leaders the most.[86] States no longer necessarily seek power for its own sake (as a strategic end), but could merely be optimising its capabilities for its utility as an instrument (means) of national survival.[87] Furthermore, Kegley and Wittkopf are in agreement with Waltz, a pioneer of neorealism, that states' means to attain their foreign policy objectives fall in two categories: those internal means that governments are in control of –military strength, economic capability, and domestic intellectual capital – and the means that states develop beyond the country's borders – regional alliances, foreign relations, and international institutions. In this view, the competencies of states (military, economic, diplomatic, and so forth) define their *position* within the global political system. The concept of a state's capability is therefore of special importance in the neorealist view, since changes in the distribution of capabilities among states automatically result in an adjustment to the higher-order *structure* of international political system as well.[88]

Then again, realism is not the only mental model from which policy decisions on the development of capabilities may arise - other international political paradigms, which may be equally valid, have attached considerably less importance to military security from the start, and may accordingly generate policy that is much less demanding of its armed forces. Since its formulation after World War I, the theory of idealism, originating from an archaic philosophical tradition of liberalism, has always been a divergent in its views on international politics. Liberalism has always accentuated the

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84 *Ibid*, p 23.
85 Lynn-Jones, S.M. *op cit* pp 58 - 61.
86 *Ibid*, p 58.
87 Johnston, A.I. 1995. *Thinking about Strategic Culture.* In: International Security, Vol 19, No 4, p 42.
88 Kegley, C.W. (Jr) and Wittkopf, E.R. *op cit* p 29.

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importance of liberty, equality, and common destiny among individuals (not states), and considered the pursuit of principle dominant over the need for power.[89] Idealists therefore do not think of war as an inevitability, or even as a national problem; rather, as an international risk that demands collective or multilateral intervention to mitigate its effects or to prevent it from occurring at all. For idealists, the solution to the problem of war lies in the mobilization of international society to eliminate those institutions that make war possible. They therefore sought to advance the concept of collective security (as opposed to realism's ideal of a balance of power), whereby the community of states would view an attack on one as aggression against all.[90] Furthermore, idealists attempted to control the risk of going to war by legal process, such as mediation and arbitration between belligerents; also, by literally reducing the means of nations to go to war through disarmament- and arms control agreements.

One problem for adherents of idealism was that, while their paradigm of choice flourished during the years between the two World Wars, only a modicum of their designs were tried, and even less succeeded in making an impact. The international political theory of realism gained credence with the advent of World War II and, with idealism pushed into the background, reigned supreme until the last decade of the 20th Century. Serious questions regarding the continued viability of realism then arose, since the theory failed to predict the end of the Cold War and the changes that began sweeping the globe in the 1990s. Subsequent to a critical interrogation of both the realist and idealist paradigms, the liberal agenda morphed into a more sophisticated and pragmatic 'neoliberal' approach towards international politics.[91] Seeking to operationalize its particular focus on peace, prosperity, and progress, the neoliberals developed an agenda that emphasized (among others) democratic governance, consideration of public opinion, mass education, free trade, liberal capitalism, international law, arms control, disarmament, collective security, and multilateral diplomacy. One of the effects of the growing interdependence among the world's countries was the linkage between the foreign- and domestic policies of states, which in turn resulted in a re-definition of national security. With perspectives on aspects such as food security, economic security, physical security, global climate change, and other non-military issues gaining ascendancy in the debates among polities, the perceived utility of military power began to diminish.[92]

During the literature study for this thesis, two theoretical perspectives of neorealism appeared to be particularly relevant to the compilation of defence policy. First, the world-view of complex interdependence postulates that national states no longer seemed to be the only important actors

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89 *Ibid*, p 19.
90 *Ibid*, p 20.
91 *Ibid*, p 31.
92 *Ibid*, p 32.

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determining the ebb and flow of relations within the anarchic international discourse, and that national security issues — specifically the military balance of power — no longer would dominate foreign policy agendas.[93] This approach presupposes that government policy would become far more sensitive to a range of economic, environmental, and societal issues than was the case during the Cold War, which considerations could also result in the acceptance of interdependence and multilateralism as the new norm for the conduct of state business. Second, the liberal feminist theory offered a possible explanation for some of the observed changes in defence policies, in that it proposes an expanded role for women in policymaking, the management of security, and the conduct of international relations.[94] Scholars and politicians embarked on this agenda for a number of reasons, but for the purposes of the current study, its relevance lies in the fact that disregard of females seemed to have caused bias, injustice and inequity in the conduct of international affairs. The attitude therefore accentuates justice, fairness, cooperation, and tolerance as philosophical foundation for the interaction among states, while it focusses on (for example) the performance of women as combatants in armed conflict: "In this sense, feminist theory, like neoliberalism generally, is motivated by the quest for discovering the paths to greater international cooperation."[95]

5. Shifting the Focus from Military Power to National Security

After the Cold War, the unease with both the realist- and idealist paradigms gave rise to a revision of national security concepts in general, and to the idea of military power in particular. Advocates of a new conceptualisation either incorporated an extended range of social sciences (economics, psychology, sociology and anthropology), or additional international problems (intra—national threats, population growth, environmental degradation, poverty) in their models of national security.[96] The paradigm shift has been a long time in the making; Barry Buzan *(2009)*, for instance, is of the opinion that John Hertz's idea of the 'security dilemma' in the early 1950s might have been the first major revelation in this regard.[97] . He further postulates that a theory of national security, confined to one level – that of individual states – and which focussed on military threats by default, was inherently insufficient to serve the needs of individuals, states and the universal good of humankind.[98] By the 1990s the focus was therefore shifting away from strategic studies, which is about how the instruments of force influence relations among states, towards security studies.[99] The

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93 *Ibid*, p 33.
94 *Ibid*, p 35.
95 *Ibid.* Also see Addendum A.
96 Mandel, R. 1994. *The Changing Face of National Security: A Conceptual Analysis.* Westport: Greenwood Press, p 19.
97 Buzan, B. *op cit* p 27. The notion of a security dilemma arises from the perception that states, by unilaterally improving their military defence capability, are contributing to the insecurity of others who perceive their efforts as having an offensive intent.
98 *Ibid*, p 29.
99 Snyder, C.A. 1999 (ed). *Contemporary Security and Strategy.* London: Macmillan Press Ltd, p 4.

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latter construct of international politics takes a much wider view of security, to include an increasing interdependence of ideas (theories of governance, economics, human rights) and the practical needs arising from the physical requirements for co-existence on the surface of the planet (for example the natural environment, resources, human demography). Within this firming paradigm of interdependency, analysts saw military considerations playing second fiddle in the security debate.[100] In addition, the field of strategic studies (occupied primarily with concepts of military power) also suffered a loss of credibility, because its central doctrine of deterrence had failed to provide either intellectual or physical security to individual citizens, or to national states. On the other hand, the challenge to idealists arose from the fact that neither the concepts of suppliant, isolationist policies, nor the collectivist policies towards global governance appeared to provide viable models for the attainment of national security in a universe of growing interdependence among states

As a result, the idea of common security, which highlighted the interdependence of holistic security relations as opposed to national (military) strategic priorities, gained increasing support among the lesser-endowed countries of the world.[101] Common security first came to the fore in the recommendations of the Palme Commission in 1982, after the inquiry proposed the interdependence of security relations as an alternative to the traditional national strategic priorities of states. National defence policies henceforth had to reconcile the absence of authoritative governance over states with the deepening interdependence among them.[102] Policymakers also had to contend with the fact that security - like freedom, justice, equality, and power - is an essentially contested concept: it has ideological and moral content; is associated with deep convictions; and the views of individuals are impervious to change on the grounds of empirical evidence.[103] Buzan is therefore convinced that the concept of 'security' provides a more flexible, perceptive, and functional vehicle for the analysis of international relations than either 'power' (the classic realists) or 'peace' (the idealists) does.[104] The flexibility of the concept creates challenges for analysts, though. It is a contested idea, and straddles both the worlds of philosophy and of application simultaneously. While the theory answers some questions, it generates others that remain unresolved. Some of the latter are related to the dichotomy between defence and security (referred to previously as the 'security dilemma'); the opposing imperatives of individual security and national security; the tension between national security and international security; and last, but not least, the dilemma between the use of violent means to achieve benevolent ends.[105] It is within this context that theories like non-provocative

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100 Buzan, B. *op cit* p 31.
101 *Ibid*, p 35.
102 *Ibid.*
103 *Ibid*, p 29. In South Africa, 'transformation' would be another example of such a contested concept.
104 *Ibid*, p 26.
105 *Ibid*, p 35.

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defence (or non-offensive defence — NOD) seem to thrive, since they attempt to account for these contradictions by reconciling the necessity for national security with the inherent dualities of the concept.

At first glance, the approach above contrasts with that of David Chuter *(2011)*, who is inclined to think of national security as a series of processes — a project, if you will — rather than as an objective or a product.[106] However, a closer inspection of this approach reveals that Chuter, too, thinks that definitions of security are widely contested, reasons being that there are such vast differences in the domestic- and foreign relations environments within which states have to draft and execute security policy. Chuter does not entirely negate the formulation of security objectives *per se*, even when policymakers prefer to sublimate these into national strategic goals. On this point, Buzan considers security to be an intensely political concept, which governments treat with circumspection. In fact, some governments deliberately give themselves political manoeuvring room by *not* developing a security strategy, which allows them expediency to claim national security interests when other arguments give way.[107] Buzan also confirms two salient characteristics of the environment within which public servants make defence policy: first, he endorses the neorealist perspective of an anarchic international political system, within which a society must necessarily strive to obtain national security. International anarchy does not automatically imply chaos and disorder, though; lately, it appears to be moving towards a decentralised, interdependent form of political order, as the study had previously intimated.[108] Second — and more sobering — is the fact that, to obtain freedom from threat by others, the anarchic nature of the international system obliges its component units to compete among each other, and to be largely self-reliant (if not self-sufficient). The security needs of national states, being largely similar and mirror images of each other, may plausibly give rise to violent military *conflict* between them; more certain, however, is the fact that *competition* among states is inevitable within an anarchic international system. As this inter-state rivalry takes concurrent political, economic, societal, and military forms, it furthermore implies that the national security of any state can only be expressed relative to that that of another state, in any of its forms, and never as an absolute. National security only has meaning if it presupposes successful competition with other states, thereby negating the establishment of an international stability regimen premised upon either harmony or hegemony.[109]

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[106] Chuter, D. 2011. *Governing and Managing the Defence Sector.* Brooklyn Square, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, p 13.

[107] Buzan, B. *op cit* p 32. The South African government since 1994 has yet to publish a national security strategy, a fact implicitly recognized by the draft 2012 Defence Review when it speaks of the "emergent national security strategy" (p 44).

[108] *Ibid*, p 39.

[109] *Ibid*, p 40.

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6. Positioning Defence within the National Security Debate

Buzan's theories and the neorealist models are not without contention, though.[110] Chuter argues that the paranoia and ideological tension of the Cold War may have subsided, but that even neorealist views (such as those that Buzan professes) still nurtures two inappropriate 'mental habits.'[111] First, Chuter disputes the notion that the states of the world are interminably locked in competition with one another; on most issues that affect relations among units within the international system, the global actors would, in fact, much rather cooperate than compete. This would hold true for matters of national security, as it would for international economics. However, in conducting this argument Chuter apparently ignores the fact that states will usually cooperate with each other only if they calculate it to be in their interest to do so. He is therefore at odds with Buzan's view that, as long as anarchy exists and national states strive to maintain their independence and sovereignty within the anarchic international system, they will be opposing each other at least *part* of the time – but will be competing with each other *all* of the time.[112] On this question, Buzan's theories appear to be the more valid.

Chuter's second idea, which is more difficult to dismiss offhand, postulates that realism has conditioned states to keep searching for (military?) threats, especially those that endanger their territorial sovereignty. He argues that this mind-set feeds paranoia, and that the constant search for a threat eventually results in a self-fulfilling prophecy: "…treating a state or an entity as a threat is a good way to turn them into one." [113] Worse, a threat-dependant approach to the compilation of defence policy may invalidate the conceptualisation of the armed forces' functions, structures, and capabilities, resulting in the development of a military establishment that is at odds with reality. To change these mental models, Chuter recommends that states look for (military) *tasks* rather than *threats* … but then only in stable regions of the globe, where there is no fear of a military attack. Buzan, too, admits to having doubts about the unresolvable ambiguity of threats; but then, he considers threats within the much wider domain of national security, rather than within the narrow context of national defence.[114] It is therefore necessary to lift the argument regarding military threats and the tasks of armed forces one level higher — from the military strategic to the national strategic, in fact.

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110 Mutimer, D. 1999. *Beyond Strategy: Critical Thinking and the New Security Studies.* In: Snyder, C.A. (ed). *Contemporary Security and Strategy.* London: Macmillan Press Ltd, pp 78 – 81. Buzan's two major contributions seem to be his suggestion that one should consider security in sectorial terms — military, political, economic, societal and environmental — and that analysts cannot treat states as similar units, either in terms of their power or in terms of their strength.

111 Chuter, D. *op cit* p 11.

112 Buzan, B. *op cit* pp 37 - 38.

113 Chuter, D. *op cit* pp 11 - 13.

114 Buzan, B. *op cit* p 43.

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Mandel *(1994)* argues that states should be aware of national interests at all times, even in the absence of threat; however, the reality appears to be that perceptions of threats, rather than the achievement of national goals, shape security agendas.[115] External threats are emphasised because of the conceptual and bureaucratic gaps between internal and external threats. For example: the sources and forms of internal security threats differ substantially from those of external threats, and requires a different 'conceptual toolkit'; furthermore, external threats permit contentment with one's own society, while internal threats demand domestic transformation.[116] Buzan, too, devotes much attention to national *in*security, which he considers to consist of an inseparable combination of vulnerabilities and threats that are unique to each country. States will therefore endeavour to minimise their insecurity, either by moderating the threat, or by reducing their vulnerability.[117] As with Mandel, this approach allows for a dual focus on national security: outward, in seeking to address international threats, and inward towards addressing national vulnerabilities. An initial assessment of Buzan's method indicates limited value, in that it merely points to national security risks on two fronts (internationally and domestically), rather than a singular focus on foreign threats; however, adding his concepts of strong and weak states/powers provides further depth and a wider scope to the topic under discussion.

When Buzan therefore speaks of a strong or weak *state*, he is referring to the measure of socio-political cohesion within a national state: the domestic dimension of vulnerabilities, in other words.[118] One would begin by defining a potentially weak state as one where a unifying, inspiring idea (or sense of national identity) is either diffuse, weakly held or even contested. Such a state could still function as a viable entity, though, but only if its government machinery —the institutions of the state, comprising of the legislative, executive, judicial, and administrative bodies, functioning within an effective regulatory- and procedural framework — remain strong.[119] If the 'idea' and the 'institutions' are equally weak, the state becomes highly vulnerable against security threats both domestic and foreign. In contrast to strong states, the weak — not having sufficient societal and political consensus internally to ensure cohesion — are highly concerned with internal threats, and the security of government. The general rule seems to indicate that, the weaker the state, the greater the confusion between state security and the security of government … and the more prominent the role of armed forces in states' internal security.[120] This phenomenon becomes problematic in a regional context, because weak states will constantly be exporting their internal

115 Mandel, R. *op cit* p 22.
116 *Ibid*, p 22.
117 Buzan, B. *op cit* p 104.
118 *Ibid*, p 93.
119 *Ibid*, p 83.
120 *Ibid*, p 96.

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instabilities to their neighbours, thereby complicating the establishment of collective security agreements. Buzan is therefore in agreement with analysts such as Mueller (2007) when he avers "…that the creation of stronger states is a necessary condition for both individual and national security. The existence of stronger states will not by itself guarantee security, but their continued absence will certainly sustain insecurity."[121]

More conventionally, Buzan thinks of strong or weak *powers* in terms of the customary differentiation among states, based upon their comparative economic, military, and (presumably) diplomatic standing within the international community.[122] He elaborates somewhat on this familiar concept by repeating that weak powers are so only relative to other states, particularly in comparison with their neighbours and the great powers of the era. From a risk management point of view, a country is therefore obliged to emphasize its defence policy and military capability *only* if it is a strong state (has the benefit of robust socio-political cohesion), but is a weak power relative to its competitors — a state in the second position, as presented in the model below:

		Socio-political Cohesion	
		Weak	**Strong**
Power	**Weak**	**1. Critically vulnerable to security threats across a wide spectrum**	**2. Vulnerability to foreign military threats increased**
	Strong	**3. Vulnerability to domestic political threats is increased**	**4. Relatively invulnerable to the majority of security threats**

Figure 2.1: Security Threats by Type of State[123]

Looking at the other quadrants, a state in the first position would hardly be able to emphasize defence policy over anything else, while a disproportionate focus on defence matters for a state in the third position would only provide temporary mitigation of its real security risks. The model is limited, though, since it focuses on security threats and vulnerabilities only (and therefore makes the most sense in a cataclysmic philosophy of war, which deems *all* armed conflicts to be wars of necessity); also, the theory does not explain the discretionary employment of military force, as found in a political philosophy of war. Nevertheless, an analysis of a country's defence policy publications, in parallel with the actual military capabilities that it consequently develops, should provide ample evidence of the governing elite's security mentality at the time when they formulated the particular policy's guiding principles.

121 *Ibid*, p 99.
122 *Ibid*, p 93.
123 *Ibid*, p 105.

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7. Utilizing Military Power in Modern Statecraft

States often base their opinion of other countries' national power on perception, rather than reality; power is what observers believe it to be, rather than what it actually is in practical application. The doctrine of deterrence, for example, relies mainly upon the attribute of credibility – the perceived national will to employ elements of power – rather than upon a state's actual military capability.[124] Defence policymakers bent upon developing operationally capable militaries therefore need to consider that, whereas the instruments of a state's economic, political, psychological, and informational power elements are perpetually in action, the employment of traditional military tools in armed combat is a rare event for most nations. This is even more applicable to a post-Cold War world, where states that develop armed forces in the absence of appropriate employment strategies soon discover that they are holding their expensive military capabilities in suspended animation most of the time. Furthermore, defence policies are not only resource-dependent, but also predicated on the expected or desired scope of force employment: what the state should employ its military capability for, where it needs to do it and how the armed forces have to execute their missions. The processes of force development and force employment are therefore interactive, and both are dependant variables of each other.[125] From an economic (state resources) point of view, the maintenance of a peacetime defence force, which government only employs as an insurance policy against the risk of having to conduct an interstate war, does not make much sense. Nevertheless, national states face the fact that, while the primary influence of countries primarily reside in non-violent means such as negotiation, rewards, sanctions, or threats, the realist paradigm still offers the more comprehensive sets of theories and hypotheses about international politics,[126] and also continues to link national power to military capacity, and the capability to wage war.[127] In their attempts to reconcile these contradictions, societies that essentially abhor the actual employment of military force may nonetheless invest in the creation of those very capabilities, but rather for purposes of enhancing their national identity, legitimacy, international status, or diplomatic leverage, than for their employment in violent conflict.[128] Whatever the case may be, it seems clear that the world has been in the throes of a revolution in strategic affairs by the close of the previous century. Smith[129] and Mueller[130] offer further evidence of the changed utility of military power since the end of the Cold War.

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124 Jablonsky, D. *op cit* pp 123 - 125.

125 Drew, D.M. and Snow, D.M. 2006. *Making Twenty-First-Century Strategy: An Introduction to Modern National Security Processes and Problems.* Alabama: Air University Press, p 108.

126 Lynn-Jones, S.M. *op cit* p 56.

127 *Ibid*, p 124.

128 Farrel, T. and Terriff, T. (eds) 2002. *The Sources of Military Change: Culture, Politics, Technology.* Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., p 268.

129 Smith, R. 2006. *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World*. London: Penguin Books.

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They confirm the view of other authors that there has been a decline in war among states; also, most societies appear to be changing their attitudes toward the theoretical concept of war in general and actual conduct of warfare in particular.[131] At the level of international relations, war no longer appears to be a practical way to resolve intractable political problems among national states; at a societal level, warfare as a state-sanctioned activity may even have become morally and culturally unacceptable, at least insofar as the developed world is concerned.[132] Mueller *(2007)*[133] extrapolates the trend, by averring that global society had finally brought the ubiquitous problem of interstate war under control, leaving only two 'remnants of war' for future relegation. The first is the civil, internal and mostly criminal form of conflict, which is without an overarching political objective in the traditional sense of the word (see the first position in Table 2.1); second, the modern manifestation of war, which seems to be limited policing wars of discretion, rather than of necessity. It is through wars of discretion that major powers attempt to establish regional or global order, and/or to protect their national interests. Flowing from this argument, it follows that modern states must have been limiting their options by taking rational decisions *not* to engage in war — which, again, supports the political philosophy of war.[134] Mueller offers reasons for the perceived decline of inter-state warfare, including the threat of atomic weapons,[135] the rise of democracy,[136] the acceptance of capitalism, scientific methodology, human rights, environmentalism and liberalism — all of which he eventually discounts as primary explanations for war aversion. Mueller then concludes that the dissipation of interstate war may be confidently associated with the growing number of competent, coherent governments in the developed world, but qualifies his theory with one final observation: "…if the people happen to think they want war, they will tend to get it."[137] The remark implies that, since autocracies also have domestic constituencies that they must account for, the decreasing utility of military coercion, as an instrument of state policy, must necessarily originate among the citizenry — at the individual level — and not with government. In this way, the attitude of war aversion within a political context, and the abhorrence of warfare within a cultural context, starts with the convictions of a state's people and ends with its expression in government policy.[138]

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130 Mueller, J. 2007. *The Remnants of War.* New York: Cornell University Press.

131 Gray, C.S. 2005(2). *How has War Changed Since the End of the Cold War?* Parameters, Spring 2005, pp 22 and 23.

132 *Ibid*, p 24.

133 Mueller, J. *op cit* pp 86 and 118.

134 *Ibid*, p 87. John Mueller defines war as "…violent armed conflicts that resulted in at least 1 000 military deaths over the duration of the dispute for international wars, an average of at least 1 000 military deaths per year for imperial and colonial wars, and at least 1 000 military and civilian (but battle-related) deaths for civil wars."

135 *Ibid*, p 164.

136 *Ibid*, p 167.

137 *Ibid*, p 169.

138 Gray, C.S. 2005. *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare.* London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, pp 83 – 97; 173 – 177.

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While broadly in agreement with the trend outlined above, other writers take a different view of the causes and manifestations of the declining utility of military power. To them, the problem is not the *willed* obsolescence of war as an instrument of state policy, inasmuch as it is the *neglect* of policymakers to grasp that states still base their notions of military power — and their preferred structures for their armed forces — on the paradigm of interstate industrial war.[139] The end of the Cold War left states with inappropriate doctrine, structures, and equipment for the type of operations that they now had to conduct. These operations contain contradictions to industrial-age conventional war, such as the fact that the actors are mostly non-state and that military forces no longer fight to obtain decisive victories on the battlefield, but rather to preserve their forces and to create security conditions in which the political outcome may be decided.[140] Whereas before the Cold War military forces were developed and employed to achieve decisive outcomes in armed *conflicts*, they were now destined only for deployment in a long-term *confrontations*. The objective of the latter activity is "…to influence the opponent, to change or form an intention, to establish a condition and, above all, to win the clash of wills."[141]From this point of view, conventional military capabilities — still the primary means of military power — are simply unsuitable for employment in support of a modern state's political objectives. To have value, they have to adapt their warfighting from achieving "…the hard objectives that decide a political outcome to those establishing conditions in which the outcome may be decided."[142] Military force, employed *en masse* to defeat equivalent capabilities of an enemy, has little remaining utility other than ensuring that the opposition does not resort to similar means at short notice.[143] Smith therefore advocates a defence policy favouring a strategic defence (predicated on a struggle for national survival), [144] and with armed forces capable of amelioration, containment, deterrence and (finally) coercion when the risk of violent conflict is realised.[145]

David Chuter contributes to the debate by surmising militaries exist primarily to support the foreign- and domestic policies of the national state with force, or the threat of force.[146] This description speaks to the armed forces' active participation in the execution of government policy, but does not quite come clean about the armed forces' passive role in the affairs of the state: militaries also exist

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139 Smith, R. *op cit* p 26.

140 *Ibid*, p 269. Smith also emphasizes that conflicts are interminable and fought among the people, not on a battlefield — all of which would be familiar to a student of revolutionary- and guerrilla warfare.

141 *Ibid*, p 182.

142 *Ibid*, p 269.

143 *Ibid*, p 188.

144 *Ibid*, p 196.

145 *Ibid*, pp 320 – 321.

146 Chuter, D. *op cit* p 24.

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to ensure government's exclusive control of intra-national force.[147] Chuter mentions that a state that loses its grip on the monopoly of organised violence fails to be a viable entity, because it can no longer ensure (military) security for its citizens. (Although one can agree with the first part of the statement, the latter is contestable. As Buzan has indicated, the governments of weak states in particular are wont to employ their militaries to ensure their own security rather than the security of the national state.) The retention of armed forces by countries, even those without any conceivable risk or intent of employing force in support of national security, is therefore the clearest possible expression of resolve to retain that monopoly.[148] However, the mere presence of armed forces is not sufficient. As previously indicated when the study dwelt on the psychology of deterrence: the adversary will only limit their violent options if they perceive an opposing military as being willing and able to outfight them.[149] This simple fact, so basic that it receives scant attention in the works of (for example) Mueller and Smith, was apparently not so obvious in the neoliberal paradigm that gathered momentum after the end of the Cold War; it is only lately that the competency of armed forces has resurfaced as a factor in the domain of international relations. Even in benign foreign relations environments, capable militaries are conducive to securing influence with major powers and regional security organisations.[150] On the issue of capability, Chuter ventures further and addresses other self-evident truisms, such as the fact that no formula exists whereby one may equate the size of military forces with their usefulness in supporting the achievement of a state's political objectives. With the rapid advances in military technology, for example, numerical preponderance only becomes meaningful in symmetric conflicts where all else is equal.[151] Fact is, a military force's competence would primarily reside in the quality of its equipment, leadership, organisation and training[152] — all of which are issues that should be addressed by defence policy.

In closing this section, Chuter unintentionally provides a theory for a defence paradigm that may have relevance for the current study. First, he avers that the militaries of the West during the Cold War epitomized society's fear of annihilation in a global conflagration; since then, however, those sections of society that previously feared and distrusted the armed forces began to grasp the potential usefulness of the military.[153] Second, Chuter proposes that these changed perceptions

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147 *Ibid.*

148 *Ibid.*

149 *Ibid*, p 25.

150 *Ibid*, p 27.

151 Biddle, S. 2004. *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p 52.

152 Chuter, D. *op cit* p 25. This conclusion can be arrived at from a number of viewpoints, including the technological (quality of equipment and integration of combat systems), the psychological (will to serve/fight and cohesion of forces), and the socio-cultural (values and norms, knowledge and skills).

153 *Ibid*, 34. For the USA, this would imply a belief in the global variety of the cataclysmic philosophy; for apartheid South Africa, it could conceivably suggest certitude of an ethnocentric version of the theory.

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lately resulted in "…a routine demand by liberal and humanitarian thinkers, despite the very mixed history of such interventions and the suffering and death that usually accompanies such actions" to deploy military forces in crises abroad.[154] Chuter further asserts "…liberal militarism has largely replaced traditional militarism in the discourse of major Western states."[155] Lately, analysts in the UK seems to agree that 'liberal interventionism' may have reduced in political popularity, but that a firm position on national interests and the execution of responsibilities for the maintenance of international order may soon see renewed employment of the military.[156] Some writers further suggest that the universalising ideologies of liberalism and Marxism, rather than those of the state-centred concepts of realism, are most likely to give rise to notions of crusading imperialism in modern times.[157] Since these interventions appear to be versions of Mueller's limited policing wars of choice — or Gray's 'wars of discretion'[158] — they could well arise from revived messianic convictions of the global variety: for the West, the belief in the validity of their political- and economic models that is reinforced by military action when deemed necessary. This notion seems to arise from an eschatological philosophy of war, conceptualised through to a neoliberal view of international relations, and expressed in the employment of (among others) military force. It just so happens that the West also entertains a military theory that has been notably successful in getting the job done.

8. Explaining the Western Way of War

Parker *(2005)*[159] contends that the western prototype rests upon five pillars, of which the first is a heavy reliance upon superior technology. Biddle *(2004)*[160] not only agrees with this assertion, but also contends that the plethora of new inventions on post-industrial battlefields, and the consequent lethality of war, is actually the main driver behind the development of the 'modern system'. In their attempt to avoid annihilation by weapons with increased firepower, accuracy, and mobility, western armies were forced to create complex and interrelated war-fighting models, which utilises "…cover, concealment, dispersion, suppression, small-unit independent maneuver, and combined arms at the tactical level, and depth, reserves, and differential concentration at the operational level of war."[161] Crucially, Biddle further opines that the modern military system is so complex and resource-intensive that few states can implement it fully, and that the gap in real military power is growing between the

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154 *Ibid*, p.35.
155 *Ibid.*
156 Cornish, P. and Grouille, O. 2011. *Land Forces Fit for the 21st Century.* London: Chatham House publication, p 8 (available at www.chathamhouse.org.uk).
157 Lynn-Jones, S.M. *op cit* p 56.
158 Gray, C.S. 2005(2) *op cit* p 22 and 23.
159 Parker, G. 2005. *The Cambridge History of Warfare.* New York: Cambridge University Press, p 1.
160 Biddle, S. 2004. *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p 3.
161 *Ibid.*

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states that are capable of implementing the system successfully, and those that are not. However, for an army to be incapable of implementing this feature of the modern system does not automatically imply that it is incompetent or ineffective at executing its particular mandate.

Biddle emphasises, for example, that attributes of technological superiority and numerical preponderance are inadequate predictors for military effectiveness by themselves. Policy decisions based upon these simple, materialist explanations for success are, in fact, likely to overspend on force structure and the modernisation of ordnance, while neglecting the training, techniques, and practices that are essential in assuring forces' readiness for employment.[162] Parker reinforces this approach in his discussion of the second historical pillar of the western way of war: drill (intensive training) and long-term service, which collectively inculcated strong group cohesion and unflinching discipline under fire.[163] Furthermore, the success of the western way of war is reliant upon a third pillar, which premises a liking for precedence, an absence of religious- and ideological constraints, and the willingness to accept innovative ideas. The fourth element, in turn, contends that the idealised aim of western strategy has always been the annihilation of opposing armed forces, which is in stark contrast with the less severe practises of many other cultures and societies. Finally, the last pillar refers to the West's pragmatic approach regarding the conservation or adaptation of their military practices, as required by circumstances. In times of demand, western forces were able to innovate and expand rapidly from a solid organisational base and, more important, use the extension of credit to finance the growth in capability.[164] Parker concludes that any state that intends adopting the western way of war will be obliged to replicate its social- and economic structure first, to have any hope of success. Merely imitating the model superficially will not do the trick — the required changes will, depending upon the distance between the dominant culture of the particular state and that of the West, have to be deep and pervasive.[165] Brooks and Stanley *(2007)* validate Parker's views on the development of a western military system, when they elevate his specific example into general theory by maintaining that states may develop competent armed forces from *a number* of causal variables that, together, provide a capability framework for a generic military organisation.

9. Presenting a Framework for Analysis

According to Brooks and Stanley, militaries may derive their effectiveness from any combination of value-laden sources (causal variables), including a state or society's culture, its social structure, its political- and economic institutions, and international factors such as global 'mental models' and

162 *Ibid*, p 4.
163 Parker, G. *op cit* p 3.
164 *Ibid*, p 6.
165 *Ibid*, p 8.

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competition among states.[166] For the implicit values to be realised in martial competencies, however, defence management would have to employ strategic devices and processes (denoted 'translation mechanisms' by Brooks and Stanley)[167] to influence the development of military capabilities. Translation mechanisms serve to mediate the effects of causal variables at all levels, whether the political, strategic, operational or tactical. However, this study is most interested in the instruments employed at the political- and strategic levels of defence activity: those levels where defence leaders "…consult with one another, analyze policy options, and otherwise participate in decision making prior to or during an interstate conflict."[168] It is at this level that the governing elites conduct strategic assessments, calculate costs and risks, reconcile foreign- and domestic policy imperatives … and guide the writing of defence policy that shapes a country's military capabilities.

From Buzan, one understands that higher-order *security policy* would have to account for at least three referent objects: the individual citizen, the state, and the international system; also, that one cannot isolate the multi-dimensional security risks at any one of the levels from the other.[169] South African *defence policy*, for example, provides a constant reference of national leadership's directive attempts to balance the demands of human security, the potential demands of defence against aggression, and the discretionary demands of military employment in support of the international system. However, the current study is exclusively concerned with the relationship between defence policy and the capabilities of the armed forces, both of which fall primarily within the military-strategic domain. Furthermore, the variable of military capability is not a constant: it is context-dependant and varies across time, place, and the type of mission that the particular military has to execute (or potentially has to accomplish).[170] One can also not assume that militaries that are competent at one task are equally capable at others; for that kind of flexibility, leadership would at least have had to train them, or, depending on the scope of the differences between the missions, developed specific military capabilities. Viewed from this angle, the purpose of defence policy is to ensure that the state develops appropriate military capabilities; specifically, that the armed forces are structured, organised, trained, and equipped for the strategic environment in which they will *most likely* have to achieve their missions.[171] By providing both retrospective evidence of a national security strategy (whether declared or emergent), combined with forward-looking direction to the

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166 Brooks, R.A. and Stanley, E.A. (eds) 2007. *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness.* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, pp 16 – 17. Note Schein's definition of culture in Chapter 1.

167 *Ibid*, p 18.

168 *Ibid*, p 19.

169 Buzan, B. *op cit* p 42.

170 Biddle, S. *op cit* p 5.

171 Brooks, R.A. and Stanley, E.A. (eds) *op cit* p 11. Even for major powers, it is simply not cost-effective to prepare an army equally well for every possible eventuality.

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formulation departmental- and military strategy, defence policy publications serve as practical expressions of the logic that connects a state's security paradigm to its military capabilities.

Furthermore, one can expect that every state will have a unique, culturally-biased understanding of its particular security- and defence problems, and will therefore develop distinctive policy solutions and military capabilities accordingly. Stephen Biddle has the following to say on this matter:[172]

> "If capability is the ability to succeed at an assigned mission, different states will thus assess capability very differently for different forces — no single, undifferentiated concept of "military capability" can apply to all conflicts and times. An analysis must therefore focus on a subset of the *tasks* (accent by researcher) militaries perform, which are in turn a subset of the elements of state power."

At first glance, these arguments seem to preclude the use of a common denominator to render a parallel description of a particular defence policy and its related military capabilities with.[173] Nevertheless, closer scrutiny of the above reveals that effectiveness in mission achievement is still the prime motive for the development of military capabilities, as it should be in the formulation of defence policy. One would still have to determine, though, whether the concept of military effectiveness would serve the same purpose at all levels of military activity. According to Millett and Murray *(1990)*,[174] defence forces execute their missions at four intersecting levels: the political, the strategic, the operational, and the tactical. Considering the two variables that the study is concerned with, defence policy will originate at the political level; military capability will arise at the strategic level. Each of the levels are characterised by different actions, procedures and goals, and it is contended that militaries cannot be equally and simultaneously effective at every one of the levels. Brooks and Stanley[175] are therefore of the opinion that the operations research approach to military competency is inadvisable, for at least two reasons: first, because operations research primarily focusses on the war *mode* and the tactical *level* of war – the outcomes of battles, or the expression of fighting power. Second, the *method* is primarily fixated on quantitative research, using empirical data and measuring effectiveness in terms of material assets, or historical outcomes. In contrast, the structure used by Brooks and Stanley conveniently allows for a study of a defence force that is in peacetime mode, focussing primarily on the political- and strategic levels, and adopting a qualitative research methodology.

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172 Biddle, S. *op cit* pp 5 - 6.

173 Defence policy gives rise to strategic **intent**, while military capabilities are a consequence of strategy **realized**.

174 Millett, A.R. and Murray, W. (eds) 1990. *Military Effectiveness. Vol 1: The First World War*. London: Unwin Hyman Ltd, p 3.

175 Brooks, R.A. and Stanley, E.A. (eds) *op cit* pp 2 - 12.

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Brooks and Stanley further argue that one may describe a military's capabilities within the framework of only four interactive attributes: integration, skill, quality, and responsiveness.[176] They define integration as the degree to which different military activities are internally consistent and mutually reinforcing, and assumes unity of purpose between force development activities and the execution of the military's roles, functions, and tasks. Integration reduces wasteful expenditure and duplication of effort by focussing military strategy on what is suitable, acceptable, and feasible (correlating with Parker's 'continuity in military theory'[177]). Likewise, Brooks and Stanley equate the attribute of skill with a military organisation's competency to execute its designated tasks against objective standards. Skill is concerned with the inculcation of proficiency through training and education, with the ability to assimilate new technology, and with morale and motivation — in other words, with considerations of competency and the service orientation of military formations and their personnel (Parker: discipline and training). The element of quality, on the other hand, is concerned with a military's ability to acquire weaponry and equipment that are not only superior in terms of function, but also optimised for the context within which the armed forces will employ them. Quality is associated with cost-efficiency, internal management and procurement processes (Parker: technology and financing). The last characteristic is that of responsiveness, which refers to a military's ability to customise its activities in the light of its own capabilities (given the nature of domestic sources from which those capabilities are derived), the capabilities of adversaries, and external constraints. Suitable policy is especially important in enhancing a military's responsiveness, which Brooks and Stanley considers one of the major properties of effective armed forces. A responsive military, therefore, is "…one that adjusts its operational doctrine and tactics to exploit its adversary's weaknesses and its own strengths" and "…one that adjusts and compensates for external constraints, including material, geographic, technological, social-structural, political, or cultural limitations in its domestic environment."[178] A responsive defence leadership will continuously scan the political- and strategic environment and adjust policy, strategy, doctrine, and processes to maintain military effectiveness; in contrast, "(m)ilitaries without responsiveness may lose an accurate sense of their particular strengths and weaknesses because of a lack of critical self-evaluation and of rigorous assessment of the external environment"[179] (Parker: pragmatic changes and/or conservation of military practices). In this way, the organising concepts for the study fall to hand readily: elaborated versions of responsiveness, integration, quality, and skill.

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176 *Ibid.*

177 Parker, G. *op cit* pp 1 - 8. The study draws all future references to Parker, associated in this way with the work of Brooks and Stanley, from this source.

178 Brooks, R.A. and Stanley, E.A. (eds) *op cit* p 11.

179 *Ibid.*

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Finally, the framework for the subsequent analysis would benefit from the interrogation structure proposed by Millet *et al*, which is comprised of a number of questions that cut across Brooks and Stanley's theoretical framework.[180] Although the answers to these questions would not go directly towards a description of the delta between the obligations of defence policy and the capabilities of the armed forces, they should point to some of the causes for the correlation (or lack of it) between the two variables. In addition, the answers should provide clues as to how realistic and feasible the demands of policy in terms of capability development are. The framework for analysis therefore employs the gist of Millett and Murray's questions at the political level, which primarily deal with resource allocation: defence budgets, industry, technology, and human resources. Moving down one level of military activity to the domain of military strategy, Millet *et al* provides a number of additional lines of enquiry that a researcher could employ in the interrogation of a military's capabilities.[181] However, if the study were to advance along this avenue of interrogation, the amount of detail required to substantiate a valid conclusion would not only increase vastly, but would also become harder to obtain, categorize, and correlate. In the end, though, one could confidently subsume the method postulated by Millett and Murray into Brooks and Stanley's framework for military effectiveness, and use the attributes of responsiveness, integration, quality, and skill as an organising structure to describe both defence policy and military capability.

10. Conclusion

This chapter has argued that humans create simplified mental frameworks of 'reality'; that these paradigms are value-based, and often collectively held by particular societies. Furthermore, leaders' images of historical events create cognitive bias, and predispose them to particular reactions when faced with challenges in their current environment. Since these images are not only part of the individual's belief system, but are also conceptually interlinked, they are resistant to change. Examples of mental frameworks include beliefs about the causes and effects of armed conflict, which range from humankind being a passive victim of circumstances (the cataclysmic philosophy), to societies actively employing war as a coercive instrument (the political philosophy). Mental frameworks are also prevalent in constructs of international politics, where variants of idealism and realism have been in contestation for more than a century now. Inevitably, these frameworks find expression in a state's policies, and especially in its defence policy. Since the end of the Cold War, the mental frameworks of societies have evolved further to accommodate at least two new influences. The first is the theory of national security, which has connected national defence with individual security in a way that especially the realists could not have foreseen in the previous century. The rise of human security has shifted governments' focus from striving to establish

[180] Millett, A.R. and Murray, W. (eds) *op cit* pp 4 – 6.
[181] *Ibid*, pp 7 – 10.

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economic- and military powers, to maximising the cohesion of states as socio-political entities; for militaries, from the conduct of war, to the management of security, and onwards to maintaining the peace. Second, the effects of globalisation have resulted in the anarchic system of national states migrating towards increasing interdependence and cooperation in a number of domains, including the economic and the military. This has resulted in a reassessment of the utility of military power in general — a revolution in security affairs — and of the roles and functions of the armed forces in particular — a revolution in strategic affairs.

After the Cold War, there was initially much relief at the mitigation of inter-state war and the consequent reduction of defence budgets; however, since then there has been a revived appreciation for an adjusted role of the armed forces in — and employment by — enlightened societies. A responsive state would have accounted for these changes in its defence policies, generating adjustments throughout the armed forces' "…leadership and management systems — from organisational structure to applied technology, from measures of readiness to measures of effectiveness, and from military training systems to professional military education."[182] By this reasoning, the study has developed a structure in terms of which it may describe not only the relevant South African defence policy publications and their presumed products (the capabilities of the SANDF, with a particular interest in those of the SA Army), but also the measure of divergence between them. The next chapter will therefore employ this basic structure as an organising framework for its rich description of South African defence policy, as it stood between 2000 and 2012.

[182] Snider, D.M. and Watkins, G.L. 2000. *The Future of Army Professionalism: A Need for Renewal and Redefinition.* In: Parameters, Autumn 2000, p 5.

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3

Analysing Defence Policy Statements

1. Introduction

A defence policy is neither the outcome of a clear pronouncement of national objectives, nor entirely the result of military logic.[183] Since defence preparations are also encumbered by a much greater degree of uncertainty and unquantifiable risk — in contrast to the planning of other state departments (agriculture, economic affairs, or education, for example) — the making of defence policy is never a wholly rational process either.[184] Huntington[185] avers that defence policy is rather a political statement of the inevitable interplay between *domestic policy*, whereby the actions of government affect the allocation of values among groups within society, and *foreign policy*, where the allocation of values affect relations between national states. Stated differently, defence policy is a compromise in managing the risks arising in the arenas of two different referent objects for security — the individual citizen and groups within society (human security) on one hand, and the state as a whole (national security) on the other. Concern with the former gives rise to structural (as opposed to military-strategic) policy decisions: the size and distribution of the defence budget; the composition, numbers and service conditions of defence personnel; the procurement and distribution of equipment and commodities to the defence force; the models and processes by which the military is organised and administered.[186] However, the demands of international politics obliges governments to be concerned with the strategic domain as well, since (ideally) military power has efficacy only insofar as it assists in achieving a state's foreign policy goals. Defence policy should therefore also express instrumental- or utilitarian decisions concerning the deployment, commitment, and employment of armed forces, thereby reconciling concurrent demands from both the domestic- and foreign policy environments, in ways that satisfy security demands of stakeholder groups within society *and* manages international security risks at the same time:[187]

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183 Huntington, S.P. 1974. *The Two Worlds of Military Policy.* In: Horton, F.B. et al (eds.), *Comparative Defence Policy.* John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, p 108.

184 Chuter, D. 2011. *Governing and Managing the Defence Sector.* Brooklyn Square, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, p 137.

185 Huntington, S.P. *op cit* p 108.

186 *Ibid*, p 109.

187 *Ibid*, p 108.

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> "Domestic politics serves as a constraint on the formulation of policies which are primarily responses to the external environment and have their principal impact on that environment. Conversely, international politics serves as a constraint on the formulation of policies which are primarily responses to the domestic environment and have their principal impact on that environment. With military policy, however, it is almost impossible to say which is the primary focus and which the constraint."

For the first decade after 1994, South Africa's defence fraternity had to come to terms with rapid, post-Cold War paradigm shifts in the worlds of international politics and strategic studies. At the same time, the state as a whole was undergoing political, economic, and social changes of epic proportions. While the essence of defence policy still seemed to reside in its connotation with national power and in the use of force in the pursuance of national interests, the security interests of the state were bound to be defined differently: interests that were political, a combination of domestic and foreign, and "…the product of a competition of purposes within individuals and groups and among individuals and groups."[188] As argued by Mandel,[189] South African defence policy would theoretically have given explicit recognition of the trade-offs that are invariably involved in managing the complex and fluid security environment, with national leaders forsaking any notions of a "fixed, linear, monotonic single-dimensioned security policy." In assessing such policies, the South African public should have anticipated, and accepted, apparent dichotomies in goals and methods, and desisted from demanding unidirectional defence policies. The first sections of this chapter will discuss the extent to which these hypotheses hold true, by presenting the actual content and implications of South African defence policy in the aftermath of the South African state's becoming a constitutional democracy. Given the salience of the SA Army in the South African defence dispensation[190] (and in recognition of the fact that "(i)n future warfare, land power, in key part meaning troops on the ground, will continue to be necessary if anything resembling decisive victory is to be achieved"[191]), the second section will present an analysis of the Army's interpretation of defence policy prescripts. The chapter will thereupon close with a brief description of the latest defence policy iteration — the South African Defence Review 2012 — and its implications for future force development.[192]

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188 *Ibid*, p 108.

189 Mandel, R. 1994. *The Changing Face of National Security: A Conceptual Analysis.* Westport: Greenwood Press, p 138.

190 See Chapter 1

191 Gray, C.S. 2005 *op cit* p 201.

192 Republic of South Africa 2012. *South African Defence Review 2012 (Consultative Draft).* Department of Defence (available at http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=163570)

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2. National Defence Policy: Soldiering On from 1996

The mandate of the SANDF (and with it, that of the SA Army) is derived from Chapter 11 of the Constitution, which states that it should be structured and managed as a disciplined military force, with the "primary object to defend and protect the Republic, its territorial integrity and its people in accordance with the Constitution and the principles of international law regulating the use of force." In addition, Section 102 (2) of the Constitution authorises the defence force to act *in co-operation with the police service*,[193] in defence of the Republic and in fulfilment of an international obligation. Since the "objects of the police service are to prevent, combat and investigate crime, to maintain public order, to protect and secure the inhabitants of the Republic and their property, and to uphold and enforce the law",[194] employment of the SANDF in a similar capacity is also conditionally mandated. By implication, the Constitution makes allowance for any one of the primary referent objects for security: of the individual and society, of the national state and of the international community. The Constitution furthermore defines the 'ends' of military security in broad terms, but it does not pronounce on the 'means' or the 'ways' of achieving its objectives. It leaves the choice of these two elements — with all their complexity, interdependencies, and uncertainty — to the policymakers: those who compiled the 1996 White Paper on Defence,[195] the 1998 Defence Review,[196] and the consultative draft of the 2012 South African Defence Review (the latter a recent document that will, once adjusted and approved, influence the SANDF's capability development in the future only).[197]

The 1996 White Paper publication was substantially different from its predecessors in at least two respects. First, it adopted a principle of maintaining the sound civil-military relations that are required in a constitutional democracy; second, it was deliberately short on guidance as to the structure of the future SANDF.[198] The latter deficiency was to be addressed in the Defence Review publication, which — in combination with the White Paper — confirmed the national defence posture, provided the principles for defence governance in a democracy, defined SANDF's functions

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193 Accent by the researcher.

194 Republic of South Africa. *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No 108 0f 1996.* Section 205 (3).

195 Republic of South Africa 1996. *Defence in a Democracy: White Paper on National Defence for the Republic of South Africa*, May 1996 (available at http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/SouthAfrica1996.pdf)

196 Republic of South Africa 1998. *South African Defence Review*, 1998 (available at http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/SouthAfrica1998.pdf)

197 Republic of South Africa 2012. *South African Defence Review 2012 (Consultative Draft).* Department of Defence (available at http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=163570)

198 Williams, R. 2002. *Defence in a Democracy: The South African Defence Review and the Redefinition of the Parameters of the National Defence Debate.* In: Williams, R., Cawthra, G., and Abrahams, D. (eds). *Ourselves to Know.* Pretoria: ISS Africa, pp 206 – 207.

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and tasks, and presented its force design. With regards to the latter, parliament had four proposals to select from: [199]

- First, an option that reflected a bias towards traditional defence contingencies and relying on an arsenal of conventional weaponry, but which acknowledged that the SANDF would be involved in a number of secondary tasks. The model – which cabinet eventually approved - was reliant upon the maintenance of a smaller core of full-time forces, with a substantial growth capability in times of crises.
- Second, a more ambitious design, styled the 'Department of Defence Long Term Force Design'[200] and founded on Western cultural paradigms (considered synonymous with Biddle's 'modern system'[201] in this study) was presented. This option presupposed traditional defence roles and military contingencies, and relied on conventional equipment to an even greater extent than the previous proposal.
- Third, an option that recommended a drastic shift away from conventional military thinking towards a realistic consideration of the roles and tasks that the armed forces were conducting at the time, and would most likely be involved with in the future. It argued forcefully for an unconventional approach in the formulation of primary defence roles, operational concepts, force design, and allocation of budgets. This implied a reduction of the armed forces' conventional capabilities, shifting towards counter-insurgency and peace support (SA Army), coastal protection (SA Navy), and air transport capabilities (SA Air Force). A civilian think-tank developed this proposal, but the defence planners of the time were less than enthusiastic of the proposal's implementation.
- Last, a submission based upon the principles of Non-Offensive Defence that supported a similar force design as Option 1, but placed greater emphasis on territorial (rear-area) defence, enhanced air defence capabilities, helicopter support to the Army, and inshore patrol capabilities for the Navy.[202]

With parliament accepting the first option and defence policy drafted accordingly, the 1996 White Paper and 1998 Defence Review publication thereafter served as constant reference in the future development of defence legislation (including the Defence Act, No. 42 of 2002), lower-order policy, service doctrine, and — as a consequence of government decisions ostensibly derived from the policy — a series of strategic arms acquisition projects that have locked the SANDF into a contestable

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199 *Ibid*, p 208. Also see 1998 Defence Review, pp 35 – 45.

200 *Ibid.* Equally, Chapter 9 of the draft 2012 Defence Review provides a conventional, long-term force design, the implementation of which will be subject to the defence budget allocation.

201 Biddle, S.D. 2004. *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp 28 – 51.

202 Williams, R. *op cit* p 211.

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theoretical model ever since.[203] In addition, defence policy provided a vision for the development of the SANDF's military capabilities: "*To ensure, in accordance with the Constitution, effective defence for a democratic South Africa, enhancing national, regional and global security, through balanced, modern, affordable and technologically advanced defence capabilities.*"[204] As per the framework of analysis developed in the previous chapter, the study henceforth describes defence policy's desired outcomes in terms of the SANDF's required levels of integration, its quality, skill, and responsiveness.

2.1 Implications for SANDF Capability Development

The degree of integration describes the extent to which the SANDF's activities are internally consistent and mutually reinforcing, and assumes a unity of purpose between its force development activities and the execution of the armed forces' actual (present) or plausible (future) functions *(Brooks and Stanley, 2007)*.[205] Starting with the 1998 Defence Review at the national-strategic level, the publication declares that that "… government has adopted a broad, holistic approach to security, recognising the various non-military dimensions of security and the distinction between the security of the state and the security of people. The greatest threats to the security of the South African people are socioeconomic problems like poverty and unemployment, and the high level of crime and violence."[206] In spite of this unambiguous and realistic policy statement, the Review fails to acknowledge both the *de facto* global revolution in strategic affairs, and the national revolution in security affairs, when it states that

> "The government has adopted a narrow, conventional approach to defence. The primary function of the SANDF is defence against external aggression. The other functions are secondary. The Defence Review therefore sets a policy vision for the size, structure, weaponry, equipment and funding requirements of the SANDF, mainly on the basis of its primary function. Where the self-defence capabilities are insufficient for certain secondary functions — such as peace support operations and internal deployment in co-operation with the SAPS — additional capabilities may be required."[207]

A further elucidation of defence's integration is found in Chapter 9 of the Defence Review, where it describes the fundamental concepts underlying the transformation of the DOD's administrative- and command structures: a systems approach to the management of defence; operational

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[203] Le Roux, L. 2004. *Revisiting the South African Defence Review.* In: African Security Review 13 (1), p 105.

[204] Defence Review 1998 *op cit* p 32.

[205] As with the previous chapter, all references to these authors are from Brooks, R.A. and Stanley, E.A. (eds) *op cit* pp 2 - 12.

[206] Defence Review 1998 *op cit* p 5.

[207] *Ibid*. The study will later touch on the extent to which the SANDF addressed these additional capabilities.

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synchronisation (or 'jointness') among the services; a singular focus on the core business of defence and the out-sourcing of non-core functions; civilianisation where uniformed posts are not required; a commitment to the part-time component; last, the exploitation of information technology.[208] An SANDF complying with the demands of policy should manage the risk of a foreign, armed invasion virtually all of the time, and actually deploy and conduct operations in this role most of the time.

In turn, the SANDF's level of skill (as used in this study) would be associated with the organisation's competency to execute its designated tasks, and relates to its inculcation of job proficiency through education, training, and personnel development. It also speaks to the organisation's ability to assimilate new technology and includes emotive factors such as motivation, morale, and the military ethos *(Brooks and Stanley, 2007)*. Furthermore, skill is also associated with intensive training (drill) and long-term service, which in combination inculcates an institutional culture that is premised upon effectiveness, strong group cohesion, and unflinching discipline under fire *(Parker, 2005)*. Chapter 3 of the 1996 White Paper provides detailed prescripts in this regard, stating that the SANDF will use international benchmarks of competency; that the preparation of personnel to execute the SANDF's primary function of defence against external military aggression is the essence of its training ethos; and that specific training programmes (i.e. not part of the generic training regimen) will be introduced to prepare military personnel for regional security co-operation, and involvement in international peace support operations.[209] Much is also made of the inculcation of "… respect for human rights, the rights and duties of soldiers, the rule of law, international law, nonpartisanship *(sic)*, non-discrimination, and civil supremacy over the armed forces."[210] The 1998 Defence Review continues in much the same vein, by stating that the SANDF must prepare to execute self-defence by training personnel for conventional operations, and exercising its units and formations in all-arms, joint, and combined operations.[211] In considering operations other than war, it is only training for peace support operations that receives special mention, since "(p)eace support operations are fundamentally different from traditional approaches to fighting wars. The differences are manifest in the mission, objectives and doctrine of these operations, and in the role and tasks of the forces involved therein."[212] Chapter 10 also contains a detailed section on education and training, focussing very much on a novel (more scientific) methodology, a national accreditation- and qualification system, and combined (international) training opportunities.[213] To comply with policy requirements, the SANDF should therefore be educated, trained, and motivated to match international benchmarks for military professionalism.

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208 *Ibid*, p 52.
209 White Paper 1996 *op cit* pp 13 – 14.
210 *Ibid*, p 14.
211 Defence Review 1998 *op cit* p 17.
212 *Ibid*, p 24.
213 *Ibid*, pp 81 – 84.

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The extent of the SANDF's quality — as defined in the organising structure of the study — has a bearing on its ability to acquire equipment and weaponry that are not only superior in terms of designed functionality, but that are also optimised for the context within which ordnance are to be employed *(Brooks and Stanley, 2007; Parker, 2005)*. From the 1998 Defence Review, it is apparent that the SANDF would be aspiring to technology that is both appropriate and affordable. Guiding this approach is the expectation that, in the light of rapid technological development worldwide, future enemies may possess sophisticated means; furthermore, the fact that South Africa's regional obligations will require the maintenance of a relatively high level of technological sophistication.[214] As with the attributes of integration and skill, the element of quality associates closely with the primary function of defence against external aggression. Chapter 8 of the Review, in dealing with force design options, therefore reiterates that effective defence for South Africa will be ensured "… through balanced, modern, affordable and technologically advanced defence capabilities"[215], which for all intents and purposes restricts military technology development to the conventional warfare domain. However, paragraph 8 to 13 of Chapter 8 also contains a number of caveats, the application of which could have resulted in the enhancement of the SANDF's quality dimension. It is argues that the processes and assumptions underlying the force design will be subject to periodic revision; that continuous adjustments to defence planning will be required; that the costing of the force design must include upgrades and replacement, so as to ensure its long-term sustainability; that each procurement project will be subject to a trade-off between required capabilities (associated with the 'ends' of force development), the equipment available to the SANDF, and the defence budget (the 'means').[216] South African Defence policy is therefore demanding of modern and technologically advanced equipment for conventional operations, but it is equally insistent upon the regular adaptation of force design to the operational, technological, and financial contexts within which the acquisitions are to proceed. Since the Review concludes with a comprehensive set of guidelines on defence industry and military technology, the issue of quality seems to be well covered. However, managing armed forces and conducting military operations is ultimately a practical matter, as much of a science as it is an art. It is this demand for pragmatism that brings the study to the last characteristic of an effective military: the attribute of responsiveness, which cuts across integration, skill, and quality. Since responsiveness is mainly concerned with the 'means' employed by strategy, it is more easily quantifiable, has a strong bearing on the feasibility of military planning, and is consequently worthy of a section on its own.

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214 *Ibid*, p 15.
215 *Ibid*, p 32.
216 *Ibid*, pp 34 and 35.

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2.2 Implications for SANDF Responsiveness

In this study, the attribute of responsiveness refers to the SANDF's ability to tailor its activities to the limits of its own capabilities (which includes the consideration of the domestic resource constraints), the extent of adversaries' capabilities, and the bounds imposed by external factors *(Brooks and Stanley, 2007)*. In the absence of plausible adversaries, the SANDF after 1994 had the luxury of only considering the limits of its own capabilities and the restrictions of international politics when it conducted its strategic thinking for the future. Consequently, the 1998 Defence Review concluded that the SANDF's force design should revolve chiefly around the SANDF's primary function of defence against military aggression, and that it should account for three factors: the level of defence required; the approved defence posture, and the defence budget.[217] The level of defence is characterised by the type, scale and intensity of military operations associated with defence tasks and –contingencies, as described in Chapters 3 of the Defence Review. Of note is the fact that defence tasks include the promotion of regional security through defence co-operation within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) framework, and the promotion of international security through participation in peace operations. Chapter 2 describes the approved defence posture. It proposes that the state shall pursue national security chiefly through the realization of the political, economic, social, and cultural rights and needs of South Africans, and through efforts to promote and maintain regional security. The Review reinforces the approach by pronouncing that the country shall strive for generous political, economic, and military co-operation with Southern African states in particular; that the SANDF shall have a primarily defensive orientation and posture, and that South Africa neither had at the time, nor would it have in the future, aggressive intentions towards any state.[218] In short, the South African defence theory espouses the strategic end of deterrence, employing an explicit set of ways.

First, South Africa will seek military co-operation with other states, to the extent that potential aggressors will face a combination multi-national military capabilities in response. Second, indigenous capabilities to neutralize external threats should be at readiness levels proportionate with the lead time for such threats to develop. Third, the SANDF will pursue deterrence against potential short-term aggression through immediate force readiness, and also in the longer term by maintaining the capability for expansion.[219] According to Le Roux *(2007)*, [220] one can therefore arrange the

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217 *Ibid*, p 34. Following on Huntington's arguments, these factors are the results of structural (not military-strategic) decisions. They are the products of conscious and unforced choices, and therefore entirely dependent upon policymakers' discretion.

218 *Ibid*, p 7.

219 *Ibid*, pp 8 and 9.

220 Le Roux, L. 2007. *The Revision of the South African Defence Review and International Trends in Force Design: Implications for the SA Army.* In: *South African Army Vision 2020: Security Challenges Shaping the Future SA Army.* Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, p 272.

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hierarchy of defence in order of priorities, as follows: prime, the prevention of conflict and war (an outcome of political- and economic cooperation, but including defence collaboration in multi-national deterrence); one order down, the containment of conflict and war (doubtlessly through multi-lateral peace support operations); last, the employment of armed forces in combat operations. Insofar as force development is concerned, this policy hierarchy suggests that the SANDF should first focus on those military formations committed to the collective security structures (the SADC and AU), then on those expeditionary forces that it chooses to provide for peace support operations, and last on capabilities that could conceivably be used in something like a conventional war. Within these parameters, the Review accepts that, while policy aims at providing the best value for money, a restrictive defence budget may result in an imbalance or inadequacy in defence capabilities — a security risk, in other words.[221]

As with perils in any other venture, decision-makers should manage risks through a combination of acceptance, deflection, mitigation, or elimination, which in this case implies a responsive interaction between political judgement and military expertise. Accordingly, the 1996 White Paper and the 1998 Defence Review is replete with references of managing the balance between defence budget and military capabilities (the White Paper devotes the whole of Chapter 7 to it) and the impact of financial restrictions (Chapter 8 of the Defence Review, especially). As a whole, one can therefore not fault the intended responsiveness of South African defence policy: it not only provides for its own regular revision,[222] but also for an SANDF that is responsive to the budgetary means allocated to it. However, there is more to the attribute of responsiveness than has been discussed thus far. It also features indirectly in a description of 'the western way of war', of which the South African defence policy is apparently a proponent.[223] It connotes with a reliance upon the conservation or adaptation of successful military practices, as required by circumstances; likewise, with a bias towards successful precedents, an absence of religious- and ideological constraints, and the willingness to accept innovative ideas *(Parker, 2005)*. When viewed from this angle, the idea of strategic responsiveness moves away from a quantitative calculation of 'means' towards a qualitative assessment of the 'ways'. The policymaker's challenge thus became clear: how would one subsume the political ideologies, strategic cultures, and military practices of armed forces as disparate as the SADF (subscribing to manoeuvre warfare) and MK (espousing people's war) into a unified SANDF, if both organisations were tacitly convinced that their particular biases were the valid ones — and therefore equally impervious to cultural change?[224]

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221 Defence Review 1998 *op cit* p 34.
222 *Ibid*, p 35, 43, 80, and 154.
223 Williams, R. *op cit* p 212.
224 Schein, E.H. 1995. *On Dialogue, Culture and Organizational Learning.* In: Engineering Management Review, Spring 1995, Vol 23, No 1, p 28.

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As it turns out, the 1996 White Paper spends the whole of Chapter 2 on the challenge of transformation, but dwelling primarily on aspects of human security, the role of defence in a democracy, and international law on armed conflict; in the same vein, the sections on military professionalism, education, and training are concerned with the political and ethical dimensions of military professionalism only.[225] The White Paper, in fact, does not provide any guidance on specific military practices or the achievement of military effectiveness at all. The Defence Review, on the other hand, states that the manner in which the SANDF will fulfil its tasks arises from the national- and foreign policy of government, the provisions in the Constitution, and the White Paper on Defence regarding the posture and functions of the SANDF. The most important considerations are that South Africa shall abide by international law on armed conflict, and that the SANDF shall have a primarily defensive orientation and posture.[226] On the proposed method for dealing with contingencies (Chapter 3), the Review is equally vague and confines itself to higher-order concepts such as threat-independent approaches, readiness levels, and lead times. In the end, the most succinct expression of policy intent comes from the chapter on the part-time component (PTC), where the following is stated: "The transformation of the SANDF, including the PTC, should be addressed in respect of cultural transformation, representativeness and recruiting and retention. The main aim is to foster a common military culture amongst all members of the SANDF, whether full-time or part-time component."[227]

One needs to provide an explanation for the dearth of policy guidance on military 'ways' at this point of the study, because it is crucial to understand some of the consequences that the thesis explores in the next chapter. While the 1996 and 1998 defence policy publications do not pronounce on the force employment doctrine of the SANDF directly, it was inevitable that the methods of the former SADF — which had been aspiring to Biddle's 'modern system' prior to 1994 already — would have had to serve the purpose. Aside from what Williams calls "the strong ascriptive affinities that exist between many armed forces of the developing world and the intellectual discourses of the former (mainly Western) colonisers",[228] the bulk of the tactics, techniques, and practices of the non-statutory forces — an especially those at the operational level of warfare — could simply not be reconciled with the expectations of defence policy. Furthermore, the continuation of the former SADF's successful military practices was encouraged by the fact that, at the time that defence introduced the new policy, that organisation's command structure was still very much in charge and using pre-existing infrastructure, instructors, and training institutions to conduct its force development with. However, one could also argue that this explicit conversion of (especially) the

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225 White Paper 1996 *op cit* pp 12 and 13.
226 Defence Review 1998 *op cit* p 4.
227 *Ibid*, p 100.
228 Williams, R. *op cit* p 212.

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revolutionary forces to a new paradigm was merely a pragmatic, tactful, face-saving illusion — a utilitarian construct, which stakeholders superficially maintained to enhance all participants' self-worth, to avoid defensive responses, to encourage the relationship-building process, and ultimately to ensure the successful melding of the former forces into one unified institution.[229] In situations such as these, an organisation's adoption of new, shared mental models is impeded by existing cultural rules regarding interaction and communication, which dictate that actors will readily sacrifice collaboration and understanding to preserve their reputations.[230] To this end, each of the integrating forces were ostensibly treated as if they were at the same level of military professionalism, had equally viable military doctrines, and were equally successful in achieving their military objectives: a necessary machination, given that the revolutionary forces had clearly won the political struggle and were now in power *despite* the former SADF remaining undefeated in war. Given the adage that it often takes defeat to force substantive adaptation to the actual conditions of war,[231] one may well ask which of the two antagonists (the apartheid forces or the liberation fighters) consequently perceived themselves to have been either the vanquished or the victorious, and were therefore obliged to adjust to a new security setting. This study therefore argues that, in the absence of consensus on what construes successful military practices and successful precedents, defence policy did not deliberately conserve any particular military tradition. The study also maintains that this omission was bound to confound the SANDF indefinitely in compiling a suitable, acceptable, and feasible force development strategy: an assertion that it interrogates in the next section, through a description of the SA Army's efforts to devolve national defence policy down to service level.

3. SA Army Vision 2020: Professing Inspiration from 2006 Onward

By the middle of 2004, the SA Army had largely achieved its objectives of integrating the former military forces and establishing a new organizational structure; incidentally, it also found itself with a new Chief of the Army and many fresh challenges, but still without an explicit vision and strategy for its future.[232] The SA Army therefore took a unilateral decision to develop a concept policy (provisionally called the 'SA Army Vision 2020') that it could employ to guide its future strategy. An in-house project team was appointed in September 2004, commenced with its first workshop in January 2004 and by the end of 2006 had produced two first-edition publications of note, *viz* the 'Strategic Profile of the SA Army 2020' and the 'SA Army Strategy 2020'.[233] The purpose of the Profile

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229 Schein, E.H. 1995 *op cit* p 24.

230 *Ibid.*

231 Murray, W. 1999. *Does Military Culture Matter?* In: Lehman, J.F. and Sicherman, H. (eds). *America the Vulnerable: Our Military Problems and How to Fix* Them. Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Institute (available at www.fpri.org/americavulnerable/BookAmericatheVulnerable.pdf) p 141.

232 SA Army June 2006. *Strategic Profile of the SA Army 2020.* Pretoria: SA Army Office, 1st ed, p 1.

233 SA Army November 2006. *SA Army Strategy 2020*. Pretoria: SA Army Office, 1st ed.

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was to "create an ideal, ambitious and clear picture of the future to which the SA Army members should be committed to achieve enthusiastically",[234] while the aim of the Strategy was not explicitly stated, but is assumed to have been intended as a first iteration of the SA Army's future strategy agenda. In spite of the fact that the policy venture remained unsupported and without authorisation above service level, derivatives of these publications eventually assumed the status of dogma within the Army. These artefacts — collectively denoted henceforth as 'Vision 2020' — provide solid evidence of the Army's interpretation and expression of defence policy, thereby contributing substantially towards solving the research problem of this study. As with the previous section, the following description will sequentially address the attributes of integration, skill, and responsiveness (but leaving quality aside, both for the sake of brevity and due to the limited attention that Vision 2020 devotes to it). This section also differs from the previous, in that it is more ambitious and progresses from a mere description towards a more critical analysis.

3.1 Army Focus on Integration and Skill

With the appearance of Vision 2020 in 2006 (a decade after the publication of the White Paper), the Army indicated that it would primarily be employed beyond the country's borders in peace support or stability operations.[235] This prediction is in stark contrast to the armed forces' primary role as envisaged by the 1996 White Paper and the 1998 Defence Review. The *raison d'être* of the Army seems to have shifted, from defending state sovereignty and territorial integrity towards compliance with perceived international (African) obligations, and with the Chief of the Army writing that "(t)he SA Army must ensure combat-readiness to honour South Africa's political commitments as part of the African Union's Standby Force (ASF) and specifically the South African Development Community's Brigade (SADC Brig)."[236] The Army was quite frank in recognising that the imperatives to employ forces in peace- and stability operations were at odds with the obligations of the Constitution, which apparently demands a more conventional war-fighting capability.[237] However, Vision 2020 dispelled any notions of integrating the Army's activities in a new direction. Being patently unable to direct its force development towards the singular ends and ways prescribed by the White Paper and the Defence Review, the Vision concluded that Army forces would be cultivated and deployed to satisfy the demands of *both* operations other than war (OOTW), being a political objective, and war-fighting as a constitutional obligation. If the Army had been able to implement this decision since then, the design of a force structure to accommodate the dual mandate was bound to become a major challenge,[238] as would have been the development of equipment, the conceptualisation of

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234 SA Army June 2006 *op cit* p 1.
235 *Ibid*, p 13.
236 SA Army November 2006 *op cit* pii.
237 *Ibid*, p 4-1.
238 Baker, D. 2009. *New Partnerships for a New Era: Enhancing the South African Army's Stabilization Role in Africa.* US Strategic Studies Institute, p 12 (available at

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administrative- and logistic systems and (especially) the inculcation of a governing military ethos. Under such conditions, operational integration would hardly have been possible. Instead, Vision 2020 again emphasised conventional training as the foundation of its force preparation strategy,[239] but at the same time assumed that a conventional war was highly improbable, and that this risk will be mitigated in time by the development of a suitable capacity within the reserves. For the present and for the foreseeable future, Vision 2020 therefore anticipated that the SA Army would mainly deploy in peace- and stability operations, where the infantry battalions of the regular force would bear the brunt of active military service.[240] This is a significant departure from the theory of the White Paper and the Defence Review, and in practice had the potential to ensure a much better alignment between the Army's force development activities and its operational demands (though other analysts may differ from this assessment).[241]

On the issue of skill, Vision 2020 made much of three developmental challenges, being the desired quality of human resources,[242] of the effective education, training, and development (ETD) of the recruited personnel,[243] and of the warrior ethos to be inculcated in future soldiers of the SA Army.[244] With reference to the first issue, Vision 2020 emphasised that the effective management of the Department of Defence's HR Strategy 2010 was a prerequisite for assuring the SA Army of young, healthy, and well-trained soldiers, but without excluding the contribution of older personnel.[245] This is the very same supporting strategy that the SANDF drafted to guide it in becoming the organization described in the 1998 Defence Review, and that the Joint Standing Committee on Defence subjected to a barrage of protests on 26 February 2003 already.[246] Apart from a healthy dose of suspicion that the DOD was attempting to purge the newly-integrated non-statutory forces from its ranks, the committee apparently based its objections upon the purported absence of any link between the DOD's human resources strategy and the SANDF's combat readiness. The second skills developmental issue refers to the statement that, to support 'national strategic deterrence', the force preparation of both the SA Army's regulars and the reserves must be of high quality.[247] The point was further made that the regulars – the full-time, professional component that does strategy and tactics for a living – and the reserves – the part-time component to be readied for conventional operations – were to be totally integrated in all respects to "…form a professional, capable and able

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http://www.usaraf.army.mil/documents_pdf/READING_ROOM/New_partnership_for_a_new_era.pdf).

239 SA Army November 2006 *op cit* p 4-5.

240 *Ibid*, pp 4-23 to 4-26.

241 Baker, D. *op cit* p 19.

242 SA Army November 2006 *op cit* pp 5-3, 5-15, 5B-4, 5D-8, and 6-3.

243 *Ibid*, pp 5-1, 5-7 and 5-14.

244 *Ibid*, pp 5B-10, 5C-17 and 5C-24.

245 SA Army June 2006 *op cit* p 12.

246 Notes on a Meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Defence dd 26 February 2003 (available at http://www.pmg.org.za/minutes/20030225-human-resource-strategy-2010-briefing).

247 SA Army November 2006 *op cit* p 5-1.

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force…"[248] Since modern systems combat is tremendously complex and require highly competent soldiers for successful execution, the regular forces and the reserves would both have had to be trained and kept current at the same levels; this, at a time when "(s)ocial imbalances, the poor education system, and developments in technology produce matriculants who lack military required physical and mental skills."[249] Through the deployment of suitable education, training and development (ETD) systems, Vision 2020 sought to correct these deficiencies on the SA Army's human resources input side. However, by 2006 the Army was already short of funds to conduct intensive field training exercises for regular forces, which is a critical requirement for the successful deployment of a 'modern system'.[250] Even while it was writing the embryonic policy, the Army must have known that there was every chance of it defaulting on its aim of being homogeneously comprised of a regular- and reserve workforce that could serve in a "…balanced, modern, affordable and technologically advanced military force, capable of conducting its tasks and missions effectively and efficiently."[251]

Furthermore, some of the emotive issues that had the potential to affect the Army's level of skill detrimentally — such as its diverse ethnic mix, its culture, and its desired military ethos — also made cameo appearances in Vision 2020. With reference to the last-mentioned, Vision 2020 centred upon the 'warrior ethos'.[252] As far as the officer corps is concerned, the Vision associated the desired military ethos with normative values such as discipline, acceptance of hierarchical authority, rules of public and private behaviour, and a system of sanctions.[253] Vision 2020 also required leaders who conduct their business according to a military- rather than a bureaucratic ethos, which implies a preference for a professional- rather than a machine bureaucracy.[254] In principle, there would have been much to recommend this policy approach to an armed force that was facing a plausible adversary, that had little regard for office politics, that was predisposed towards content (not form), action (not process), bonding (not consultation), conforming (not consensus) and effectiveness (not efficiency). However, the SA Army of 2006 was experiencing cultural- and ethical contradictions — "disequilibrium between training and education", for example — that appeared intractable to resolution.[255] Furthermore, adherence to a functional warrior ethos also demands personal sacrifice, courage, comradeship, service to a higher cause, commitment, passion, and the subordination of personal needs: value preferences that South African society at large seems, at best, to be

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248 *Ibid*, p 6-3.
249 SA Army June 2006 *op cit* p 15.
250 SA Army November 2006 *op cit* p 5-14.
251 *Ibid*, p 6-13.
252 *Ibid*, p 5-11.
253 *Ibid*, p 5C-17.
254 *Ibid*, p 5-10. For a contextualised description of these two types of bureaucracies, see: Caforio, G. (ed) 2003. *Handbook of the Sociology of the Military.* New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, Chapter 14, pp 237 - 278.
255 *Ibid*, p 5C-24.

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ambivalent about.[256] In conclusion of this discussion on integration and skill, Vision 2020 therefore appears to have been rather ambitious in prescribing a dual operational focus and a traditional warrior ethos for the SA Army. Ominously, it also took abundant cognizance of the consequences of an already-deficient budget on the SA Army's future strategy.[257]

3.2 Army Response to Resource Challenges

Amidst the inspirational language, Vision 2020 was therefore replete with remarks to the effect that the Army could only implement related strategies if authorities increased its budget; that the skewed ratio between cost for personnel, capital acquisition, and operations needed correction; and that it could not effect proper force preparation without budgetary adjustments. The document made no bones about the fact that the SA Army would, to remain relevant and viable as an instrument of the state, have to "… transform its current way of doing business in order to be more effective, efficient, economical …"[258] On the matter of how these management challenges were to be responded to, though, the Vision is silent. It provides no options in resolving the evident mismatch between the SA Army programme and the resources available to sustain it, as would have been the practice in developed countries.[259] One possible reason for this apparent lack of responsiveness could be that the Army has been – and conceivably still is – constrained in its formulation of policy options by the value system of its planners: a military culture which ironically is not only a major determinant of everything that they do, but also so pervasive and deeply inculcated that they are oblivious of the restrictions that it places on their freedom of choice.[260] If this were true, Army force structure planners could easily fall victim to two common fallacies, of which the first is also visible in the 1998 Defence Review: the follow-on fallacy, which postulates that the organization should replace current equipment with something similar, but better; and the like-for-like fallacy, which demands that a potential competitor's inventory be mirrored in one's own.[261] What, then, could prudent policymakers have done to resolve the obvious ends-ways-means conundrum that the Army was facing?

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256 Soontiens, W. and De Jager, J.W. 2008. *South African Values: A Reflection on its 'Western' Base.* In: African Journal of Business Management, Vol 2 (12), pp 222-229.

257 *Ibid,* p 4-31, 5-14, 5-B13, and 6-1. As fate would have it, the global economy was in recession two years later.

258 *Ibid,* p 6-18.

259 Krepinevich, A.F. 2010. *National Security Strategy in an Era of Growing Challenges and Resource Constraints.* Washington DC, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, June 2010 (available at www.CSBAonline.org) p 8.

260 Baylis, J., Booth, K., Garnett, J. and Williams, P. 1987. *Contemporary Strategy II: The Nuclear Powers.* London: Croom Helm Ltd, 2nd edition, p 11.

261 Chuter, D. 2011. *Governing and Managing the Defence Sector.* Brooklyn Square, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, p 145.

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The most obvious — and incidentally also the most productive — option would have been to achieve a better balance between the Army's real-world commitments and allocated resources.[262] Apart from increasing its funding (the interminably-delayed option aspired to by Vision 2020) or making the Army more efficient in business terms (which could have been politically unpalatable), the Army could have reduced its military strategic 'ends',[263] arranged its objectives in pragmatic order of priority, and have accepted the (highly implausible) risk of having to conduct regular warfare. Vision 2020 is certainly cognizant of this potential response in theory, arguing that the SA Army should use the hiatus in armed conflict to prepare itself for future challenges.[264] With the Army being strategically on the defensive (but intending to be operationally and tactically on the offensive),[265] Vision 2020 envisaged at least a two- to five year lead time before the SANDF would have had to engage a conventional military threat in combat. During this time, the Army would be developing its conventional forces — primarily located in the reserves — from its latent status into its full capacity.[266] However, Vision 2020's focus on obtaining responsiveness through the employment of conventional reserves is highly questionable. In the first instance, a conventional threat may arise much more rapidly than foreseen, if a major international actor is involved; in this scenario, unlikely as it is, a 'deliberate self-defence strategy' that is based upon the embryonic reserve force ability becomes a matter of being too little and too late, and therefore futile. Second, in the case of regional military threats — which are equally inconceivable, given the development of Africa's collective security architecture[267] — one has to consider that economics almost always decide the outcomes of arms races and prolonged conventional conflicts. As a regional power, South Africa would easily be able to outpace and outlast any aggressor, or combination of aggressors, among the countries within reach of its borders by merely accelerating the development of its regular military formations: again, arguments that run counter to the approach of maintaining capable conventional reserve forces. Last, it is highly unlikely that resources will, at a time of mounting international tensions preceding a conventional 'self-defence' as envisaged by Vision 2020, be diverted from the hard-pressed regular forces towards the energetic reconstruction the conventional reserves.[268]

To make matters worse, a conventional military strategy aims at limiting the cost of war by engaging the opponent with superior military force, and obtaining a decisive victory as quickly as possible; in contrast, the counter-insurgent (or peacekeeper, for that matter) should employ a variety of state

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262 *Ibid*, p 140.
263 SA Army November 2006 *op cit* p 4-4.
264 SA Army June 2006 *op cit* pii.
265 *Ibid*, p 10.
266 SA Army November 2006 *op cit* p 4-5 and p 4-25. This is similar to the familiar 'core force to war force' concept proposed in the 1996 White Paper on Defence.
267 Le Roux, L. *op cit* pp 277 – 278.
268 Baker, D. *op cit* pp 18 - 23.

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instruments synchronously in a protracted struggle for supremacy.[269] This truism is recognized in Vision 2020, which sees conventional forces concluding "operations swiftly and decisively within a broad timeframe of 120 days after deployment" through conducting a series of high-intensity operations, at a high tempo.[270] In addition, Vision 2020 is biased towards the employment of the military as early as possible in preventative self-defence, so as to "…capitalise on surprise, to conclude operations swiftly and decisively, and to decrease or eliminate the effects of an enemy response",[271] and continues to emphasise the need for a rapid force concentration and initial deployment to the specific theatre of operations[272] — all of which militate against the long-term view adopted by Vision 2020 for the development, deployment and employment of the conventional reserves. While a plausible assessment of the security context seems to guide the Army's *de facto* policy statement, the publications do not provide a viable response to the ends-ways-means challenge. At best, they recognise the existence of the need for responsiveness by averring that "…implementing the aforementioned strategy will require bold, brave and well-calculated decisions and implementation if the SA Army wants to be successful and achieve its future objectives."[273] At worst, Vision 2020's policy response to a limited resource allocation seems to boil down to nothing more than a culturally biased, flawed[274] exercise in strategy formulation: another tentative hypothesis that appears to be ready for testing in the next section of the study.

4. Conclusion

The chapter above has argued that the establishment of South Africa's constitutional democracy coincided with the end of the Cold War; consequently, that the country's new government simultaneously had to deal with major discontinuities in both the international- and domestic political systems. With reference to the former, the realist theory of international politics and its approach to the maximisation of (especially) military power came under pressure, while domestically the prominence of the armed forces in national security debates reduced substantially. Riding the global wave of resurgent optimism, the South African defence community, too, took a new course: drafting a national defence policy that consisted of two publications in quick succession, *viz* the *White Paper on National Defence for the Republic of South Africa, May 1996* and the *South African Defence Review*, *1998*. These policy documents mainly have an inward, structural focus, in that they

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269 Drew, D.M. and Snow, D.M. 2006. *Making Twenty-First-Century Strategy: An Introduction to Modern National Security Processes and Problems.* Maxwell AFB: Air University Press, pp131 – 149.

270 SA Army November 2006 *op cit* p 4-6.

271 *Ibid*, p 4-7.

272 *Ibid*, p 4-10.

273 *Ibid*, p 6-18.

274 For an example of the potential pitfalls in strategy-making, see: Mintzberg, H. 1991. *The Design School: Reconsidering the Basic Premises of Strategic Management.* In: Engineering Management Review, Vol 19, No 3, Fall 1991, pp 85 - 102.

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express the relationship between state and defence, the implications of defence in a democracy, the posture, roles, doctrine, force design, and the administrative processes of defence. To a more limited extent, though, the defence policy also contains instrumental decisions concerning the deployment, commitment, and employment of armed forces. South African defence policy also appears to be derivative of a cataclysmic philosophy of war: forever forsaking any aggressive intentions towards any other country, avoiding any impression of military superiority, professing to a purely defensive strategy (albeit with retention of the capability to go on the offensive, at the operational level of warfare), and declaring willingness to engage in combat only as a measure of last resort. Its accent on the prevention of conflict, multilateralism, and collective defence places it firmly in the liberal/idealist tradition, while defence policy's choice of the individual citizen as the referent object for security is an indication of government's redefinition of threats to the state — a recognition of South Africa's position as a relatively strong power, but as a weak state (in Buzan's parlance). In contrast, approved defence policy publications, and the SA Army's effort through Vision 2020 a decade later, made statements of force development ends (the ability to defend the country against an armed invasion from abroad) that seem to contradict these intentions. Policy guidance officially places the 'primary mission' at the top of the pile, and relegates all other functions to secondary commitments. For the purposes of the study, defence policy publications also provided a point of departure for the assessment of the SANDF's peacetime effectiveness, using the criteria of integration, skill, quality, and responsiveness.

The analysis conducted in this chapter indicates that defence policy makes more than adequate provision for the enhancement of the attributes listed above, with the possible exception of responsiveness (the latter being particularly questionable in the Army's Vision 2020). It also hints at the possibility of a dichotomous organisational culture for the country's defence community. The next chapter will therefore dwell on the extent to which the SANDF has conformed to the requirements of defence policy in practice, through a description of the armed forces' actual capabilities at this time. This analysis has not arrived a moment too soon, for government had announced another new vision for the SANDF on 17 May 2012.[275] After many years of apparent neglect, the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans had presented a draft Defence Review again, raising expectations that South African defence policy is on the verge of only its second major adjustment since 1994. While an interrogation of the minister's speech does not reveal any information on the SANDF's military effectiveness (the primary decisions taken in activating the new dispensation ranges from adjusting salaries, through to the establishing of crèches or pre-schools at

[275] Speech by L.N. Sisulu, Minister of Defence and Military Veterans on the occasion of the Department of Defence Budget Vote, dated 17 May 2012 (available at http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/view/politicsweb/en/page71654?oid=299448&sn=Detail&pid=71616)

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military bases, and onwards to the establishment of a military ombudsman for the purpose of managing grievance procedures), the draft 2012 Defence Review appears to be much more informative on matters of mission-readiness. The study will continue to interrogate this perception in the forthcoming chapter.

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4

Assessing Defence Policy Outcomes

1. Introduction

When judging the effectiveness of a modern military, whether serving in deterrence mode or actively involved in armed conflict, size does not count for much. Acquiring substantive military capabilities for their own sake no longer generates secure areas of influence for a state, nor does it ensure success at coercing a competitor; in fact, the financial cost and international responsibilities accruing to disproportionate military power has escalated prohibitively, while intangibles such as the quality of training and command, control, and communications have proven to be at least as important as the concrete attributes of force size and weapons sophistication.[276] This does not mean that command over capable armed forces is without any benefit to the state, though. Mandel, for one, is of the opinion that, while the salience of military threats to national survival may have declined substantially since the end of the Cold War, there are still valid reasons for the maintenance of military forces:[277]

> "…some forms of persistent international behaviour require for effective management the credible threat of military action. Even though conventional deterrence doctrine has less relevance and effectiveness in the post-Cold War world — due to increasing ambiguity and subtlety of the nature of threats, enemies and aggression — military capacity to respond to these challenges in innovative ways seems important during peacetime as well as wartime. The core of this argument is not that the application of military force in violent warfare is essential or effective; preparedness rather than use is what is crucial. Anarchic conflict in the global arena appears to demand dramatic change in military capability, not its elimination."[278]

For a state's defence policy to result in military capabilities, government would have had to translate its intentions into strategies and plans. It is common knowledge that a strategy is most often expressed in terms of its *Ends + Ways + Means,* where the ends are the objectives (the 'what') that

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[276] Mandel, R. 1994. *The Changing Face of National Security: A Conceptual Analysis.* Westport: Greenwood Press, p 29.
[277] *Ibid*, p 23.
[278] *Ibid*, p 24.

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the strategy wishes to accomplish; the ways are the strategic concepts and methods (the 'how') of applying the means; and the means are the resources, assets, and capabilities used to attain the ends. What policymakers sometimes seem to understand less well, though, is that there is an interdependent relationship between the three elements of strategy: if any one of these are fixed, either one or both of the others should be adjusted to keep the venture in balance.[279] While the achievement of desired strategic outcomes are invariably dogged by a measure of uncertainty, the risk of failure increases exponentially if — for example — one fixes the means of executing the strategy without adjusting the ends and/or ways to suit. Simply stated, *Ends = Ways + Means + Risk*,[280] which is an equation that all project managers, seeking to balance the dimensions of *Quality, Time and Cost* in a similar fashion, are intimately familiar with.[281] One may therefore judge the success of strategists — or policymakers, for that matter – by the extent to which they achieve this equilibrium.

As explained in the previous chapter, the makers of South African defence policy were apparently acutely aware of the need to bring the ends and ways of policy in balance with a fixed budget.[282] They would also have been painfully conscious of the fact that the allocation of the defence budget is ultimately a political decision, constrained not only by the size of the economy, but also by public opinion and competing domestic priorities for funding.[283] Furthermore, since the SANDF had inherited the force structure of the former SADF (the maintenance and support of which implied fixed financial commitments), its options for the internal distribution of the available funds among the three main expenditure areas (personnel, operations and capital acquisition) would have been severely limited from the start. However, whereas the 1996 White Paper and 1998 Defence Review presented a flexible 'ways' solution to the problem, based upon the core force / war force concept, the Army's Vision 2020 had a simplistic 'means' answer: increase the defence budget. (Oddly, the latest defence review committee was under instruction to draft the Defence Review 2012 in the absence of any budgetary considerations whatsoever, potentially relegating the product to a martial fantasy.)[284] Still, if all stakeholders in national defence had adhered to standard risk management

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279 Schnaubelt, C.N. 2011. *Strategy and the Comprehensive Approach*. In: Neal, D.J. and Wells, L. (eds). *Capability Development in Support of Comprehensive Approaches: Transforming International Civil-Military Interactions.* Washington DC: NDU Press, for the Center for Technology and Security Policy, p 56.

280 *Ibid*, p 59.

281 Project Management Primer (article available at http://www.projectsmart.co.uk/project-management-scope-triangle.html). 'Performance' is sometimes substituted for 'Quality', as it appears in the emblem of the DOD's Defence Matériel Division.

282 Heitman, H. 2010. *South African National Defence Force in Crisis.* In: Jane's Defence Weekly, 07 April 2010, p 23. Heitman goes so far as to state that the 1998 Defence Review "…focused almost entirely on fitting the shrinking budget, with no regard to likely missions."

283 Baylis, J., Booth, K., Garnett, J. and Williams, P. 1987. *Contemporary Strategy II: The Nuclear Powers.* London: Croom Helm Ltd, 2nd edition, pp 9 - 11.

284 ISS Seminar Report 25 April 2012 (available at www.iss.co.za/eventitem.php?EID=819).

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practices since the 1996 and 1998 policy's publication, the delta between the desired outcomes of defence policy and the actual capabilities of the armed forces should have decreased; if not, the difference would be rather more substantial by this time. Although it is neither the purpose of the study to express judgement on the quality of South African defence policy, nor on the excellence of the SANDF's strategy, nor on the renown of the armed forces' capabilities, a devotee of military strategy may easily infer such judgements from the text that follows. Readers so inclined would do well to remember that the process of crafting, implementing, and managing policy and strategy originates from domestic culture: a culture that not only influences the way militaries prepare for and conduct operations, but also determines their understanding of victory and defeat, success and failure, triumph and humiliation.[285] What may therefore appear as a disaster to some, might equally well be of little consequence to another. While promising to delve deeper into the matter of culture later, the study at this point needs to bring the perceived military readiness of the SANDF more clearly in focus.

2. From Hunches to Tentative Hypotheses

As suggested elsewhere, "(a) military that cannot perform well, or a system of command and control that does not function properly, is a waste of money and effort, no matter how neatly it may demonstrate civilian control, or what other theoretical virtues it may possess."[286] The previous chapter has argued that South African defence policy promotes a military that is both effective, efficient and representative of a modern system; yet, three years after the establishment of the SANDF, some analysts were already hinting that the armed forces' operational standards were under pressure, that its morale was not what it should be and that it was haemorrhaging managerial and technical expertise.[287] Since then, a number of articles in the press gave the impression that the readiness of the SANDF was increasingly in doubt. By 2006 the SA Army's Vision 2020 document went further, declaring that unit cohesion and combat readiness were being detrimentally affected by the increasing age and health problems of the service's personnel, and that its budget for operations (already skewed by the disproportionate expenditure on human resources) was being absorbed by its obligatory peace support activities, leaving insufficient funds for force preparation exercises. In addition, the demands of peace support operations were increasingly forcing the SA Army to employ reserve force elements — intended for the 'war force' — so as to relieve regulars in

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285 Gray, C.S. 2005. *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare.* London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, pp 89 - 94.

286 Chuter, D. 2011. *Governing and Managing the Defence Sector.* Brooklyn Square, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, p 125.

287 Cilliers, J., Schutte, C., Liebenberg, I. et al. 1997. *Public Attitudes Regarding the Image and the Future of the South African Military and the Defence Industry.* . African Security Review, Vol 6 No 5, 1997,p 28.

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the line.[288] Other analysts noted that the prime mission equipment of the SA Army, which was not part of Strategic Defence Procurement (SDP) package announced in 1999, was facing block obsolescence; last but not least, the Army was being constrained by a less-than-optimal administrative structure, which had been developed under the guidance of private-sector consultants when the SANDF started with its transformation process in 1994.[289]

While all of these reports hinted at serious capability problems within the SANDF, analysts found it increasingly difficult to get to either the causes or the consequences of the affair. With the passing of years, the preparedness of the armed forces had gradually become — especially since the appointment of Ms Lindiwe Sisulu as the Minister of Defence in 2009 — 'a matter of national security', with hard data on defence being progressively restricted.[290] (In the absence of any plausible or purported military threat to South Africa, the obvious reticence of the Department of Defence and Military Veterans [DOD] to present the facts for public scrutiny suggests that it may well be the security of *government*, rather than the security of the *state*, that is at stake here.) This perceived trend towards secrecy was lately tempered, though, with the announcement of the South African Defence Review 2012 (Consultative Draft), which is a public document and — although its intimations are somewhat obscured in the section on South African Defence Spending — contains a host of direct references and implied allusions regarding the capabilities of the SANDF.[291] In essence, the draft Defence Review suggests a major delta between current defence policy and the capabilities of the SANDF, expressed here as tentative hypotheses and in terms of the effectiveness framework adopted by the study:

- First, the management of the DOD may be lacking **integration** in meeting the demands of defence policy. For example, there appears to be an enduring divide between the declared defence mandate, government expectations, and the resource allocation to the DOD.[292] Since the SANDF does not have an approved force design, it is unable to develop a long-term joint armaments plan; the services therefore conduct armaments acquisition projects within the twin budgetary constraints of the medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) and the DOD's strategic capital acquisition master plan (SCAMP) instead. Consequently, the SANDF is

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288 SA Army November 2006. *SA Army Strategy 2020*. Pretoria: SA Army Office, 1st ed, pp 1-10.

289 Baker, D. 2009. *New Partnerships for a New Era: Enhancing the South African Army's Stabilization Role in Africa.* US Strategic Studies Institute (available at http://www.usaraf.army.mil/documents_pdf/READING_ROOM/New_partnership_for_a_new_era.pdf) p 5.

290 See, for example, http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Politics/Public-must-wait-for-scathing-defence-report-20101125; http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global[_id]=79329

291 Republic of South Africa 2012. *South African Defence Review 2012 (Consultative Draft).* Department of Defence (available at http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=163570)

292 *Ibid*, p 99.

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neither able to reap the benefits of joint systems employment, nor those of strategic consistency in its armaments acquisition projects.[293]

- Second, the SANDF may be critically deficient in the **skill, motivation, and ethos** that is required to operate a 'modern system', as envisaged by the 1996 White Paper, the 1998 Defence Review and the SA Army's Vision 2020. The armed forces, for instance, are obliged to retain human resources that are no longer employable in an operational capacity, which exacerbates the DOD's relentless exodus of technically skilled and professionally qualified personnel.[294] Average standards of military proficiency are therefore continuously decreasing, also due in part to a dearth of funds for training, and to the limited availability of serviceable prime mission equipment.[295]
- Third, the armed forces may no longer possess the **quality** of equipment that is suitable for execution of its present tasks, and even less for compliance with its capability obligations in terms of current defence policy. Through the increase in defence commitments since 1999, the costly integration of the equipment acquired by means of the SDP, and the real decrease in the defence budget allocation, the SANDF has become derelict in conforming to its constitutional imperatives. The armed forces are too poorly equipped and funded to execute its widening mandate, and even maintaining its present equipment levels is unsustainable.[296]
- Last, an analysis of the 2012 Defence Review indicates that the SANDF has neither been able to tailor its activities to the limits of its own capabilities, nor to its resource constraints, nor to the restrictions imposed by external factors (such its commitments to the African Standby Force). The Review has an interesting way of admitting the armed forces' lack of **responsiveness**, though: "The expanding defence personnel budget impacts negatively on the defence operating budget, resulting in an under-investment in the levels of maintenance and repair, training and preparation to meet South Africa's defence commitments. However, this apparently inflated personnel budget is not necessarily an indication of inflated staffing, but of an insufficient operating and capital budget to support the activities of the Defence Force."[297] This explanation is contested by government's political opposition, which believes that the 'capability gaps' in the SANDF had been caused less by underfunding, and more by a failure to properly prioritise defence expenditure.[298]

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293 *Ibid*, p 97.
294 *Ibid*, p 99.
295 *Ibid*, p 92.
296 *Ibid.*
297 *Ibid*, p 97.
298 Maynier, D. 17 May 2012. *Lindiwe Sisulu's War on Parliament* (available at www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/view/politicsweb/en/page71619?oid=299365&sn=Detail&pid=7)

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In spite of the manifest absence of any inter-state military threat to South Africa, and in the presence of actual security threats both intra- and extra-state, the latest iteration of the Defence Review insists that the defence mandate requires the maintenance of 'comprehensive' defence capabilities. It asserts that, while a 'full spectrum' of capabilities would not be sustainable, or at full readiness, the SANDF should nevertheless maintain them in anticipation of expansion to the required levels, when so demanded.[299] At first glance, draft Defence Review therefore appears to be a much-enhanced version of the 1998 policy, in the sense that attempts to cover not only the 'primary mission', but the majority of other contingencies as well. However, what the 2012 Defence Review lacks in focus when compared with the 1998 version, it makes up for in Chapter 9 with its force design and force structure guidelines — all of which indicate the retention and improvement of conventional capabilities, but now with complementary functionality for the execution of joint, inter-departmental, inter-agency and multi-national (JI^2M) operations.[300] In effect, the draft policy not only validates the 1998 Defence Review — albeit without the latter's overt emphasis on military cultural change and civil-military relations — but also reinforces its predisposition towards the full deployment of Biddle's 'modern military system'. What follows, then, is a testing of the hypotheses presented above, cast within the framework of integration, skill, quality, and responsiveness, and ultimately rendering a description of the SANDF's perceived military capabilities.

3. Degree of Integration

For the SANDF to be an integrated entity, its activities would have to be internally consistent and mutually reinforcing, displaying a unity of purpose between force development activities, and the execution of the armed forces' current and predicted functions *(Brooks and Stanley, 2007)*. Had the prescripts of approved defence policy been adhered to, the SANDF would have developed military capabilities that are narrowly focussed upon its primary function, which is declared to be defence against external aggression and the maintenance of territorial integrity. It is accepted today that this conventional approach (in both its connotative and military denotative meanings) came about as a result of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) having had a very negative experience of the former SADF and its involvement in the internal security of the state, and the ANC's fear of the armed forces using their influence to intervene in the political process.[301] Coincidentally, it also allowed for policy acceptance by the two most influential communities in the military at the time, each comfortable with the validity of their own cultures and military styles. For the post-1994 government and the former revolutionary forces, a strategically restricted defence meant a truly

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299 Defence Review 2012 *op cit* p 123.

300 *Ibid*, pp 229 – 238.

301 Williams, R. 2002. *Defence in a Democracy: The South African Defence Review and the Redefinition of the Parameters of the National Defence Debate.* In: Williams, R., Cawthra, G., and Abrahams, D. (eds). *Ourselves to Know.* Pretoria: ISS Africa, p 215.

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non-partisan and professional military; for the command cadre of the new SANDF, comprised mostly of conventionally-oriented officers from the previous regime, the accent on the primary function implied an opportunity to solicit funding for the continued upkeep of powerful conventional capabilities.[302] However, there were also other factors present that obscured the potential misunderstanding regarding defence policy's strategic ends.

The victory over apartheid had caused a euphoric wave of idealism to sweep the country, accompanied by visions of an increasingly stable, peaceful, and prosperous Africa — thereby (in theory, at least) obviating the need for an effective, sustainable SANDF with employment utility in the real world.[303] In the heat of the moment, the practicality of defence policy, and the suitability and feasibility of military strategy, appears to have become irrelevant. This need not necessarily have been the case indefinitely, though, since the sanctity of the primary function should have been a context-determined variable and not an immutable principle. Colin Gray *(2005)*, [304] for one, is of the opinion that any thinking about future war must necessarily account for its political, social, cultural and — to a lesser extent — technological contexts. Williams *(2002)* [305] therefore contends that the protection of territorial integrity and state sovereignty, in the manner prescribed by South African defence policymakers after 1994, is neither an accurate reflection of what modern defence forces (barring notable exceptions) have been doing during the 20th Century, nor of the South African armed forces' actual and expected roles since their establishment in 1912; in fact, for the past 100 years the South African military had been engaged in everything *but* defence against external armed aggression. Cilliers *(2007)* [306] contributes further to the debate by stating that the SANDF's conventional approach to its mandate, as reflected in its force design, may actually be indicative of a misinterpretation of its primary function — which deduction could be valid, considering the divergent cultural biases previously indicated. In the end, though, it was in the practical implementation of defence policy that the contradictions between the SANDF's force development objectives and its real-world functions raised to the surface.

3.1 Adjusting to Operational Demands

The first major shift in operational focus started with the SANDF's increased deployment in peace support operations (PSO). At the time of the White Paper's writing, it was already apparent that

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302 Le Roux, L. 2007. *The Revision of the South African Defence Review and International Trends in Force Design.* In: Le Roux, L. (ed). *South African Army Vision 2020: Security Challenges Shaping the Future South African Army.* Pretoria: ISS, p 273.

303 *Ibid*.

304 Gray, C.S. 2005 *op cit* p 84.

305 Williams, R. *op cit* pp 214 and 215.

306 Cilliers, J. 2007. *The African Strategic Environment 2020: Challenges for the SA Army.* In: Le Roux, L. (ed). *South African Army Vision 2020: Security Challenges Shaping the Future South African Army.* Pretoria: ISS, p 79.

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South Africa would eventually be obliged to develop its PSO capabilities, for a variety of good reasons. These motives could have included the pressure of public opinion, considerations of national prestige and self-interest, the inevitable responsibilities that accompany regional-power status, fear of sub-continental hegemonies, and a means of keeping the armed forces gainfully occupied.[307] The SANDF itself had at least three major reservations against large-scale employment in PSO: first, the integration of the former forces into one entity had not been completed yet, and more time was required to meld the forces into cohesive units;[308] second, an expectation that PSO would place an additional burden on a defence budget that was already stretched to the limit, and third that excessive participation in PSO may detract from preparation to execute the SANDF's primary function.[309] Eventually, and in spite of the SANDF's suggestions a focus on PSO may negatively affect its levels of integration, quality, skill, and responsiveness, the forces of political necessity swept all of these considerations aside. By 2004, the chairperson of the Defence Portfolio Committee observed that, at the time when South Africa was drafting its current defence policy, participation in multi-national peacekeeping missions was more of a statement of intent, but that PSO had since then become a matter of strategy.[310] The SANDF of 2004 was supporting four peace missions, with a combined budget of close to a billion rand, and facing numerous challenges in the process. These included a dearth of suitable equipment and spare parts, brought about partly by the long lines of sustainment. Consequently, the Secretary for Defence "…prayed *(sic)* that his Department was undergoing a learning experience and hoped that with time things would be improved tremendously."[311] However, the SANDF could not expect guidance from defence policy publications in this regard, seeing that it is obliged to cultivate a defensive posture that presupposes short logistic lines, developed over time, and supporting mechanised forces that are fighting a regular war in defence of the state's territorial integrity.[312] While the absence of an expeditionary capability (referred to as an 'intervention capability' or, more politically correct, a 'crisis response capability')[313] was to remain unresolved, PSO continued to be the major focus of SANDF operations to date. By 2012, for example, the SANDF still had approximately 2 100 soldiers deployed in PSO, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and the Central African Republic.[314] What defence

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307 Cilliers, J. and Malan, M. 1996. *A Regional Peacekeeping Role for South Africa: Pressures, Problems and Prognosis.* In: African Security Review, Vol 5, No 3.

308 Malan, M.1996. *Foundations for Regional Security: Preparing to Keep the Peace in Southern Africa.* In: African Security Review, Vol 5 No 1, p 6.

309 Cilliers, J. and Malan, M. *op cit.* Between 1989 and 1996 the SANDF had seen its budget sliced by about 50% in real terms.

310 DOD Briefing to parliament on SANDF Peacekeeping Operations, dated 24 August 2004 (available at http://www.pmg.org.za/minutes/20040823-sandf-peacekeeping-operations-department-briefing)

311 *Ibid.*

312 Le Roux, L. *op cit* p 277.

313 Defence Review 2012 *op cit* p 419.

314 Article by defenceWeb 03 May 2012 (available at http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=25317)

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policy publications considers as a secondary task had by then turned into a long-term commitment, as predicted by numerous defence analysts in 1995 already.[315]

The second overt inconsistency with defence policy arose when government did an about-turn on its previous decision to award the border control function to the police service.[316] In his address of 14 February 2003, President Thabo Mbeki announced the discontinuation of the SANDF's commando system, along with their rural policing- and border control functions.[317] While the latter role was to be turned over to the South African Police Service (SAPS), the full-time force of the SANDF continued with their border control function, albeit to an ever-diminishing extent: from an average of 2 016 soldiers in 2004, the numbers dropped to 504 in 2008.[318] However, with South Africa patently losing control of its borders — and with rhino poaching in the Kruger National Park drawing the attention of the international community — government reversed its previous decision in 2009, promising that the SANDF would resume the border safeguarding function by April 2010.[319] By March 2011, border security had therefore replaced PSO as the first national defence priority.[320] During the same announcement, the SANDF freely admitted that the decision to cede its border control function to other agencies had been a serious error, and that the SAPS' hasty abandonment of the international border implied that large areas were without any policing whatsoever. Consequently, the Chair of the 2012 Defence Review Committee confirmed that sea- and land border protection, along with PSO on the African continent, had become the SANDF's principal tasks. To this, he added that the PSO force levels provided for in the 1998 Defence Review had been an underestimation, and that defence policy had not foreseen many other developments, such as piracy on the African coast.[321] From these statements, one can infer a measure of internal consistency and mutually reinforcing processes in current military operations, which should be enhancing the integration and effectiveness of the armed forces in action. However, this is an illusion: approved defence policy publications still list the functions of PSO and border control as 'secondary', implying that the delta between declared policy and military capabilities — and therefore the *lack* of integration, between the tactical- and strategic

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315 Malan, M. *op cit* p 4.

316 The 1998 Defence Review, on pages 153 and 154, stipulates border control and support to the SAPS as two focus areas of the SANDF in the medium term.

317 State of the Nation Address, President of the Republic of South Africa, 14 February 2003 (available at www.dwaf.gov.za/Communications/President%20state%20of%20nation%20address.doc)

318 Democratic Alliance, 2008. *Sealing our Borders: A Democratic Alliance Proposal to Tackle Cross-Border Crime and Illegal Immigration* (available at http://www.da.org.za/documents.htm?action=view-document&document=565)

319 Address to the media on the presentation of the 2010 Department of Defence annual report by the Secretary for Defence Ms NZH Mpofu (available at http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9937)

320 Article by defenceWeb 08 March 2011 (available at http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13992:border-security-is-now-a-national-priority-sandf-says&catid=87:border-security&Itemid=188)

321 Article by defenceWeb 07 May 2012 (available at http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=25394)

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levels of defence management — is actually expanded and increased by the SANDF's pragmatic adaptations to its security context. None of this ambiguity is visible in the third digression from defence policy prescripts, though.

3.2 Accommodating Political Priorities

Possibly the most insidious distraction from preparing the SANDF to execute its primary function has been a gradual *de facto* migration of departmental priorities, away from the development of purely military capabilities, towards supporting government's human security agenda. The DOD's plan of 2002, for example, contains three military strategic objectives (defence against external aggression; promoting security through discretionary military deployments; supporting the people of South Africa through the use of collateral utility), and no ministerial priorities.[322] In the next year, the strategic objectives remained essentially the same — but for the removal of internal operations from the security programme — while the policy writers added three ministerial priorities: the monitoring of the new force structure and design; the implementation of a new human resource strategy; and the promotion of regional, collective security.[323] As time passed, the scope of ministerial priorities gradually grew to include the restoration of the SANDF's conventional defence capabilities (2004); meeting the demands and risks of PSO (2005); a new defence review, and concerns with governance and accountability (2006); the transformation of the defence industry (2007); facilities maintenance and the revitalisation of the reserves (2008); and the formulation of a defence strategy that is responsive to socio-economic and environmental issues (2009). During these years, the ministerial priorities remained focussed on a combination of measures to enhance military effectiveness (either potentially, in executing defence's primary function, or in practice while conducting PSO) and, especially in the latter half of the period, on improving organisational efficiency.

This trend changed in 2010, when practical expression was given to defence policy's acknowledgement that "(t)he greatest threats to the security of the South African people are socioeconomic problems like poverty and unemployment, and the high level of crime and violence."[324] For the first time, the new minister of defence — who had accepted the position in 2009 — explicitly prioritised a number of welfare issues that either had little bearing upon the SANDF's effectiveness, or could actually detract from its cost-effectiveness. These included the establishment of a functional Department of Military Veterans, the establishment of a National Defence Force Service Commission (for the purpose of attending to the SANDF's remuneration and

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322 Department of Defence 2002. *South African Department of Defence Strategic Plan for FY 2002/03 to 2004/05*, p 4.

323 Department of Defence 2003. *South African Department of Defence Strategic Business Plan FY 2003/04 to 2005/06*, pp 2 and 3.

324 Republic of South Africa 1998. *South African Defence Review*, 1998 (available at http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/SouthAfrica1998.pdf), p 5.

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conditions of service), and the optimal utilisation of the collateral value of defence capabilities in responding to the country's socio-economic needs. For its resolute focus on domestic politics, its integration-defeating potential, and its utter irrelevance in the enhancement of military effectiveness, the last ministerial priority is worth quoting in full: [325]

> "**Provide a lead in the development and implementation of the Community Service Programme (CSP).** In an effort to curb migration to urban areas, escalating levels of service delivery protest actions, high level of unemployment that is prevalent amongst women, youth, military veterans and people in the rural areas, a community services programme will be initiated that will re-skill the citizens, thus providing another opportunity for economic participation through maintenance of existing infrastructure and heritage sites. As such artisan and cultural promotion programmes will be promoted within the rural training and this will form the core of the National Community Service Concept that the Defence Force will be infused in all communities that are intricately connected to Defence institutions *(sic)*."

Finally, the SANDF's annual performance plan for 2012 presents seven departmental priorities, of which two (enhancement of the SANDF's landward defence capability; revitalisation of the reserves) are long-standing, relevant to the primary function, and at least partially funded. Two others (improving maritime security; enhancing SANDF forward deployment / PSO capabilities) associates with secondary missions, but are unfunded, while two more (implementation of the National Youth Service; job creation) cannot be directly related to military capabilities at all.[326] Even if one ignores the incongruity of these guidelines with approved defence policy, the possibility of combining the divergent ministerial priorities into a functional, coherent force development strategy seems to be remote indeed. For the lack of a national security strategy, the enduring contradiction between the demands of defence policy and the focus of military operations, and the DOD's more recent embracing of socio-economic functions, one must ultimately judge the SANDF to be deficient in strategic integrity. With that hypothesis validated, the following section will deal with the armed forces' military professional development.

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[325] Department of Defence 2010. *Strategic Plan (MTEF FY 2010/11 to FY 2012/13)*, pp 23 and 24.

[326] Department of Defence 2012. *Department of Defence (DOD) Executive Authority's overarching Annual Strategic Statement (EA OASS) for 2012*, p 34. The seventh priority is the operationalization of the DOD Works Capability, which had been on the cards since 2008 already.

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4. Level of Skill

In following the discussion below, the reader has to be conscious of the causal relationship between organisational culture, skills development, and effectiveness in action. Snider *(1999)* [327] is of the opinion that the qualities of discipline, professional ethos, cohesion, esprit de corps, and morale are all derivatives of a military culture. While these qualities on their own are important determinants of skill, as attested to in the previous chapter, the collective of military culture may also be the single most significant factor in the generation of military effectiveness — which pertains directly to the research problem of the study — and the processes involved in military innovation — which has a bearing on the armed forces' responsiveness, in particular.[328] Moving from theory to application, South African defence policy publications are unequivocal about the fact that the preparation of personnel to execute the SANDF's primary function (defence against external military aggression) is the essence of its training ethos.[329] Consequently, the SANDF's participation in (and training for) PSO was its first major deviation from both its professed training ethos and defence policy's strategic focus on the 'primary function'. Malan *(1996)* [330] is of the opinion that, since skilling for PSO emphases communication and mediation, an appreciation for cultural diversity, and respect for international humanitarian law, it would assist in breaking down the attitudinal barriers among members of the former forces that comprised the newly–constituted SANDF. He continues by extolling the virtues of force preparation for PSO, noting its potential for the inculcation of universal military values, the enhancement of basic military skills and professionalism, and the improvement of the armed forces' legitimacy in public- and politicians' eyes alike.[331] In theory, a focus on PSO therefore has the potential to enhance the SANDF's mission-specific competency, the appropriateness of its military ethos, and ultimately its job proficiency — all of which Brooks and Stanley *(2007)*[332] consider to be desirable attributes, and which are aligned with South African defence policy's demand for the inculcation of respect for human rights, international law, and civil supremacy over the armed forces. However — and here lies the policy conundrum — to get there, the SANDF would have had to abandon, or modify, a number of beliefs and attitudes generally considered essential for proper combat training: an aggressive warrior ethos, the will to win at all

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327 Snider, D.M. 1999. *An Uninformed Debate on Military Culture*. In: Lehman, J.F. and Sicherman, H. (eds). *America the Vulnerable: Our Military Problems and How to Fix Them.* Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Institute (available at www.fpri.org/americavulnerable/BookAmericatheVulnerable.pdf) pp 120 – 124.

328 Murray, W. 1999. *Does Military Culture Matter?* In: Lehman, J.F. and Sicherman, H. (eds). *America the Vulnerable: Our Military Problems and How to Fix* Them. Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Institute (available at www.fpri.org/americavulnerable/BookAmericatheVulnerable.pdf) p 134.

329 Republic of South Africa 1996. *Defence in a Democracy: White Paper on National Defence for the Republic of South Africa*, May 1996, pp 13 – 14.

330 Malan, M. *op cit* p 6.

331 *Ibid*, p 10.

332 Brooks, R.A. and Stanley, E.A. (eds) *op cit* pp 2 – 12.

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costs, chauvinist anti-foreigner attitudes, and prejudice against an enemy.[333] It is therefore a matter of supreme irony that the logic of defence policy requires a military predisposed to the aggressive annihilation of an invading enemy force, while an improvement in the SANDF's PSO capability — the grammar according to which it actually has been conducting operations since its establishment — requires the opposite: the exercising of patience, perseverance, restraint, compassion, and kindness.[334] The SANDF therefore confronts the dilemma of simultaneously enhancing its warfighting effectiveness, in anticipation of combat operations that are highly implausible, while developing the disparate character required for the conduct of current military operations. Defence's reaction to these opposing imperatives clearly connotes with its responsiveness, which the study deals with later; for now, one may conclude that the SANDF's professional ethos — and possibly its military culture — may be indeterminate, if not schizophrenic or downright dysfunctional.

Turning to the training regimen of the SANDF, one soon discovers that detailed (unclassified) information regarding the quality and intensity of the SANDF's training is hard to come by, and that those sanitised snippets that the DOD releases for publication are insufficient to base an opinion on. The Secretary for Defence announced, for example, that the SANDF in 2009 successfully executed a total of nine joint, interdepartmental, and multinational exercises, one of which was in preparation for the provision of security for the 2009 FIFA Confederations Cup. To assess the capability and readiness of the Southern Africa Standby Brigade, the SANDF also conducted an exercise involving almost all of the SADC region's armed forces.[335] In stark contrast to these innocuous pronouncements, though, some defence analysts are of the opinion that the SANDF is confronting a skills crisis, for at least two reasons. The first is budget-related, where the correspondent reports (for example) that the flying hours available for training the SA Air Force are so limited that it cannot put its newly-acquired fighter force into operation. The SA Navy is similarly restricted in its operational- and training hours at sea, while a deficient budget constrains the SA Army to one brigade-level exercise (with reduced force allocation) per annum.[336] However, the 2012 Defence Review Committee's assessment is probably the most valid indicator in this regard: it points to a chronic under-investment in training and force preparation, coupled with the poor serviceability of major prime mission equipment, as being the primary reasons for the SANDF's declining standards of proficiency.[337] This may very well be true, but does not provide the complete picture. Since skill also

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333 *Ibid*, p 12.

334 *Ibid*, p 14. Clausewitz was the first to present politics as the 'logic of war', and military operations as its 'grammar'.

335 Presentation of the 2010 Department of Defence annual report by the Secretary for Defence Ms NZH Mpofu.

336 Heitman, H. *op cit* p23.

337 Defence Review 2012 *op cit* p 92 and 97.

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speaks to the armed forces' motivation, morale, and military ethos, one has to face a second reason for the SANDF's alleged skills crisis: its human resource practises.

Heitman *(2010)* [338] avers that the Defence Secretariat has not been effective since its establishment in 1995, reason being that political imperatives had resulted in the appointment of senior civil servants in key posts without them having any defence- or civil service experience worth mentioning. Furthermore, "(t)he SANDF continues to suffer from self-destructive personnel management focused on gender and racial quotas to the near exclusion of practical requirements. It is unable or unwilling to dispense with dishonest and incompetent officers, which have driven out experienced white officers and demoralises black officers, who are frustrated and compromised by the incompetents."[339] As a matter of fact, the SANDF' motivation and morale has been a matter of public debate since the infamous soldiers' march to the seat of government on 26 August 2009.[340] In the months thereafter, an Interim National Defence Force Service Commission (INDFSC) was appointed to investigate a host of issues pertaining, among others, to the disempowerment of commanders; the defence budget allocation and composition; the state of defence infrastructure; the provision of health care and transport to military personnel; career management within the Defence Force; the grievance mechanism; command, control and communication in the SANDF; remuneration and conditions of service; and the overall wellness of the Department of Defence.[341] Although the minister never made the full report public, the informed populace learnt enough to warrant considerable disquiet. This section therefore concludes with a similar verdict as the previous: the SANDF's training and motivation does not match international benchmarks for military professionalism. Again, the discrepancy between the spirit of defence policy and the outcomes of military practice appears to be uncomfortably large, not only because the SANDF seems to be unable to meet its 'primary function' skills obligations, but also because it appears to be faltering in the basics — those emotive factors encompassed by its military culture — that are required for effectiveness in military missions involving combat. On that note, the study turns to a description of the SANDF's relationship with technology and modernisation.

5. Extent of Quality

With the 1998 Defence Review supplying the motive, the South African government and the DOD embarked upon the SDP and proceeded with the acquisition of four frigates (euphemistically

338 Heitman, H. *op cit* p23.
339 *Ibid.*
340 Minister of Defence and Military Veterans briefing on military union protest action (available at http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20090908-minister-defence-and-military-veterans-recent-military-union-protest)
341 INDFSC Recommendations: Briefing by Department of Defence (available at http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20110526-interim-national-defence-force-service-commission-recommendations)

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denoted 'corvettes' at the time), three submarines, 30 light utility helicopters, 24 lead-in fighter trainers, and 28 light fighter aircraft. [342] Much controversy has dogged the SDP since then. Apart from the political, economic, and even legal concerns, security analysts also argued that the SDP acknowledged neither the sensible needs for national defence, nor the trends that were already visible in the DOD's budget allocation and expenditure priorities. With regard to the former, military pundits argued the SA Army has always been the lead service for deployments in Africa, while the SDP only catered for the Air Force and the Navy; with reference to the latter, the SDP committed the capital acquisition budget for more than a decade into the future, while the operating budget for force development, force preparation and force employment was patently under pressure.[343] Whereas it is therefore debatable whether the acquired weaponry is superior in terms of their designed functionality, their optimisation for employment in the African context is even more questionable. Ironically, the acceptance of the SDP burden — meant to signify a qualitative leap forward, as required by defence policy — has indirectly resulted in the deterioration of the wider SANDF's level of skill and its general standards of preparedness. [344] Open literature provides a number of examples of the SANDF's decreasing quality.

With reference to the SA Air Force, the gradual loss of relevant capabilities has received some publicity over time. These reports range from the Air Force considering the Denel AH-2 Rooivalk attack helicopter for premature storage,[345] to the obsolescence of radar systems,[346] the A400M Airbus debacle,[347] and on towards the much-publicised wrangling regarding presidential air transport.[348] The Defence Review 2012, too, admits to the SA Air Force being unable to maintain combat readiness "… across the full spectrum of operational tasks expected of it."[349] Whereas the much-debated SDP had presented the SA Air Force with new light fighters, jet trainers and light utility helicopters, the medium- and light fixed wing are now reaching the end of their operational life. External operations can no longer be supported, while the intensive maintenance cycles that the aged transport aircraft are obliged to undergo have reduced their operational availability even further.[350] In the absence of any airborne early warning capability, compliance with the policy demand of intelligence-driven operations to secure South Africa's airspace and territorial integrity is

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342 Le Roux, L. *op cit* p 279.

343 *Ibid.*

344 *Ibid.*

345 Available at http://www.spacewar.com/reports/South_African_air_forces_woes_999.html

346 Robinson, A. 2010. *Ensuring Air Power Integrity: Radar Renewal Programme.* In: Ad Astra, Vol 30 No 3, p 29. "Obsolescence has become a serious problem that adversely affects the availability of spares. From an operational perspective the Radar Picture quality has also significantly deteriorated over the years, especially low-level primary radar coverage."

347 Available at http://www.xairforces.net/newsd.asp?newsid=761&newst=2

348 Available at http://www.saairforce.co.za/news-and-events/acquisitions

349 Defence Review 2012 *op cit* p 93.

350 *Ibid.* The SA Air Force has also lost its in-flight refuelling capability, thus tying the range of its new fighters to the fuel that is available in their tanks when they take off.

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virtually impossible.[351] The Chief of the Air Force raised other obsolescence issues at the annual Air Force Day parade on 27 January 2012, when he indicated challenges in the areas of maritime surveillance, VVIP transportation, night-fighting capabilities, electronic warfare platforms, and UAV sensors.[352] While the SA Air force is apparently sliding down the capability scale in terms of meeting defence policy's air power technology demands, the decay appears to be more rapid in the types of air support required for a 'war among the people': those services rendered by transport aircraft and helicopters.

The apparent decline in the SANDF's ability to procure, maintain, and employ technologically advanced equipment extends to the SA Navy as well. Although mere numbers do not tell the full story, it is worth noting that the SA Navy had 23 warships (frigates, destroyers, and submarines) in 1961, but only 11 in 2011.[353] As with the other services, the SA Navy is experiencing relentless pressure on its operating budget. In spite of having been a beneficiary of the SDP and its modern equipment, the Navy has recently had to increase its operational tempo dramatically in order to deal with the piracy threat off the African East Coast;[354] consequently, it has had to spend funds dedicated for fleet maintenance and refit elsewhere. No longer is the Navy able to make its new vessels combat-ready for the types of missions envisaged by defence policy. Coming to the mundane (but much more plausible) necessity of ensuring territorial integrity and protecting resources in South Africa's Exclusive Economic Zone, the Navy is even worse off. It has had to maintain the obsolete Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) in service for longer than anticipated, and the Navy is only lately considering their replacement; furthermore, the complete absence of static- and airborne maritime sensors implies that the Navy has no domain awareness around South Africa's coasts, and intelligence-driven operations are near impossible.[355] As with the SA Air Force, the Navy seems neither in conformance with the theoretical demands of defence policy, nor with the practical demands of national security. Deane-Peter Baker *(2012)*, [356] for example, is of the opinion that the SA Navy faces a capability/challenge mismatch. What decision-makers conceived and equipped it as a 'counter-navy' force, and provided with frigates and submarines to deal with equivalent maritime combatants, now confronts a host of immediate operational challenges (piracy, smuggling, poaching, and other criminal activities): challenges that it cannot resolve while burdened with an inappropriate operational philosophy, doctrine, organisational structure, and equipment. In any case, policy does not consider law enforcement of marine resources and the maritime zone as a primary defence

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351 Available at http://digitaljournal.com/article/318581#ixzz1yRciEVWb

352 Available at www.saairforce.co.za/news-and-events/1070/caf-speech-ataf-day-parade

353 Defence Review 2012 *op cit* p 91.

354 Engelbrecht, L. 2011. *SA to Join Counter-Piracy Fight* (dated 22 February 2011, and available at www.defenceweb.co.za/)

355 Defence Review 2012 *op cit* p 93.

356 Baker, D. 2012. *The South African Navy and African Maritime Security.* In: Naval War College Review, Spring 2012, Vol 65, No 2, pp 152 and 153.

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task.[357] While efforts are nonetheless underway to revive the Navy's offshore- and inshore patrol capabilities, there are early indications that budgetary constraints may — again — sink these initiatives.[358] In the light of these facts, the SA Navy appears unable to meet either the naval-strategic demands of defence policy (for a lack of operational funding) or the maritime-strategic requirements of current operational utility (for a lack policy direction and appropriate equipment to do the job with).

This may also be true for the SA Army, since it is facing the block obsolescence of its prime mission equipment, and of the majority of its support capabilities. While the Army has *not* benefited from the SDP or any other major capital investment programme, it has since 2009 had to reallocate significant chunks of its operating budget to personnel expenditure. Consequently, it has had to defer major maintenance- and repair programmes into the future:[359] bringing into balance the project scope elements of performance, cost and time on the one hand, but resulting in a steady loss of serviceable equipment on the other — this, in spite of the fact that the armed forces deployed about 6 470 combat vehicles in the late 1990s (the vast majority from the SA Army), and only about 1 680 by 2011.[360] By 2012, the SA Army therefore had an immediate need for modern equipment to conduct border safeguarding operations with: suitable patrol vehicles, a suite of surveillance equipment and sensors, and a designated communications system. It also required appropriate equipment and weapons for parachute forces, such as protected and air-transportable vehicles. Not quite so pressing was the urgent requirement for infantry combat vehicles, armoured personnel carriers, logistic vehicles, and light artillery. Finally, the Army faced terminal obsolescence of some field support systems, such as water purification, kitchens, accommodation, technical workshops, and hospitals — systems required for operating on external logistic lines.[361] Inevitably, one is left to conclude that the SANDF is currently neither capable of sustaining its existing ordnance, nor of conducting major combat operations (as required by defence policy in execution of its 'primary function'), nor of competent participation in new-generation operations.[362] The SANDF simply does not have the ability to acquire equipment and weaponry that are not only superior in terms of designed functionality, but also optimised for the context within which the armed forces expect to employ them — neither as anticipated by the theory of defence policy, nor as demanded in practice by the government of the day. With this section concluded, the study now ventures on to describe the SANDF's multi-faceted version of a military evolution, as it grew from the defence force's incremental (and not necessarily voluntary or cognizant) adaptations to its operating environment.

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357 Defence Review 1998 *op cit* p 12.
358 *Ibid*, p 157.
359 Defence Review 2012 *op cit* p 92. PSO and expeditionary forces rely on this type of support.
360 *Ibid*, p 91.
361 *Ibid*, pp 418 – 421.
362 *Ibid*, p 92.

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6. Measure of Responsiveness

As recorded in the previous chapter, South African defence policy writers were abundantly aware of the fact that the SANDF had to tailor its activities to the limits of its capabilities and resource constraints; in fact, they also provided potential responses to these challenges. Their knowledge was based upon practical experience, since the defence budget had decreased in real terms by more than 49% from 1989 until 1997 (reducing by 11,1% in nominal terms between 1995 and 1998 alone —see Addendum B[363]), while at the same time the integration of constituent forces into the new SANDF, the bulk of which was into the SA Army, resulted in an almost 35 per cent increase in its personnel numbers.[364] While spending on military equipment declined from 44% of defence expenditure in the 1980s (at the height of South Africa's conflict on the Namibia-Angola border) to about 28% by 1994 (when the liberation forces won their political victory), the total cost of personnel already accounted for about half of the budget by the mid-1990s.[365] By March 2011 the Interim National Defence Force Service Commission reported that defence policy proposes a ratio of 40:30:30 for the cost of personnel, operations, and capital expenditure, but that the 2010/11 budget reflected a skewed ratio of 44:43:13 instead. While the defence budget represented 1,1% of GDP at the time (only 3,9% of total Government expenditure, generally thought to be a good thing), it was also inadequate to meet the needs of the DOD. The deficit prompted a request for an additional amount of R2,6 billion for the 2010/11 fiscal year; instead, the final allocation was reduced by R2 billion.[366] The 2012 Defence Review is therefore of the opinion that, since the 1998 force design was neither affordable nor sustainable (read *not feasible*), the current mismatch between defence policy intent and policy execution (read *an imbalance between policy ends* on one hand, and *policy ways and means* on the other) had already arisen at the time that the policy was written.[367] A cursory glance at the SA Army's post-transformation response to the proven resource deficiencies sheds further light on the matter.

By the year 2006, at the time of Vision 2020's publication, the SA Army was already beset by numerous problems that had characteristics of an emergent strategy; a strategy that was developing inadvertently, through a process of learning and conditioning, without the conscious intent of the

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363 Defence Review 2012 *op cit* pp 81 – 101.

364 Uys, F. 1997. *The SANDF Transformation Process.* African Security Review, Vol 6 No 1, 1997 (available at http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/ASR/6No1/Uys.html)

365 *Ibid*, p 90. Even with the cost of personnel remaining the same, a shrinking budget would have resulted in this perturbation.

366 INDFSC Final Report: Briefing (available at http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20110304-interim-national-defence-force-service-commission-final-report-briefi)

367 *Ibid.*

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Army's senior management, and therefore an *involuntary* response.[368] While some of the challenges were possibly self-inflicted (such as a dysfunctional organizational structure), the most intractable and pervasive obstacles to the achievement of Vision 2020's ideals were deemed to be the result of a woefully inadequate budget.[369] By default, the Army has allowed the creation of an imbalance in its fixed- and variable cost relationships, resulting in (among others) a severe reduction in capital expenditure, technology development, and the budgets for training exercises and operations.[370] These distorted expenditure ratios are apparently necessitated by socio-political imperatives (such as the SANDF's role in job creation), which prevents the SA Army from legally and equitably terminating the service of soldiers that are, for a variety of reasons, redundant or no longer deemed effective in terms of Vision 2020's demands.[371] Consequently, it is questionable whether the Army is either able to conduct major combat operations — as per the demands of defence policy publications — or to deploy adequate forces in border protection (the latter being is a realistic way of ensuring territorial integrity, which is one of defence's few constitutional imperatives).[372] As in the case of the other services, this study would therefore argue that the SA Army had failed to apply a suitable and feasible (if not politically acceptable) risk management strategy, and that its responses to its well-known resource challenges had been sadly lacking in their focus on maintaining military effectiveness. Given the dire implications of such a broad statement, theoreticians and practitioners alike are sure to challenge its veracity. The issue of responsiveness therefore seems to require additional elucidation, as per the precedent set in the previous chapter. Accordingly, this study is also concerned with the armed forces' responsiveness in terms of soft issues such as its conservation or adaptation of successful military practices, its bias towards successful precedents, the SANDF's position regarding religious- and ideological constraints, and its willingness to accept innovative ideas *(Parker, 2005)* — all of which may be related to the defence force's organisational culture.

7. Responsiveness as a Matter of Culture

The study has already indicated that defence policy did not deliberately attempt to conserve a designated set military practises and martial traditions. At the same time, it has been argued that the physical, administrative, and doctrinal infrastructure of the former SADF, along with the

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368 Mintzberg, H. 1994. *The Fall and Rise of Strategic Planning.* Harvard Business Review, January – February 1994, p 111. An emergent strategy signifies that the actions taken by the organisation over time are converging into identifiable trends and predictable outcomes, whether premeditated, intentional and desirable, or not.

369 Article on *The African.org* (available at http://www.the-african.org/blog/?p=192)

370 Baker, D. 2009. *New Partnerships for a New Era: Enhancing the South African Army's Stabilization Role in Africa.* US Strategic Studies Institute, p 6 (available at http://www.usaraf.army.mil/documents_pdf/READING_ROOM/New_partnership_for_a_new_era.pdf): "… vital equipment is often unavailable or broken, regular units are difficult to field because of the high incidence of health problems, and the reserves – once a critical component of the old SADF's order of battle – are so underfunded as to be almost completely non-functional."

371 ISS Seminar Report 25 April 2012 *op cit.*

372 Defence Review 2012 *op cit* p 92.

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operational practices associated with it, served as the *de facto* framework for the construction of the South African military after 1994, to the extent that some of smaller forces complained of being 'absorbed' into the apartheid machinery, rather than being 'integrated'.[373] Resistance was to be expected, since "(w)hen we operate as culture carriers and are conscious of our cultural membership, we are emotionally attached to our culturally learned categories of thought; we value them and protect them as an aspect of group identity."[374] The illusory conservation of the SADF's military practices, associated with its western, modern-system oriented military culture, was due to have a short life in practice, though, and for more reasons than the fact that their adoption may have been — at least on the part of the former revolutionary forces — the result of provisional expediency, rather than of genuine conviction.

The study draws theoretical support for this statement from Murray *(1999)*,[375] who is in agreement with Parker when he posits that military culture usually changes slowly over time: as a response to advances in technology, to the impact of leadership and —of critical importance — to change in the larger socio-political culture of the nation. Regarding top defence leadership's composition, suffice to say that the SANDF has changed radically from being largely a white, former SADF-dominated organisation in 1994, to an organization mainly under the command of black officers from MK in 2012.[376] Whereas the study had previously confirmed the conventional orientation of the former SADF officers who had influenced the making defence policy the most, these orientations have since been superseded by the basic assumptions of leaders from the irregular forces, of whom it was said that, "(u)nlike government armies they lack, once deployed, the benefit of reliable resources, a fixed infrastructure, a capable administrative system and an institutionalised military-historical tradition."[377] During the same period, the demographic (and therefore cultural) composition of the country's ruling elite changed likewise, to reflect the whole of South African society and to express the state's dominant value sets accordingly. At the heart of the SANDF's limited responsiveness, therefore, lies the paralyzing dichotomy between an antediluvian cultural paradigm, as exemplified by current defence policy publications, and an authentic military culture that had evolved, partly by design and partly by default, since the inauguration of the new dispensation in 1994. Snider's submission "… that those who tinker with the culture and climate of military organizations may well be, either unknowingly or without concern, modifying the long-term effectiveness of *(the country's)*

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373 Williams, R. 2004. *The Impact of "Umkhonto We Sizwe" on the Creation of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF).* In: Journal of Security Sector Management, Vol 2 No 1 – March 2004, p 16.

374 Schein, E.H. 1995 *op cit* p 28.

375 Murray *op cit* pp 135 – 138.

376 With the belated retirement of Lt Gen Gagiano at the end of September 2012 – he had remained in office for an extended period, on invitation of the Minister — the last of the former SADF service chiefs had hung up their caps. The chiefs of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Military Health Services, Defence Intelligence and the SANDF now all came to be from Umkhonto we Sizwe.

377 Williams, R. *op cit* p 2.

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armed forces"[378] may equally apply to the SANDF, thereby providing not only an explanation for the study's overarching assessment of the armed forces' perceived effectiveness, but also for the size and shape of the observed delta between defence policy and military capability. Without being overly reductionist, it is possible that the present condition and character of the SANDF simply reflects the unintended consequences of a conflicted, peacetime military cultural evolution — which statement now brings the discussion to its interim conclusions.

8. Conclusion

Capable militaries still have important functions to fulfil within the societies they serve, even though their utility lately seems to reside in the deployment of armed *forces*, rather than in the employment of armed *force*. For the SANDF to have evolved into an effective organisation, the translation of South Africa's defence policy into a sound military strategy, scientifically and artistically balanced among its ends, ways, and means, would have been of crucial importance; failing which, all manner of risks would have accrued to the enterprise objectives. However, people from different backgrounds do not interpret policy, or make strategy, in the same way. As indicated by any number of theoreticians and practitioners, the culture of societies in general, and of the armed forces in particular, has a major influence not only in the way that stakeholders subjectively perceive military effectiveness, but also in how they think one should bring it about. In the case of South Africa, the draft 2012 Defence Review avers that the SANDF may conceivably suffer from less-than-adequate degrees of integration, skill, quality, and responsiveness. The chapter above has dealt with these tentative hypotheses in turn, coming firstly to the conclusion that the SANDF is presently lacking in strategic integration, and — if the latest ministerial priorities and budget speeches are anything to go by — may be in danger of losing its strategic focus altogether. Furthermore, there is valid cause for doubting the SANDF's skill levels as well, for reasons that have as much to do with deficiencies in the armed forces' motivation, morale, and military ethos, as it pertains to the delta between defence policy and military practice. On the subject of equipment quality, abundant evidence of the SANDF's inability to sustain its current inventory, even in the absence of the demands of by defence policy or current operations, is available in the public domain. Last, the discussion on responsiveness leads to the conclusion that a limited means allocation, insufficient to meet the SANDF's concurrent obligations in terms of declared defence policy, international peace support initiatives, and the emerging threats to national security, petrifies the defence force. The absence of a suitable response to these challenges — epitomised by the excessive longevity of South African defence policy — relates as much to a schizophrenic national- and military culture as it indicts defence leadership of the past decade.

[378] Snider, D.M. *op cit* p 119.

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5

Conclusion

1. Background

No government should simply assume effective defence policy implementation (and neither should a peacetime military presume a working force development strategy) from the mere absence of operational feedback. In solving the research problem — through a descriptive analysis of the variance between South African defence policy and the actual military capability of the SANDF — the study has not only confirmed the veracity of this statement, but also managed to produce tentative explanations for some of the observed phenomena. While the thesis therefore mainly sought to provide a general description of the delta between the objectives of defence policy on one hand, and the actual outcomes of the military's force development programmes on the other, such a study would have been meaningless without a portrayal of the context within which it is situated. The researcher was therefore obliged to conduct a general interrogation of global- and South African security perspectives since the end of the Cold War first, focussing in particular on developments after the advent of the new dispensation in 1994. Although it has not been possible to provide even a brief description of some of the major sources of defence policy and military effectiveness (such as societal culture, and the state's political- and economic institutions), the study includes at least a relevant selection of thoughts on the philosophies of war, and the potential influence of international political archetypes on defence policy development.

All societies have enduring and pervasive convictions regarding these matters, which they express in (among others) the policies that produce. South African defence policy, too, reflects the mind-set of its authors, which the researcher may deduce through an analysis of the text. Closer scrutiny of the relevant policy publications consequently revealed strong indications of an attachment to a cataclysmic philosophy of war, in statements that deny any aggressive intentions towards any other state; that deliberately avoid any impression of relative military superiority; that profess to a purely defensive strategy (albeit retaining the capability to go on the offensive at the operational level of warfare), and that declare a willingness to engage in combat only as a measure of absolutely last resort. A society, government, or military in this mode is unlikely to spend much energy and resources on developing an effective defence force anyway, unless it becomes important for national survival. Furthermore, the policy publications' emphasis on the prevention of conflict,

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multilateralism, and collective defence places it firmly in the liberal/idealist tradition of international politics, again making the employment of other instruments of state (diplomacy or the economy, for example) much more likely than that of the military. Further conclusions from the study, especially insofar as they arise from an analysis of defence policy publications, support these initial expectations of the military's relative unimportance in South African affairs of state. However, there is also evidence of the same defence policy being increasingly at odds not only with universal developments in the field of security studies, but also with the realities of the security environment to which it supposed to be applied.

2. From Military Threats to Domestic Vulnerabilities

Since the end of the Cold War, there is ample testimony to the fact that both academics and practitioners have extended the concept of security from its former preoccupation with foreign military threats, to include the security of individuals and societies within — or even among — national states. In South Africa, for example, the 1998 Defence Review tacitly acknowledges the salience of domestic vulnerabilities and the non-military dimensions of security, noting that the greatest threats to the wellbeing of the South African people are socioeconomic problems and public disorder. A reader taking this statement at face value may therefore argue that government has chosen the individual citizen as the referent object for security (implied by the redefinition of the primary threats to the nation) and believes South Africa to be a strong power / weak state (i.e. a well-organized country with a comparatively strong economy and defence force, but rather weak in its social cohesion). Had this perception been true for the writers of defence policy as well, their products would have reflected the fact that states in this condition are increasingly vulnerable to domestic political threats, but are quite secure from foreign military hazards. Instead, the 1998 Defence Review posits that government has adopted a narrow, conventional approach to defence, and that the primary function of the SANDF is protection against external aggression — a policy position better suited for states in a weak power / strong state condition. The apparent incongruity of this policy response gives the impression that South African defence policymakers were either oblivious to the fact that [(1)] a global revolution in *strategic* affairs had already occurred, and that [(2)] a national revolution in *security* affairs was currently underway; or (and this is more plausible) that other political, social and institutional factors contributed to the defence policy position in larger measure than military logic did. However, the study had to investigate the South African context in greater depth to arrive at valid conclusions in this regard.

A revolution in strategic affairs speaks directly to the changed utility of military *force*. Given the history of apartheid South Africa, policymakers in the first decade after 1994 were obviously cognizant of the vastly reduced usefulness of threatening, or employing, military force in combat

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operations. This inhibition regarding the employment of sanctioned, organised, purposeful violence by the state is abundantly visible in the South African defence policy position, and the SANDF's mandate. However, due to their unintended longevity, the policy publications' directives were soon overtaken by a global paradigm shift in the utility of military *forces* — forces that other countries now routinely use on foreign soil for the amelioration, containment, deterrence and even coercion of violent conflict. In contrast, South Africa's defence policy left its armed forces without the motives to develop, deploy, and employ expeditionary forces in (for example) peace support operations, thereby denying government a foreign policy tool that it could have used in the active enhancement of peace and security on the African continent — an attitude consistent with the 'mental model' of South African decision-makers, as argued above. However, while this approach appeared to be mildly incongruent with the South African government's liberal/idealist orientation in international politics from the start, it was only in later years that the dissonance between the national strategic context, the declared defence policy, and actual policy implementation became abundantly visible. The inconsistencies between the demands of the state security, defence policy and the SANDF's capabilities become even more apparent if one is prepared to contemplate the notion of a 'revolution in security affairs' in a South African context.

This theory points to a clear discontinuity in the general relevance of military *power*, and is based on the premise that defence and security are not synonymous (a fact implicitly recognized in the 1996 and 1998 defence policy publications, but yet to be unequivocally stated in a national security strategy). The study has argued that makers of South African defence policy understood the link between human- and state security, as well as the necessity to rebuild a South African society that the preceding regime had divided and selectively disadvantaged. In contrast to these realities, policy's singular focus on defence against external aggression could most plausibly have arisen from a strong state / weak power paradigm only — a belief according to which South African society would be a cohesive entity, but the state would have little influence in the region. The policy ramifications of such a point of departure would be to trivialise those military tasks (for example border control, support to the police, and security of national key points) with which the SANDF could still have assisted in enhancing national security, and incidentally also have ensured compliance with the armed forces' constitutional mandate. Further proof of this policy paradigm came when, within a decade of defence policy's publication, government had largely removed the armed forces from the domestic security domain as well.

The study has also argued that, while parliament is lately revising the political decisions that resulted in the apparent isolation and torpor of the SANDF, the military has already suffered the consequences of public apathy by now: a stagnant budget, a reduced professional status of the

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military, and a lack of public debate on defence matters. Adherence to policy has prevented the SANDF from effectively maintaining, adjusting, or augmenting those military capabilities that the apartheid regime had previously nurtured to ensure its domestic security with (the doctrine, skills, and equipment required for border control, support to the police, and internal stabilisation operations, for example). By interpreting the constitutional imperative to mean that the SANDF was obliged "to defend and protect the Republic, its territorial integrity and its people" against an external, military threat, defence policy appears to have biased the armed forces towards a strategy that is not only highly implausible within a regional context, but also largely irrelevant within the domestic. When viewed against its *external* backdrop — from whence the strategic problems arise that it is supposed to address — policy that may have been merely dubious in 1998 appears to have become hugely imprudent by 2012. Nevertheless, defence policy also has an *internal*, structural focus, usually premised not only upon the maximisation of specific operational effectiveness within policy's assumed strategic context, but also upon military effectiveness in general. The next section will therefore conclude on the actual results of South African defence policy's implementation, based upon a comparison between the demands of defence policy on the one hand, and the SANDF's capabilities on the other.

3. Developing the Attributes of Military Effectiveness

In terms of the SANDF's force design, defence policy demands a balanced, modern, affordable, and technologically advanced organization, *capable of executing its tasks effectively and efficiently*. Read in association with policy's definition of its primary role, this statement biases SANDF towards the development of a 'modern military system' (Biddle) that carries out the 'western way of war' (Parker). The study has confirmed that this particular archetype was acceptable to competing groups of South African decision-makers at the time when defence policy was being compiled, albeit for different reasons: one retrospective, based upon aversion and apathy towards a military regime of the past, and the other futurist, based upon an affinity and ambition towards the deployment of a modern military system. Government (in which the former liberation movements now held sway) wished to see a demilitarised society, in which the armed forces were stripped from even indirect political influence, and exclusively focussed on a hypothetical enemy from abroad; the aficionados of traditional military power — mostly officers from the former SADF — believed that this very same option would allow the SANDF to retain its conventional arsenal, doctrine, war-fighting capabilities, and ultimately its status as a regional military power.

Given South Africa's moderate security milieu of the late 20th Century, the adopted policy position was probably as suitable to solve the defence problem as any other. The feasibility and affordability of its force design were certainly matters of concern, but policy publications consequently provided

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potential management solutions to these problems. Following on this mandate, the defence force should have been able to derive — and implement — a force development strategy that is at least internally consistent with the demands of policy, if not effective in satisfying the needs of the external, changing security environment. However, this study has maintained from the beginning that military effectiveness is as much a specific, overarching policy objective for the SANDF, as it is a general requirement for any other military's performance — and therefore a valid yardstick to assess any military by, always conditional upon the consideration of context. Consequently, one may then also view a military's capabilities as policy-driven outcomes towards the achievement of effectiveness, adjusted to account for the influences of the external environment. This study was therefore able to employ Brooks and Stanley's framework for military effectiveness, being a common denominator of both policy and capabilities, to describe the delta between South African defence policy publications, the actual capabilities of the SANDF, *and* the real demands of the South African security environment (the latter to an admittedly lesser extent). As with the study as a whole, the following conclusions are therefore organised in terms of the generic effectiveness attributes of integration, skill, quality, and responsiveness.

3.1 On Organizational Coherence, Proficiency, and Material Superiority

Insofar as the SANDF's integration is concerned, the study has argued that the armed forces have struggled to correlate their actual force development activities with the declared defence policy position, especially during the last decade. This has been more true for the SA Army than it had been for the other services, since the latter forces had received the modernisation benefit of the SDP packages,[379] they are better aligned with the execution of the SANDF's 'primary function', and (for the SA Navy, until recently) they have had a lesser role to play in fulfilling the immediate security demands of peace support operations, border control and internal stabilisation operations than the SA Army did. While the internal activities within the SA Navy and the SA Air Force appeared to be mutually reinforcing to a large extent, the unity of purpose between the main thrust of the SA Army's force development activities and the execution of its current- and predicted functions has steadily deteriorated. Ultimately, though, none of the services can escape the effects of the discrepancy between declared defence policy outcomes, government's expectations of real defence outputs, and the resource allocation to the DOD: the dichotomy not only prohibits the integration of effort within the services, but also among them.

Adding to these incongruent military-strategic considerations is a more recent emphasis on the SANDF's role in improving the socio-economic conditions of the population at large, for example

[379] Ironically, the Army's lack of inventory modernization may yet result in it suffering *less* organizational stress — financially, doctrinally, and especially culturally — than the other divisions, if the SANDF had to adopt an entirely different force development strategy,.

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through community service programmes, the national youth service, or simply 'job creation'. It has been hard enough for the SANDF to balance the contradictions between defence policy theory and national security practice, but with a direct commitment towards human security mixed into its force development strategy, a prognosis for the military's improved integration becomes immeasurably worse. By having three distinct areas of focus (*viz* the primary function in terms of its policy mandate, the current set of missions that it is committed to, and socio-economic initiatives that political authority demands), the SANDF is neither able to attain strategic consistency in its conceptual vision for the future, nor in its operational activities such as armaments acquisition projects, doctrinal development, or joint systems employment. The study therefore concludes that the SANDF is deficient in integration, becoming worse to the same extent that defence policy's obsolescence increases.

Moving on to the issue of skill, the study has produced ample evidence of the SANDF's competency — or the lack of it — in executing its designated tasks and meeting its ordered commitments. Although hamstrung by a dearth of serviceable equipment and funds for the conduct of intensive training exercises, the SANDF still appears to have sufficient capacity for the inculcation of on-the-job proficiency through education, training, and personnel development. In the absence of evidence to the contrary (probably only obtainable from contact with an enemy), the armed forces seem quite capable of assimilating the new technologies acquired through the SDP packages. Still, a submission that the SANDF appears to be skilful enough in its current operational context does not automatically suggest that the competencies of the organization are in alignment with the ambitions of defence policy. Whereas the attributes of integration and responsiveness are generic in nature, that of skill has a particular meaning for a military aspiring to develop a 'modern system': it associates positively with intensive training and long-term service, designed to develop an institutional culture that favours military effectiveness, strong group cohesion, and unwavering fortitude under enemy fire. From its preceding arguments, the study has inferred that the SANDF may be deficient in all of these qualities, and therefore unable to conduct the 'western way of war' as defence policy evidently demands — a deduction that, given the gravity of its implications, begs further validation.

While the qualities of integration, responsiveness and skill could be equally applicable to any effective military, whether considered a 'modern system' or not, Parker contends that the idealised aim of western strategy has always been the total annihilation of the enemy's armed forces: a Clausewitzian maxim that is not only in opposition to the values of many other cultures, but also anathema to the approach required for the successful waging of (for example) revolutionary warfare, peace support campaigns, and internal stabilisation operations. Consequently, the organizational ethos of an SANDF that is being prepared to defeat a foreign aggressor — the armed forces' primary

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function, according to policy — would be antithetical to that which is required for the execution of the defence force's current operations, and also contrary to defence policy's insistence on a human rights culture for the military. Oddly enough, this internal inconsistency allows the study to conclude that the convergence between the letter of defence policy, the SANDF's prevailing force development outcomes, and its current operational tasks is actually reasonably good. The same does not appear to hold true for the quality of the defence force's material inventory, though.

The attribute of quality relates to the technology and equipment that the military is using, or has access to, when it employs forces in operations. As with a military's skill, this particular element connotes positively with the 'modern system' — so powerfully, in fact, that some analysts consider technology to be the primary motive underlying the construct's development. Defence policy's insistence on the development of a balanced, modern, and technologically advanced SANDF is therefore a prime indicator of its aspirations towards a modern military system. It is also after considering the quality of the armed forces that the study found the SANDF largely derelict in complying with the demands of the 1996 and 1998 defence policy publications: not by any stretch of the imagination could the combat services (and especially the SA Army) be called 'modern systems', as Biddle and Parker conceptualised it. As a matter of fact, the subtext of the 2012 Defence Review gives reason to suspect a regression in military effectiveness since defence policy was published, and suggests doubt as to whether the SANDF, in its present condition, would be able to defend the country against any determined military invasion at all (which is admittedly a very remote possibility, but a national policy imperative nonetheless).

Whereas the South African citizenry may draw some comfort from the implausibility of the principal contingency that defence policy caters for, the study continuous to conclude that the armed forces do not even have access to the type and numbers of equipment required for the execution of its present tasks. Regardless of the DOD's confirmation that increased defence commitments, the costly integration of SDP equipment, and the real decrease in the defence budget allocation caused this state of affairs, the fact seems to be that the SANDF has failed to ensure the sustainability of the capabilities that it has either chosen to retain from the Cold War dispensation, or elected to acquire since then (yet another policy imperative). Concluding on the quality of defence material, the study therefore judges the SANDF to be largely in contravention of the spirit of defence policy, which envisages the development of a modern military system; also, potentially at variance with the military's constitutional obligation, and certainly deficient in meeting the needs of current operations. One definitive attribute of effective militaries remain for the study to render a verdict on, though — a characteristic that, had the SANDF displayed it consistently since the publication of

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defence policy (and as, indeed, the very same policy demands it), could still have resulted in an effective military. This is the element of responsiveness.

3.2 Regarding Appropriate Adaptations to the Environment

After achieving its first objective of integrating statutory and non-statutory forces into a single entity, the SANDF was supposed to have turned its focus towards the development of the type of defence visualised by defence policy (and attempted by the SA Army after 2006, for example): one motivated not only by the implausible contingency of a military invasion from abroad, but also bent upon solving the realistic security problems of the day. In compliance with defence policy's demand for regular review, the armed forces should have been able to revise its strategy by then, shifting its attention away from its preceding internal, structural focus, so as to provide for defence policy's military-strategic objectives as well. Initially, the demands on military effectiveness were few in number and discretionary in nature, allowing government to employ some of the SANDF forces in secondary tasks (peace support operations), but largely withdrawing them from others (border control and support to the SAPS). While the time therefore seemed to be right for the next phase in defence force's evolution, as mandated by policy publications, such a reformation would be largely dependent upon the ambition and vision of defence's political- and military leadership.

From the available evidence, though, the study has concluded that there has been (and possibly still is) at least two competing philosophies that guide defence policymakers: one that finds expression in revolutionary war and people's war, and one that espouses conventional-, regular- and manoeuvre warfare. Adherents of the former theory, ascendant in both government and the armed forces, had their ambitions realized by the middle of the first decade after democratization, when the SANDF had attained the retrospective objectives of defence policy. This group had spent its philosophical and ideological momentum. One cannot say the same of the grouping that strove for the development of a modern military system, though. Their gratification remained in abeyance in spite of a clear policy mandate to this effect, for reasons that the study has elaborated upon at some length. Since the governing elites were unconvinced of the western way of war's value from the start, the political will to embrace a modern military system would always have been lacking anyway. Furthermore, its implementation was tempered by the psychological effects of at least two other factors: the establishment of a regional, collective security regime, which argues against self-sufficiency in national defence, and the fact that a regular war — or any other military threat against South African interests, for that matter — seemed as remote then, as it does in the present (which, incidentally, allows collective defence to remain an untested concept, and therefore an objectively viable military option).

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In practice, government also had to weigh any real increase in the defence budget against society's growing demands on those ministries that deal with human security issues, such as the departments of health, welfare, education, and police services. Government is simply facing too many domestic concerns that vie for attention — issues that are simultaneously more urgent and more important than a national defence force's requirements for (very expensive) capabilities to either fight implausible wars, or to conduct discretionary military missions with. As for the SANDF itself, it has — in spite of policy demands to the contrary, and with its ever-dwindling capabilities clearly visible for all to see — remained largely unresponsive to both its resource constraints and its external operational environment. The SA Army's Vision 2020 initiative (arriving eight years after the 1998 Defence Review's publication, at a time when defence policy was already overdue for adjustment) is a case study of one service's response to the changed security context: while favouring the development of a modern military system in theory, it fails to reflect the practical implications of a budget that is inadequate to even sustain the SA Army's capabilities in their present condition.

4. Final Conclusion

The South African government has, since the publication of the 1998 Defence Review, neither produced a coherent national security strategy, nor an updated and relevant defence policy that could serve to guide the development of the SANDF. After achieving its initial objectives (integration, transformation, and withdrawal from domestic security), the defence force was consequently left with a policy vision of its future that was not only discordant with the global revolution in strategic affairs, but also with the national revolution in security affairs: effectively, a policy vacuum in which the SANDF has had to find its own way. The security risks accompanying government's dereliction were manageable, since no military threats seemed to be forthcoming, and the state has entered into collective defence agreements with other countries anyway. However, it is by no means certain that an SANDF left to its own strategic devices will be effective when called upon to execute its constitutional mandate. In fact, the study has rendered a description of a delta between the demands of South African defence policy, the military capabilities of the SANDF, and the challenges of South Africa's security context that appears not only to be uncomfortably large, but is also growing with the passage of time. At the deepest level, the condition seems to originate from the fact that SANDF is constituted from exponents of two incompatible, but equally valid philosophies — those advocating a modern military system, and those schooled in revolutionary war — that have, through the existence of a permissive military-strategic environment, been allowed to coexist and remain unresolved. The SANDF has therefore been unable to develop military capabilities that satisfy either the desired outcomes of defence policy publications, or that comply with the contemporary demands of the national security environment. With an insolvent defence policy lately appearing to coincide with financial bankruptcy, the SANDF may just be heading for a perfect storm.

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A

Perspectives on International Relations Theory

Model Component	Idealism	Realism	Behavioralism	Neoliberalism
Core Concern	Institutionalizing peace	War and security	Discovering through science "laws" about the causes and consequences of interstate interaction	Fostering interstate cooperation on the globe's shared economic, social, and ecological problems
Submodel(s)	International law; international organization; democratization	Neorealism; structural realism	Comparative study of foreign policy; quantitative analysis	Complex interdependence; regimes; feminist theory
Outlook on Global Prospects	Optimistic; progress	Pessimistic; stability	Progress through reason	Expectations of cooperation; creation of a global community
Key Units	Institutions transcending nations	Independent nation-states	Individuals, states, and the international system	Individuals; "penetrated" nations and non-state transnational actors
Motives of Actors	Collaboration; mutual aid; meeting human needs	National interests; zero-sum competition; security; power	Rational choice, as modified by environmental opportunities and constraints	National interests; justice; peace and prosperity; liberty; morality
Central Concepts	Collective security; world order; law; integration; international organization	Structural anarchy; power; national interests; balance of power; polarity	Theory building and hypothesis testing against reproducible evidence and deductive modeling	Transnational relations; law; free markets; interdependence; integration; liberal republican rule; human rights; gender
Prescriptions	Institutional reform	Increase national power; resist reduction of national autonomy	Policy advice grounded on verifiable knowledge	Develop regimes; promote democracy and international institutions; coordinate collective responses to diverse global problems

Source: Kegley, C.W. (Jr) and Wittkopf, E.R. 1995. *World Politics: Trend and Transformation (Fifth Edition).* New York, St. Martin's Press p 37

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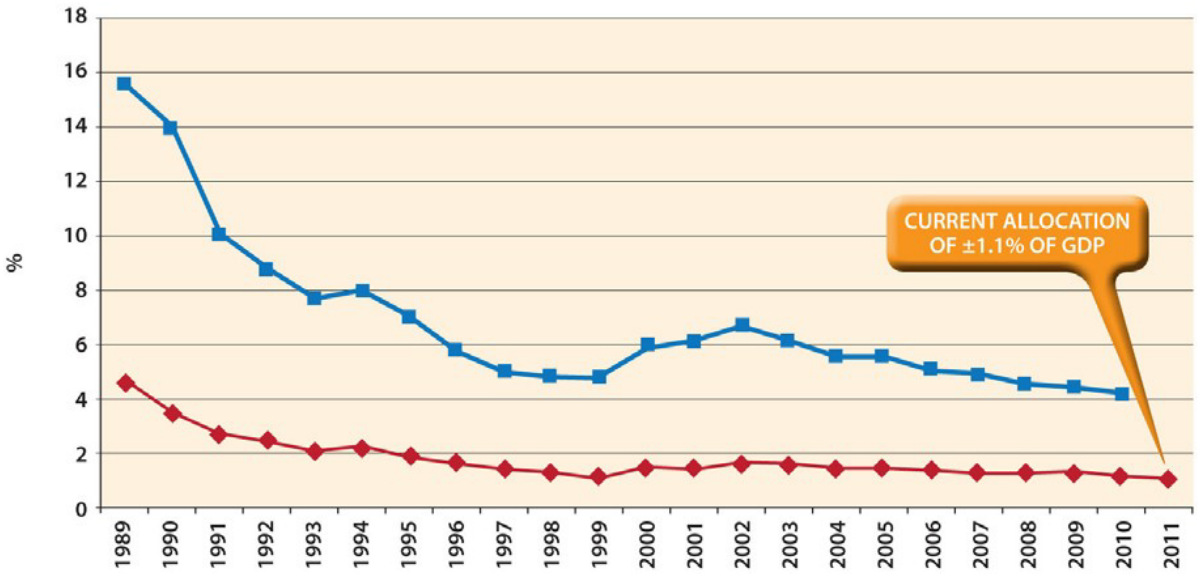
B

Budgetary Considerations

1. Defence Budget as a Percentage of GDP

2. Recent Defence Allocations



Source: Republic of South Africa 2012. *South African Defence Review 2012 (Consultative Draft).* Department of Defence, pp 89 and 90 (available at http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=163570)

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