

# PUBLIC DEFENCE REVIEW 2020/21:

## An Examination of Attitudes Towards the South African National Defence Force

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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFD	Armed Forces Day
Agri SA	Agri South Africa
AU	African Union
CI	Confidence interval
EPOP	Evaluation of Public Opinion Survey Programme
GIS	Geographic Information System
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
EA	Enumerator Areas
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ISSP	International Social Survey Programme
SAL	Small Area Layer
SADF	South African Defence Force
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SAPS	South African Police Services
SASAS	South African Social Attitudes Survey
UN	United Nations

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## THE AIM OF THE SURVEY

The Attitudes towards the South African National Defence Force Survey is a nationally representative, cross-sectional survey, conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) as part of the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS). The intention of this project is to determine general attitudes towards the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). More specifically, the project aimed to evaluate public levels of knowledge of the SANDF, to probe the expected role of the SANDF and to determine confidence and trust in the SANDF. The ultimate aim of the study was to determine the degree to which a national consensus exists on defence matters in the country, as the basis for further promoting knowledge and awareness of the Defence Force. Fieldwork for this SASAS round began in late February 2020 but was interrupted due to the announcement of the national lockdown by President Ramaphosa in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which came into effect on 27 March 2020. At the time of survey suspension, approximately 40% of interviews had been completed (referred to as pre-COVID-19 interviewing). In November 2020 fieldwork resumed and was completed in February 2021 (referred to as post-COVID-19 interviewing).

The conceptual framework guiding the study draws on the procedural fairness model as developed by Tyler (2006a; 2006b). This approach contends that individuals' decisions are driven by moral and value assessments. It is guided by a view that perceived fairness, trustworthiness, effectiveness of an institution, together with a sense of shared moral values, is what dictates the overall level of confidence and legitimacy vested in an institution, as well as willingness to recognise its authority and co-operate. The survey has been designed to test core aspects of this conceptual approach.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The survey consists of a sample of 500 Population Census Small Area Layers (SALs) as primary sampling units, stratified by province, geographical sub-type, and majority population group. A total of 2 844 individuals aged 16 and older were interviewed in households which were geographically spread across the country's nine provinces. The data was weighted and benchmarked to

Statistics South Africa's mid-year population estimates for 2020 to ensure that the results are representative of the population older than 15 years. This survey represents the views of 42,573,093 South Africans of 16 years and older. Adherence to ethical and quality protocols was stringent.

## KEY DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS

### *Contact with the Defence Force*

Contact with an organisation or institution allows individuals to gain a better understanding of that institution, thus helping to override impressionistic or stereotypical representations. Military service has the potential to influence an individual's opinion and behaviour towards the armed forces in South Africa. The contact that close friends and family have had with the Defence Force may also have an indirect bearing on one's behaviour, opinions and preferences. The survey therefore examined patterns of individual military training (and/or experience), including both personal and indirect forms of military exposure.

Respondents were firstly asked whether they have ever had any military experience or training. To capture indirect contact, respondents were then asked: Has a family member or close friend ever had any military experience or training? From the results, it was evident that only a relatively small share of the population has had some form of personal or indirect military experience. In the 2020 survey round, 13% reported personal experience, and 20% indirect experience. Taken together, approximately a quarter (23%) of the adult population had either direct or indirect military contact, compared to 72% reporting no prior contact. If we compare these figures to both the 2014 and 2017 rounds of surveying, we find a largely consistent pattern of results.

The pattern of contact and non-contact across a select set of socio-demographic attributes was investigated. A broad definition of contact was used in this instance, including both personal and indirect military experience. A marginal – and smaller than expected – gender effect was observed, with men marginally more inclined to report contact than women (25% vs. 22%). While military exposure was slightly higher among older age groups (50-64 years and 65+ years), the aggregate age-based differences ultimately did not achieve statistical significance. There were distinct racial differences in reported military exposure, with white adults reporting

levels of contact (39%) that were higher than black African, coloured and Indian adults (19-29%). This partly reflects military conscription for white South Africans before 1994. As for class-based differences in reported military contact, no significant employment status effect was found, though there was an education effect. Those with a tertiary-level education reported higher levels of military exposure on average. There is a weaker though significant subjective poverty status effect, with the non-poor reporting higher military exposure than the vulnerable and poor. Finally, from a spatial perspective, there was no clear difference between urban and urban residents, though appreciable provincial differences were evident. Levels of military exposure were highest in the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, Free State and North West, while the lowest exposure levels were observed in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga.

Logistic regression analysis was conducted to test which variables were most significantly associated with reported direct and indirect military exposure when all the socio-demographic attributes in the table were considered simultaneously. We found that age, educational attainment, and province of residence remained the dominant predictors of military experience, with population group effects playing a small, if not negligible, role when controlling for other factors.

### **Knowledge of the Defence Force**

It is suggested that the degree to which the public is familiar and knowledgeable of an institution will ultimately have a bearing on attitudes and preferences towards it. In the analysis, responses to both subjective and more 'objective' lines of questioning were examined, as well as the information sources trusted to provide information about the Defence Force. In the 2020 survey, 16% of South African adults regarded themselves as 'very knowledgeable' about the country's armed forces, while a further 37% reported that they were 'somewhat knowledgeable'. This suggests that slightly over half (53%) of South Africans had at least a basic familiarity with the SANDF at the time of surveying, based on their own estimation. By contrast, 25% reported being 'not very knowledgeable', with 19% of adults indicating that they were 'not at all knowledgeable' about the SANDF. Lack of awareness of the SANDF is therefore common to a considerable minority share (43%) of the South African public. Levels of subjective knowledge appear to have increased slightly in 2020, relative to what was observed in the 2014 and 2017 survey rounds. The differences between 2014 and 2017 were negligible, but in 2020, the shares answering 'very' and 'somewhat knowledgeable' increased six to seven percentage points, with a corresponding decline of ten percentage points in the share responding 'not at all knowledgeable'. Regression analysis confirmed that the changes evident from the 2020 data were statistically significant. Despite the encouraging upswing in self-reported knowledge, the ultimate impression is of a public that remains evenly divided among those with and without awareness of the Defence Force.

One of the key issues regarding subjective knowledge measures is how accurately individuals estimate their level of familiarity and understanding of an institution such as the SANDF. Given the possibility of error in self-reported evaluation (either upwardly or downwardly biasing level of knowledge), survey respondents were also asked a follow-up question focusing on their ability to identify the four branches of the Defence Force. This is taken as a more objective measure of knowledge. When used together with self-rated knowledge, this provides a composite picture of the influence of awareness of the SANDF on various attitudes towards the institution. In the 2020 survey round, 73% were familiar with, and correctly identified, the Army. However, the share correctly identifying the other three branches was substantially lower, ranging between 41% in the case of the Navy to 50% in the case of the Air Force. Only 30% of adults were able to correctly identify all four branches of the SANDF. The figures for both 2020 and 2017 are significantly higher than in 2014, when only 21% of the population correctly identified all branches. At the other extreme, the share unable to correctly identify any branches fell from a fifth in 2014 to slightly over a tenth in 2017 and 2020. These findings further suggest considerable latitude exists for improving public knowledge of the Defence Force.

Multivariate regression analysis was performed to determine the predominant factors underlying subjective and objective knowledge of the SANDF. The results of the subjective knowledge models showed that gender, educational attainment, urban-rural location, province of residence, and personal exposure to the Defence Force mattered most. As for objective knowledge, the strongest determinants were gender, age, education level, province, and indirect exposure to the SANDF.

The survey included a multiple response question designed to evaluate which source(s) the general population used and trusted mostly to acquire information on the Defence Force. Conventional sources of broadcast media were preferred as a source of information about the country's military. The most popular (by a considerable margin) in all three survey years was television. This was mentioned by 69% in 2020, with figures fluctuating modestly over the 2014-2020 period (61-69%). Radio was the second highest ranked information source in all three survey rounds, mentioned by 44% and 47% in 2014 and 2020, respectively. Newspapers are a form of print media that was consistently ranked as third most trusted information source by the public in the three survey rounds. It was mentioned by a quarter of the public in both 2014 and 2017, but rose to just over a third (35%) in 2020. Newspapers – including community papers – therefore continue to remain a key source for promoting SANDF-related news and developments. Taken together, these three conventional sources (television, radio, and newspapers) remain dominant channels through which the public accesses defence news.

## Overall confidence in the Defence Force

Following the transition to democracy, the Defence Force underwent a process of transformation to promote greater levels of trust, legitimacy and pride in the institution among South Africans. In many ways, the SANDF has succeeded in this objective. Pride in the SANDF has since grown and in 2017 more than three-quarters (77%) of the adult public stated that they are proud of the SANDF. In 2020, pre-COVID-19 results showed that 73% of adults were proud of the SANDF, but this proportion had reduced to 63% post-COVID-19. Overall, pride levels for 2020 averaged 66% overall. The handling of the COVID-19 pandemic by the SANDF seems to have reduced overall pride in the SANDF, a finding that was fairly common among all groups. Apart from the COVID-19 pandemic, it was also noticed that between 2017 and 2020, the black African population group had become distinctly less proud of the SANDF.

Since the late 1990s, trust in the SANDF has fluctuated with episodic ebbs and flows. However, despite these fluctuations, trust in the SANDF has gradually and systematically improved over this period. Despite this improvement a decrease in trust was noted in 2020, specifically post-COVID-19. Despite this, on average the SANDF survey showed that 58% of people still trust the SANDF. To contextualise trust in the SANDF, trust in this institution was compared to other core institutions in South Africa. These included the three levels of government, parliament, political parties and politicians, as well as other social and political institutions, namely religious institutions; the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC); the Electoral Commission (IEC); courts and the South African Police Service. Results revealed that the SANDF was ranked third highest, surpassed only by trust levels in the SABC and churches. Despite the impact of the COVID-19, the SANDF therefore remains one of the most trusted institutions.

## Perceived role of the Defence Force in a democratic society

In the mid-1990s, the South African armed forces were being transformed. Their original mission changed along with the political landscape of the country. In order to understand the public's view of the SANDF during this transition, the Department of Defence commissioned a public opinion study in 1995 to determine if South Africans felt that South Africa still needed a strong defence force. More than half (56%) of the general public said 'yes', the country required a tough military force. In comparison to what was observed in 1995, people in the current period have not changed their minds about the necessity of the post-apartheid armed forces. In actual fact, in 2020 63% of adult South Africans felt that the country required a strong defence force. Unfortunately, however, as with most other indicators, the COVID-19 pandemic did negatively impact the demand for a strong defence force, but despite this, the 2020 figures remain more positive than in 1995. Subgroups varied in terms of the demand for a defence force, with province creating the most variability. In the Northern Cape 75% agreed that a strong defence force is needed, while in Limpopo

the demand was as low as 52%.

Eight questions were included in the survey that aimed to gain a better understanding of the views of the public concerning the specific roles that were most important for the SANDF to perform. Findings show that South Africans tend to prioritise domestic rather than international interests. The roles deemed most important by the public on average were 'safeguarding and patrolling the country's borders', 'assisting SAPS to uphold law and order in the country' and 'helping other government departments in times of disaster or emergency'. A factor analysis of the eight questions was conducted and only one dimension emerged as opposed to two factors in previous years. The implication of this is that in 2020, there has been a convergence of the importance attached to all these goals and roles. An interesting observation is that, despite the finding that COVID-19 impacted negatively on attitudes and perceptions, the need for the SANDF to assist the SAPS in upholding law remains a very high priority.

## Support for a Defence Force role in crime reduction efforts

The 2020 survey round also examined support for the deployment of the SANDF to assist with crime reduction efforts at community level. This theme was included following the July 2019 decision to deploy the SANDF to provide temporary assistance to the South African Police Service (SAPS) in gang-affected hotspots on the Cape Flats in the City of Cape Town. The deployment was initially scheduled to end in September 2020, but the President extended it until March 2020. The period covered by the survey fieldwork, including the pre- and post-COVID lockdown samples, provides a good opportunity to examine views of SANDF deployment to assist the SAPS in crime reduction efforts, while also allowing us to determine whether the lockdown deployment altered public opinion on this issue.

The results suggest that the public was broadly favourable towards this form of deployment, in line with the expanded defence roles articulated in the Defence Review. An estimated 63% voiced support in principle for the SANDF being deployed to patrol crime hotspot areas, of which 27% expressed strong support and 36% moderate support. Only 7% of the adult public was opposed to this suggestion, while a fifth (22%) was neutral, and 8% uncertain. A very similar pattern of responses emerged when respondents were asked if they favoured similar military deployment to their own place of residence for crime reduction purposes. Nearly two-thirds (65%) supported this, with 26% strongly supportive. By contrast, only 9% opposed the suggestion, with 20% neutral and 7% uncertain. Finally, respondents were asked about the perceived effectiveness of such deployment to fight crime in communities. The dominant response was again a positive one, with 62% stating that the SANDF would do a good job in fighting crime at community-level. Again, less than a tenth (7%) of South Africans expressed doubt about the likelihood of the

SANDF being successful if they were to be deployed to assist in crime-affected communities.

The results of the three survey questions on deployment seem to suggest that the public was behind the decision to send the army to patrol the Cape Flats to help bring crime and gangsterism under control. It appears that the public vests confidence and hope that such expanded defence roles might make the difference in addressing crime at community level.

### **Perceived effectiveness of the Defence Force**

In order to determine the perceived effectiveness of the SANDF, respondents were asked to rate the SANDF in terms of being (i) fair or unfair; (ii) successful or unsuccessful; (iii) professional or unprofessional; and (iv) disciplined or undisciplined. The results show a fair degree of consistency between 2014 and 2017, but show a decrease in ratings on all these domains between 2017 and 2020. Although the overall sentiment remains positive, the fairness rating has decreased from 70% in 2017 to 61% in 2020. Likewise, ratings on the successfulness of the SANDF reduced from 71% to 65%, professionalism decreased from 73% to 67% and discipline from 73% to 66%. This decline in performance ratings is therefore highest on the fair/unfair indicator (9%) and rated lowest in 2020.

When a Perceived Index score was created, using all four indicators, it appeared that certain groups have become more sceptical over time. Black Africans have particularly become more sceptical over the last four years. Youngsters (16-24-year-olds) and persons with no schooling have also become more cynical over the period. Significant provincial variation was found with index scores declining by more than 10 points considering previous rounds in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Effectiveness Index scores in these provinces were lower than 60%. Northern Cape and Free State residents scored the highest on this Index, therefore being the most satisfied with these dimensions of the SANDF.

### **Perceived legitimacy of the Defence Force**

The 2020 results depict a public that is overall content with the manner in which the SANDF operates. However, compared to 2014 and 2017, it is clear that the country was somewhat more negative on all of these domains in 2020. In terms of fairness, 61% of adults in 2020 felt that the SANDF was fair, representing a 9% decrease from 2017. The COVID-19 pandemic seems to have affected ratings of fairness, given that interviews taken prior to COVID-19 showed fairness ratings of 65%, while post-COVID-19 ratings were down by 5%, averaging 60%. Similar patterns were noticed for the other three domains, but the COVID-19 effect was especially pronounced in terms of the professionalism rating of the SANDF where pre- and post-COVID-19 interviews showed a decline of 9%. It seems that overall, the COVID-19 pandemic and specifically the role that the SANDF played during the pandemic impacted perceptions of the SANDF in terms

of its fairness, successfulness, professionalism and discipline.

From a moral alignment perspective, respondents were asked whether they would be willing to serve in the military. Nearly two-thirds (65%) indicated that they would be willing, a figure that has increased since 1994. The proportion being morally aligned with the SANDF in 2020 was much lower than in 2014 and 2017. The general change between 2017 and 2020 can be ascribed to a decrease in agreement with these statements and an increase in neutral responses. 'I would be a proud member of the SANDF' fell with 16% from 2017. The share mentioning that the 'SANDF stands up for values that are important for people like me' also showed a radical downward tendency (from 67% in 2017 to 47% in 2020) and support for how the SANDF typically performs their functions fell by 16% between the 2017 and 2020 rounds.

### **Transformation in the Defence Force**

The White Paper on Defence (1996) guides the transformation of the Department of Defence and promises to foster a non-racist, non-sexist and non-discriminatory institutional culture. This survey tested whether South Africans believed that the SANDF was a transformed, non-discriminatory institute. South Africans were asked whether they thought the SANDF was representative of all South Africans, whether it was a transformed institution and whether racism or racial discrimination occurs within the SANDF. About a fifth (18%) strongly agreed that the SANDF is representative of all South Africans in SASAS 2020, with 45% agreeing with this statement. In other words, a significant majority (63%) of South Africans agreed that the SANDF is an inclusive organisation.

Given South Africa's history, it was surprising to find only relatively small disparities between the country's different population groups on the issue of representativeness. Black South Africans, however, were generally found to be more convinced than minority groups that the current SANDF is an inclusive institution. Awareness of the armed forces was a significant determinant of public evaluations of whether the South African military represents all people in the country. Those with high levels of knowledge were much more liable to think that the military was representative than other self-reported knowledge groups. Between SASAS 2017 and SASAS 2020, low knowledge individuals became less likely to view the armed forces as inclusive of ordinary South Africans.

More than half of all adult South Africans believed that transformation within the Defence Force was progressing well in 2020 (16% felt transformation was progressing very well and 34% felt it was progressing well). A quarter thought it was progressing reasonably well, with only a tenth stated it was progressing badly. Positive perceptions about transformation in the SANDF have increased significantly in the last 15 years – from 32% of people in 2001 appraising transformation in the SANDF as progressing well or very well, to 50% in 2020. Much like what was observed for public evaluations of

institution representativeness, knowledge of the armed forces was a significant determinant of public opinion on this subject. Those with low levels of knowledge were much more liable to think that the military was not continuing satisfactorily.

When asked about racism and racial discrimination, about an eighth of adult South Africans believed that this form of prejudice does not occur in the SANDF at all. The majority, unfortunately, felt that racism occurs in the military. Just over a fifth of the populace (21%) felt it occurred to a small extent and two-fifths (41%) believed that it was quite common. As may not have been expected, robust disparities between different population groups did not exist around this issue. This is a departure from what was observed in SASAS 2017, when racial minorities were much more convinced that racial discrimination still occurred in the SANDF than the black African majority. During the last few years, the black African populace has become much more negative on this subject, viewing greater levels of bigotry in the institution. A clear knowledge bias was evident with those people who were more knowledgeable about the military, being much less cynical about racial transformation in the SANDF.

### **Perceptions of women in the Defence Force**

A policy on gender equality was introduced in 1996 in the SANDF and had at its core the gradual breakdown of male-dominated structures and trends in the SANDF. The intention is the advancement of women at all levels through the provision of equal opportunities, training, development and utilisation. In order to interrogate the issue of gender in the SANDF, SASAS respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the statement: 'Women can perform as well as men in all areas of the military.' It is encouraging to find that a distinct majority (56%) of the adult public agreed (15% strongly) that women can perform as well as men in all military fields. There was also no gender differential noted in SASAS 2020 and this stands in contrast to what was observed in SASAS 2014. In that survey round, women were more liable to agree with the statement. The cause for this disparity was a substantial corrosion in the perceived ability of women among the female population in recent years.

Attitudes and perceptions about women in the SANDF have progressively shifted towards the positive in the past two decades. Views on special attempts to recruit more women to the military have also shifted towards inclusivity. In 1995, less than two-fifths (38%) was in favour of special attempts to recruit more women into the military while this proportion almost doubled to 67% in 2020. Over the past decade, it is, therefore, clear that public opinion on the inclusion of women in the SANDF has dramatically increased, with people more willing to allow women to play a larger role on the battlefield. Barely more than a third of South Africans were willing to agree that women should do combat duty in 1995. This proportion had increased to almost half (48%) in 2020. Although this is encouraging, it is important to

acknowledge that the SASAS 2020 figure represents a decline from SASAS 2017 when almost three quarters (74%) of South Africans agreed with this statement. This report shows that perceptions about women in the SANDF have declined in recent years, becoming more patriarchal on time.

### **Career opportunities**

In order to interrogate public perceptions of the armed forces as a valuable source of employment for ordinary citizens, South Africans were asked to indicate the extent to which the SANDF offers good career opportunities for people like themselves. On average, about half (56%) of the adult populace agreed that the SANDF offers good career opportunities for people like them. When disaggregated by knowledge of the SANDF, it was found that a greater proportion of knowledgeable persons (67% as opposed to 47%) agreed that the SANDF provided decent job prospects. There has been a decline in the proportion who agreed with the statement between SASAS 2014 and SASAS 2020. Some of the largest declines in agreement were among the following groups: (i) youth; (ii) rural dwellers; (iii) black Africans; and (iv) the less educated. It would appear that recent events in the country have negatively impacted the perception of the SANDF as a viable career path among these groups.

### **Military show and exhibition attendance**

Understanding patterns of participation and non-participation in SANDF-hosted events and activities is an important constituent dimension in determining the effect of military communication efforts. It is also critical in terms of identifying factors associated with higher and lower turnout, that could be addressed in order to improve attendance at future SANDF events. The SASAS 2020 found that close to a twentieth (4%) of people aged 16 years and older in the country attended at least one event associated with the SANDF recently. A seventh had attended a military event in the more distant past. We differentiated those non-attendees by intention to attend future events. Almost a third (32%) of the adult public has never attended, but would like to participate in such an event. Finally, two fifths (40%) said they have not attended such an event and would also not be interested in attending any military show or exhibition in future.

The survey results pointed to signs of class and military knowledge-based differences in reported event participation. More affluent and well-informed individuals were more liable to attend military shows and exhibitions. A greater tendency to attend SANDF events was apparent among persons that are better educated and wealthier. Furthermore, those with social media access demonstrated a far greater likelihood of attending. This again testifies to the salience of a carefully considered and well-designed communications strategy to promote awareness among host communities in advance of armed forces events. Age is another key factor influencing turnout. It is likely that the decision to attend is informed by a variety of factors, many of which are likely to vary by age cohort. In addition, members

of the white minority were more likely to attend military shows and exhibitions than other population groups in South Africa.

### **Attitudes towards military shows and exhibitions**

The majority (57%) of the general public believed that Armed Forces Day type shows and exhibitions were a priority. Personal experiences of SANDF demonstrations and displays influence attitude formation here. If an individual had attended such an event, then they were more likely to describe SANDF events as important. Asked whether the SANDF should spend more or less on shows and exhibitions, 14% of the adult public supported much more expenditure while a further 26% favoured just more spending (40% in total favour an increase). Around a third (31%) opted for keeping expenditure at current levels, while a seventh favoured a reduction in capital outlays on these events (4% much less and 12% somewhat less).

Attending SANDF shows and exhibitions (like Armed Forces Day) was a determinant of whether an individual preferred to spend more on hosting military events. The size of the effect was especially large if we looked at those who had attended an SANDF event in the last year. Knowledge of the SANDF had a major effect on whether an individual thought that spending on military shows or exhibitions should be increased.

### **Public support for peacekeeping operations in Africa**

Since the advent of democracy in 1994, domestic and international expectations have steadily grown regarding South Africa's role as a responsible and respected member of the international community. A 2007 survey, undertaken by the Government Communication Services (GCS) on behalf of the SANDF, showed that just over a tenth (13%) preferred military isolationism and most favoured the deployment peacekeeping of SANDF forces in other countries. In 2020, a sizable majority (63%) of the general public supported greater involvement, confirming the earlier GCS survey results.

More knowledgeable individuals exhibited a greater tendency to support expanded peacekeeping operations on the continent.

### **COVID-19 and Defence Force attitudes**

As mentioned, two-fifths (40%) of the surveying was done prior to the national COVID-19 lockdown introduced on 27 March 2020, with the balance completed between November 2020 and February 2021. This allows for testing whether attitudes towards the SANDF differed before and after the lockdown. The results show that the public became more critical on most of the survey indicators examined, including awareness, pride, trust, performance evaluations and transformation attitudes. The largest effects were on overall confidence in the SANDF, pride and trust in the institution, as well as perceived transformation of the Defence Force.

Taken together, the examination of the pre- and post-COVID-19 lockdown changes in attitudes towards a wide-ranging set of defence-related topics suggests that there has been a dampening effect. Many measures displayed a statistically significant change in a more critical direction. Nonetheless, in most instances, the scale of effect was in the five to ten percent range, with only six items displaying a double-digit percentage-point change. Furthermore, the public's views on the Defence Force remain firmly positive in nature, despite these changes. This is, however, not a time for complacency, as the ongoing efforts to promote the expanded roles of the Defence Force in democratic South Africa and during times of peace depend fundamentally on ensuring that the public regards the institution with a sense of trust, legitimacy and pride.

### **Conclusion**

In order to understand what characteristics are associated with public confidence in the SANDF as an institution (and to test the conceptual model), a multivariate regression was conducted on overall job appraisal in the armed forces. Results show that the more an individual feels that they are knowledgeable about the SANDF, the more that individual will support the SANDF. Those people with a friend and/or family member with military experience are more likely to support the SANDF. Whether an individual had personal military experience/training before 1994 was not a statistically significant predictor of attitudes in our regression model. If individuals feel that the armed forces were successful in fulfilling its goals, that individual will be more inclined to give the institution a favourable rating on job performance. Even controlling for a range of descriptive variables (including age and gender), a moral attachment to the armed forces was a better predictor of confidence in the country's military than an evaluation of the functioning of the SANDF. The model outputs imply that perceived fairness was the most important factor shaping how the adult public in South Africa thought about the SANDF.

The post-COVID-19 results generally portray decreased confidence in the SANDF. The conduct of the SANDF during the COVID-19 pandemic therefore influenced perceptions of the SANDF. Since a sense of moral alignment seems to be the most important factor impacting attitudes and perceptions of the SANDF, reports of unfair conduct prior and during the COVID-19 pandemic would have contributed to this decrease in positive evaluations of the SANDF. Ongoing efforts at outreach to sensitise the public to the roles and responsibilities (both conventional and expanded) that the SANDF undertakes, need to be maintained. Military conduct that is procedurally and distributively fair, effective and confidence-building needs to also be instrumental to restoring a sense of shared values, trust, pride and willingness to co-operate with the SANDF.



# INTRODUCTION

Chapter 11 (subsection 200) of the South African Constitution stipulates that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) must be structured and managed as a disciplined military force. During the past two decades, the SANDF has become one of the most important institutions in the country. South Africa plays an integral role in a variety of peacekeeping efforts in the African Union (AU). The SANDF has engaged in peacekeeping missions across the continent, including Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Sudan, Ethiopia and the Central African Republic. The contribution of the SANDF in Burundi's peace mission, for example, helped end that country's 15-year long civil war. These peace-keeping efforts across the continent have largely been progressive and yielded positive outcomes. The SANDF also works to protect ordinary South Africans, both inside and outside the country. Consider, for instance, the deployment of the SANDF by President Cyril Ramaphosa to evacuate citizens from Mozambique following unrest in that country.<sup>1</sup>

The South African economy has, for the last ten years, struggled. According to the World Bank, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) has fallen, dropping from \$12,628 in 2008 to \$12,482 in 2018. Hard economic times have been exacerbated by the economic instability brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. After a long period of weak growth, the national economy contracted by 7% last year. Jean du Toit, Head of tax technical at Tax Consulting South Africa, pointed to a shrinking tax base as undermining the national fiscus (Omerjee, 01/04/2021). A recent study by the University of Cape Town's Liberty Institute of Strategic Marketing found that the middle class in South Africa has declined substantially. This group makes up the bulk of those who contribute to the personal income tax pool. Given these precarious financial conditions, the ability of the government to provide the SANDF with the necessary funds has become more and more constrained. Budget cuts over the past three years have undermined the institution's deployment capabilities.

South Africa's financial constraints have posed a significant challenge to the Defence Force. The recent budget cuts and reallocation of funds to other key-priority areas may result in the SANDF losing its capabilities. This has been recognised by the Department of Defence in its annual report for 2019/20. Parliamentary investigations have confirmed that the SANDF requires additional funding to fulfil its Constitutional mandate to defend and protect the nation. During November last

year, the Joint Standing Committee on Defence and the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans paid a visit to Air Force Base Waterkloof. The following concerns were raised in an official statement from the committee:

*'The SA Air Force's ageing fleet is very concerning, as it will soon become obsolete, which will further exacerbate the current serious situation to execute their mandate' (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2021).*

Current defence funding does not even allow for the maintenance of present equipment and there is growing talk of dropping capabilities, discharging personnel and downsizing military branches.

In recent times, the SANDF has been deployed domestically and dispatched to local communities to assist the South African Police Services (SAPS) to maintain law and order. Units within the armed forces were, for example, sent to the Cape Town Metropolitan in August 2019. These units assisted the SAPS with operations against gangsterism in the Cape Flats area. However, one of the most important domestic deployments of the armed forces occurred in 2020 following a decision taken by the national government to impose lockdown orders to fight the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. President Cyril Ramaphosa ordered the SANDF to assist local law enforcement bodies to implement the lockdown orders and soldiers were deployed throughout the nation. Members of the armed forces established roadblocks, conducted foot patrols, and guarded the country's closed borders.

The coronavirus disease (frequently termed COVID-19) is an infectious illness initiated by a recently discovered coronavirus. There have been 1.5 million COVID-19 infections in South Africa during the period 18/03/2020 to 08/04/2021, and more than 50 000 people have died since the start of the outbreak. As stated above, the government imposed stay-at-home orders to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and instructed businesses and public institutions (such as schools) to close. This was due to serious concerns about the considerable immune comprised population in the country; South Africa has, for example, one of the largest HIV-positive populations in the world. Fortunately, initial fears of high mortality were not realised, and the country has a coronavirus recovery rate of 95%. Over the course of 2020, restrictions were eased, and, at the time of writing, South Africa remains on alert with a midnight curfew and continued restrictions



on public gatherings.

As the number of COVID-19 infections increased during 2020, the SANDF was also asked to assist healthcare workers in the country. For example, the following Eastern Cape hospitals received aid from the armed forces: (i) Dora Nginza; (ii) Livingstone; (iii) Nelson Mandela Academic; and (iv) Tower Psychiatric. In addition, personnel from the military also helped to set up and maintain temporary COVID-19 hospitals across the country. Military hospitals were also utilised as COVID-19 facilities. Reviewing the performance of the SANDF over the past year, President Cyril Ramaphosa said that the armed forces have been essential to national efforts to curb the spread of the Coronavirus. In a public statement on Armed Forces Day 2021, he stated:

*'Through the invaluable work you have done and continue to do during this pandemic, you have demonstrated that the SANDF can be relied on in good and bad times, in times of peace and times of war, in times of stability and prosperity, and in times of crisis' (Republic of South Africa, 2021).*

The task faced by the military in maintaining the government ordered lockdown during 2020 was daunting. Although many countries had imposed stay-at-home orders to combat the pandemic, South Africa had some of the strictest lockdown restrictions in the world.

Almost 3 000 soldiers were deployed by the President in March 2020 to assist the South African Police Services with implementing lockdown regulations and another 73 180 were added a few months later. The conduct of SANDF personnel deployed to enforce the lockdown orders has come under scrutiny. The involvement of the members of the SANDF in the death of Collins Khosa has, in particular, drawn significant public comment. Army officers have been accused of using excessive force on Mr Khosa on 10 April 2020, while assisting the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department to enforce the lockdown order. At the time of writing, the criminal investigation of the SANDF members implicated in Khosa's death has been finalised and the case is awaiting action from the National Prosecuting

Authority. Unfortunately, this incident was not the only example of alleged human rights violations committed by soldiers during the lockdown period. Over the course of this period, the Military Ombud received numerous complaints about the conduct of soldiers.

The public image of the armed forces has also been damaged by allegations of sexual misconduct from SANDF personnel. The United Nations red-flagged the SANDF for sexual exploitation and abuse, identifying concerns about the adverse conduct of its peacekeepers in the DRC and the integrity of the military (Mapisa-Nqakula, 2020). A task-team report on sexual allegations within the Defence Force acknowledged instances of sexual abuse and misconduct within both the SANDF internally and also in peacekeeping missions (Department of Defence, 2020). The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula was concerned to hear that some women in the military did not feel that the institution was a safe space. The report highlighted that the SANDF has not successfully and uniformly inculcated a new organisational culture of equality and inclusivity. The document concluded that more need to be done to ensure that the armed forces are non-racist and non-sexist.

Security conditions in South Africa are changing, and in the context of this period of change, the SANDF must appropriately realign itself to the new needs of these tough times. One of the ways to do this, recognised by the SANDF, is a greater focus on engagement with ordinary citizens. The SANDF has committed itself to a greater level of public engagement and is committed to maintaining public confidence in the institutions. However, as this report will show, the general population has become more negative in its assessment of the armed forces. The organisation appreciates that it can only protect the country if it maintains a good relationship with the ordinary citizenry. Through a comprehensive understanding of public opinion, the Defence Force can act timeously and proactively to rebuild public trust. The goal of the current study is to provide the SANDF with a roadmap of adult public opinion in South African society. This roadmap can be used by the organisation to ensure that it achieves the ambitious goals it has set for itself during the 2021/22 financial year.



## 1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Given the history of South Africa and the critical role that the SANDF plays in South Africa, it is important to determine general attitudes towards the SANDF in contemporary South Africa.

More specific aims of the study were to:

- Evaluate public levels of knowledge of the SANDF
- Determine overall confidence in the SANDF
- Determine perceptions of the importance of the SANDF
- Determine the importance attached to specific tasks and goals of the SANDF
- Determine legitimacy and moral alignment with the SANDF
- Determine the perceived representativeness of the SANDF
- Determine perceived transformation in the SANDF

A nationally representative, cross-sectional survey was used to evaluate the public's attitudes and perceptions of the SANDF. The methodology will be discussed in detail in section 2 of the report.

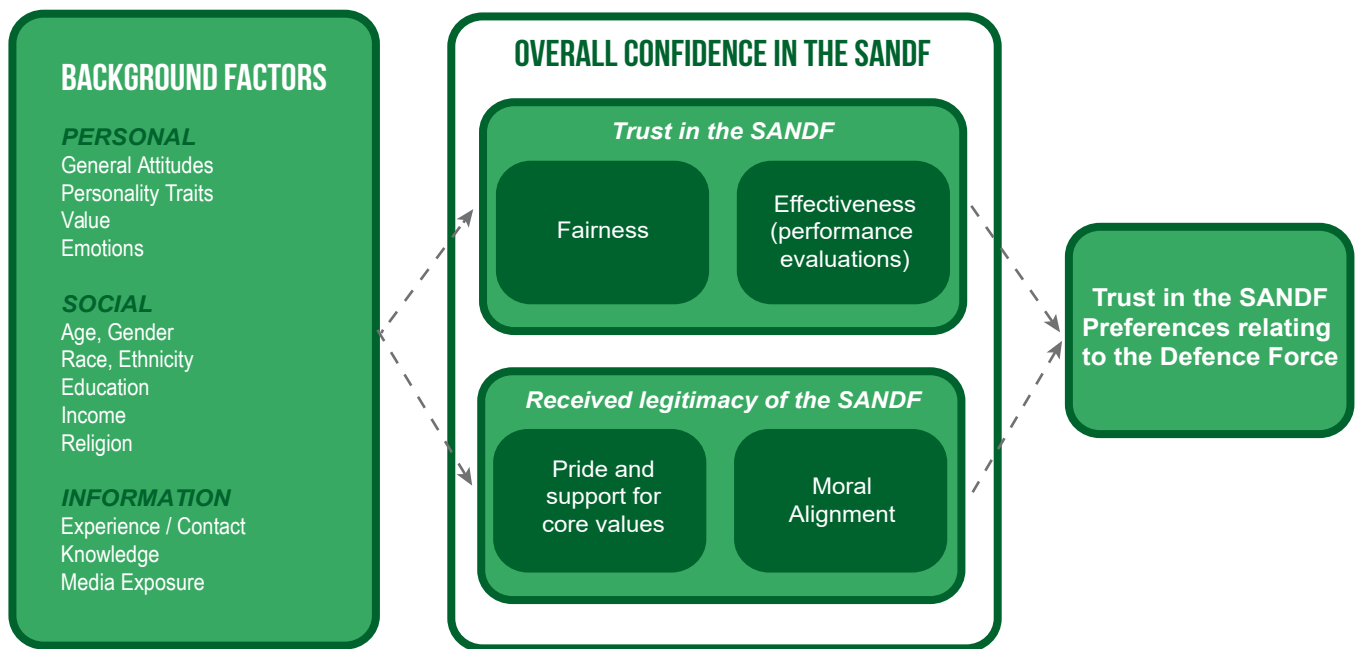
## 1.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

During the National Defence Force's transition in the mid and late 1990s, a series of collaborative projects on public opinion on security-related aspects between the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) were undertaken. These surveys were the first national public surveys to investigate and report on South African attitudes towards security issues since the 1994 elections and received extensive media coverage. The questions relating to the security services, which were included in this survey, were the result of workshops between members of the HSRC and ISS. The results provided by these surveys are interesting and some of these findings will be discussed in this report. Beyond the collaboration between the HSRC and the ISS, attitudinal studies that focus on the SANDF are scarce. This may be as a result of the unavailability of existing datasets and the inability of researchers to capture attitudinal data on a national representative level. This gap in our understanding limits our ability to meaningfully discuss the public's understanding of the modern military in South Africa.

The approach adopted in this analysis is the normative-based notion of procedural fairness as developed by Tyler (2006a; 2006b). Unlike other regulatory strategies which understand individuals as instrumentally rational decision-makers, Tyler's procedural fairness research contends that individuals' decisions are driven by moral and value assessments. MacCormick (2007, p.20) contends that 'human beings are norm-users, whose interactions with each other depend on mutually recognisable patterns that can be articulated in terms of right versus wrong conduct, or of what one ought

to do in a certain setting'. In other words, people are concerned with the procedural propriety, as well as the fairness and trustworthiness of important institutions. This concern drives their decision to trust organisations or institutions. When people believe that institutions are fairly administered and trustworthy, they are more likely to support and co-operate with those institutions. Tyler (2006b) has classified the important elements of this 'moral concern' to be objectivity, neutrality, reliability and impartiality - all features of 'fairness of decision-making', as well as treating people as human beings - "fairness of treatment". At the heart of judgements about fairness is the notion of individuals as rights-bearers, who deserve to be treated with dignity and propriety.

If an individual views an institution as legitimate, that individual will invest in that institution with a psychological property of authority. It remains an open and empirical question whether adults in contemporary South African society employ normative judgements about fair processes when orienting themselves towards the military. Many other factors may impact on fairness judgements, such as concerns about effectiveness or corruption, the social strain created by the country's historic legacy of racial divisions, the association of the SANDF with a historically oppressive SADF and the currently underperforming state of the armed services. Building on the work of the HSRC-ISS collaboration, this study looks at public support for the SANDF, focusing on whether adult South Africans feel the armed services is a legitimate institution that deserves greater levels of funding and support from government and treasury.

**FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE DEFENCE FORCE**

This study will look at different determinants of legitimacy and trust, including knowledge of the SANDF and experience of the armed services. Following on these assertions, we cluster indicators of SANDF support into a multi-dimensional framework consisting of five components of support, ranging from the most generalised to the most specific. The dimensions are: (i) perceived effectiveness; (ii) approval of military's principles and values; (iii) evaluations of

military's performance; (iv) confidence in the military's transformation; and (v) approval of funding procedures for the military. This multi-dimensional framework will be used to better understand public evaluations of the transformation of the South African military. The ultimate goal is to understand whether the public supports the new initiatives to strengthen the South African armed services through a significant increase in funding for the military.

## 1.3 CONCLUSION

In order to progressively improve citizen involvement and participation, the SANDF intends to scale up its initiatives in relation to public education, information provision and extending forms of direct access to the institution over the medium- to longer-term (DOD-MV 2014). These efforts are regarded as essential to build a stronger Defence Force in the country. In accordance with such plans and the intention to evaluate and monitor their effectiveness, this study will investigate public awareness and understanding associated with

the SANDF's role and processes, attitudes towards this important institution (support and legitimacy) and different forms of citizen engagement. This study will focus on the public's knowledge and perception of, as well as participation in the SANDF. The report will use data from a specially designed module which was included as part of the 2017 round of the Human Sciences Research Council's longitudinal and nationally representative SASAS series (more detail on this survey infrastructure in subsequent sections).

# 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Before discussing the specific methodology employed by the research project, it is important to give context to the data gathering phase given the COVID-19 pandemic. Fieldwork for this SASAS round began in late February 2020 but was interrupted when the President announced the national lockdown in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which came into effect on 27 March. At the time of survey suspension, approximately 40% of interviews had been completed (in this report these interviews will be referred to as pre-COVID-19 interviews). After approximately six months, on 21 September 2020, restrictions were lowered to alert level 1 and the HSRC deemed it safe to send fieldworkers back to the field, subject to a re-application to the HSRC's Research Ethics Committee (REC). The REC required a complete new SASAS fieldwork plan and an outline of safety protocols to safeguard survey participants and the interviewing teams. Approval to continue fieldwork was granted in October 2020 and in early November 2020 fieldwork resumed (referred to as post-COVID-19 interviews)

By January 2021, fieldwork was completed in seven of the nine provinces, including the Northern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, North West, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Gauteng. Fieldwork activities in the Eastern Cape and Western Cape were, however, more challenging. These challenges were inter alia due to the declaration of these areas as hotspots in December 2020.

As a result of this announcement, some fieldworkers (despite adherence to safety protocols) refused to do interviewing and new fieldworkers had to be trained which resulted in delays. Secondly, refusal rates in these provinces were very high and certain areas had to be replaced, which also caused delays. In addition to these problems, telephonic back checking revealed some anomalies in the Eastern Cape and since the HSRC was not happy with the quality of interviews in certain areas, fieldwork had to be redone. As a result of these delays, the SASAS fieldwork round was only completed on 15 February 2021.

## 2.1 RESEARCH UNIVERSE

The target population for the Department of Defence South African Social Attitude Survey (SASAS) project is individuals aged 16 and older, who are resident in South Africa. More specifically, the target population comprised people living in households, hostels and other structures. People living in special institutions such as hospitals and

**FIGURE 2: FIELDWORKERS PRE-COVID-19**



**FIGURE 3: FIELDWORKERS POST-COVID-19**



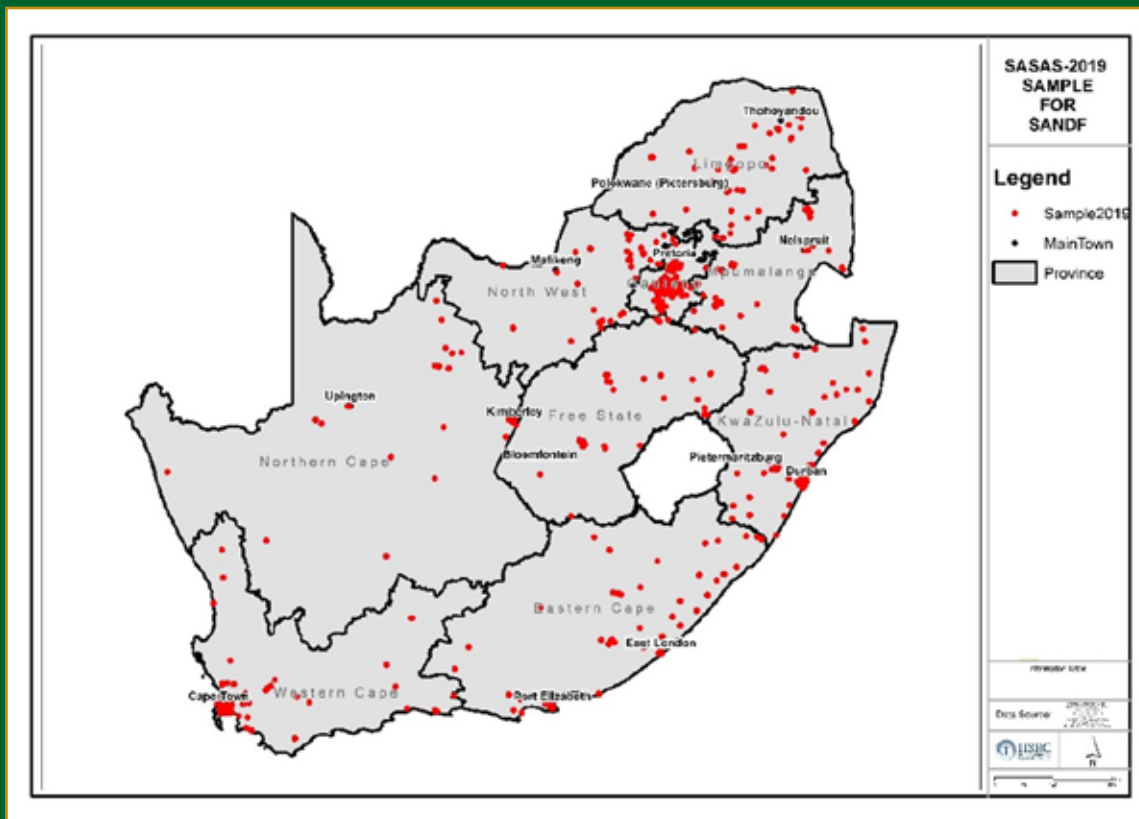
prisons were excluded from the sample. We reasoned that the inclusion of people from these institutions would compromise our random selection procedure. Also, past experience has shown that access to people in these institutions is difficult since obtaining permission is cumbersome and complex

## 2.2 THE SAMPLE DESIGN

SASAS has been designed to yield a representative sample of 3 500 adult South African citizens aged 16 and older (with no upper age limit), in households geographically spread across the country's nine provinces. The sampling frame used for the survey was based on the 2011 census and a set of small area layers (SALs). Estimates of the population numbers for various

categories of the census variables were obtained per SAL. In this sampling frame, special institutions (such as hospitals, military camps, old age homes, schools and university hostels), recreational areas, industrial areas and vacant SALs were excluded prior to the drawing of the sample.

**FIGURE 4: A GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE 500 SELECTED SMALL AREA LAYERS**



Small area layers (SALs) were used as primary sampling units and the estimated number of dwelling units (taken as visiting points) in the SALs, as secondary sampling units. In the first sampling stage, the primary sampling units (SALs) were drawn with probability proportional to size, using the estimated number of dwelling units in an SAL as a measure of size. The dwelling units as secondary sampling units were defined as 'separate (non-vacant) residential stands, addresses, structures, flats, homesteads, etc.' In the second sampling stage, a predetermined number of individual dwelling units (or visiting points) were drawn with equal probability in each of the drawn dwelling units. Finally, in the third sampling stage, a person was drawn with equal probability from all persons 16 years and older in the drawn dwelling units.

Three explicit stratification variables were used, namely

province, geographic type and majority population group. As stated earlier, within each stratum, the allocated number of primary sampling units (which could differ between different strata) was drawn using proportional to size probability sampling with the estimated number of dwelling units in the primary sampling units as a measure of size. In each of these drawn primary sampling units, seven dwelling units were drawn. This resulted in a sample of 3 500 individuals.

A list of the 500 drawn SALs were given to geographic information specialists (GIS) and maps were then created for each of the 500 areas, indicating certain navigational beacons such as schools, roads churches, etc. A graphical representation of the location of the 500 selected small area layers is portrayed on the national map which follows.

## 2.3 NAVIGATION TO THE SELECTED AREAS

Once the sample of 500 SALs was selected, a navigational toolkit was developed to assist the field teams in finding the selected SALs. These kits assisted the supervisors and fieldworkers to locate the exact SAL where the interviews were to take place. The navigational kits included:

- Route descriptions, to assist the teams to navigate their way into the selected enumerator areas.
- Maps that, using aerial photographs as a base, identified the exact geographic location of the enumerator areas to be sampled throughout the country.
- More detailed maps that identified the exact area, pinpointing street names and places of interest such as schools, clinics, hospitals, etc; selected by the office-based sampling team, within the SALs where respondents would be interviewed.

**FIGURE 5: AN EXAMPLE OF AN SAL MAP USED TO ASSIST THE FIELD TEAMS TO NAVIGATE TO THE CORRECT AREAS**



## 2.4 INTRODUCTION OF THE PROJECT TO THE COMMUNITIES

Prior to starting the actual interviewing process, supervisors were instructed to visit the local police stations, indunas, traditional leaders, or other roleplayers in the various areas to ensure that the authorities were aware of the project and to inform the communities of

their intent. Official letters, describing the project and its duration and relevant ethical issues, were distributed to the authorities. This was done not only as a form of research and ethical protocol, but also to ensure the safety of the field teams.

## 2.5 SELECTING A HOUSEHOLD AND INDIVIDUAL

After driving through the SAL and introducing the project to the local authorities, supervisors had to identify the selected households. A household was selected using a random starting point and counting an interval between households. The interval was calculated using the number of households in the SAL. Once the selected

household had been identified, a household member had to be selected randomly as a respondent. This household member (respondent) needed to be 16 years or older. For the purpose of this survey, the Kish grid was used to randomly select the respondent in the household.

## 2.6 DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOL

The following general protocol guidelines for data gathering were implemented:

- Fieldworkers and supervisors were required to notify the relevant local authorities that they would be working in the specific area. The purpose was to assist with their own safety and to reassure respondents, especially the elderly or suspicious, that the survey was official.
- They were advised to inform the inkosi or induna in a traditional authority area, while in urban formal or urban informal areas a visit to the local police and, if possible, the local councillor was to be made prior to commencing work in the area.
- They were further advised that farms should be entered with caution and that they should report to the local Agri South Africa (Agri SA) offices before doing so. Field supervisors were issued with 'farm letters' which contained information on the purpose of the study and contact details in case they had queries.
- Consent forms needed to be completed upon successfully finishing each interview. While verbal consent was to be secured from the respondent before the interview, a written consent form had to be signed afterwards.
- Fieldworkers were issued with name tags and letters of introduction to be used in the field. The introduction letter was translated from English into six other languages.
- Fieldworkers had to present their identity cards when introducing themselves.

## 2.7 TRAINING

Two-day training sessions were held in various provinces. The main training session took place in Pretoria and covered the Northern provinces: namely, Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West. All relevant remarks and instructions discussed during the training session were included in the training manual. Other training sessions were held in East London, Durban, Kimberley and the Western Cape.

The training session included sessions on use of the tablets; selection and sampling of households; fieldwork operating procedures; research protocol and ethical considerations. The questionnaire was discussed in detail. As far as possible, the training was designed to be participatory, practical and interactive, and gave fieldworkers the opportunity to seek clarification on questions.

## 2.8 QUALITY CONTROL

Due to the COVID-19 situation, HSRC researchers could not do physical back checks but extensive telephonic back checks were undertaken in all provinces. More than 15 % back checks for all provinces were undertaken.

## 2.9 DATA CAPTURING AND CLEANING

The data was captured electronically by making use of tablets. The data was transmitted to a central database. Once all the data was collected, it was downloaded and converted into SAS and SPSS and a data manager embarked on a data-cleaning exercise. Data was checked and edited for logical consistency, permitted ranges, reliability on derived variables and filter instructions. Data with wrong EA numbers was also cleaned.

FIGURE 6: TABLETS USED FOR DATA CAPTURE



TABLE 1: SAMPLE REALISATION

Province	Number of re-placed SALs	Ideal sample (N Households)	Realised sample (N Households)	% Realisation
Northern Cape	0	455	324	71
Free State	0	455	302	66
Northern Cape	0	259	233	90
Free State	0	266	164	62
KwaZulu-Natal	6	651	606	93
North West	1	259	212	82
Gauteng	1	581	476	82
Mpumalanga	0	266	248	93
Limpopo	0	308	279	91
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>3500</b>	<b>2844</b>	<b>81</b>

After data cleaning, the analytical team received the realisation rates of the survey. As can be seen from the table above, a realisation rate of 81% was achieved. This is a high realisation rate and was partly achieved owing to the fact that communities were well informed about the survey and also because of the data collection methodology – namely, face-to-face interviews.

## 2.10 DATA WEIGHTING

The data was weighted to take account of the fact that not all units covered in the survey had the same probability of selection. The weighting reflected the relative selection probabilities of the individual at the three main stages of selection: visiting point (address), household and individual. In order to ensure representativity of smaller groups, i.e. Northern Cape residents or Indian/Asian people, weights needed to be applied. Person and household weights were benchmarked using the SAS CALMAR macro and province, population group, gender and five age groups (i.e. 16-24, 25-34, 35-49, 50-59 and 60 and older). These benchmark variables for persons,

province and population group of the respondent in the household were selected due to their reliability and validity. The marginal totals for the benchmark variables were obtained from the 2020 mid-year population estimates as published by Statistics South Africa. The estimated South African population was therefore used as the target population. A total of 2 844 people were interviewed during this study. When weighted, this total represents 42 573 093 South Africans of 16 years and older. The final data set (unweighted and weighted) is disaggregated in **Table 2** by key demographic variables.



**TABLE 2: SAMPLE (UNWEIGHTED AND WEIGHTED)**

	Unweighted N	Percent	Weighted N	Percent
South Africa	2 844	100	42 573 093	100
Male	1 145	40	20 474 957	48.1
Female	1 699	60	22 098 136	51.9
Black African	1 864	66	33 618 304	79
Coloured	396	14	3 827 406	9
Indian/Asian	364	13	1 234 462	2.9
White	220	8	3 892 921	9.1
16-24 years	414	15	9 599 311	22.5
25-34 years	609	21	11 130 275	26.1
35-49 years	840	30	11 581 660	27.2
50-64 years	642	23	6 618 932	15.5
65+ years	339	12	3 642 916	8.6
Junior primary schooling or less	187	7	2 092 737	5
Senior primary schooling	255	9	3 199 586	7.6
Incomplete secondary schooling	928	33	14 734 934	35
Complete secondary schooling	1 022	36	15 978 797	37.9
Post-matric	426	15	6 125 570	14.5
Non-poor	1 176	42	16 021 603	38.1
Just getting along	972	35	15 182 574	36.1
Poor	652	23	10 844 868	25.8
Employed full-time	726	28	9 972 869	25
Employed part-time	211	8	2 954 999	7.4
Unemployed but previous paid work	352	13	5 890 897	14.7
Unemployed and never worked	558	21	9240447	23.1
Outside labour market	792	30	11889401	29.8
Western Cape	324	11	5 255 244	12.3
Eastern Cape	302	11	4 494 836	10.6
Northern Cape	233	8	911 162	2.1
Free State	164	6	2 065 731	4.9
KwaZulu-Natal	606	21	7 814 511	18.4
North West	212	7	2 887 628	6.8
Gauteng	476	17	11 850 164	27.8
Mpumalanga	248	9	3 268 948	7.7
Limpopo	279	10	40 248 68	9.5

# 3. RESULTS

## 3.1. CONTACT WITH THE DEFENCE FORCE

Contact with an organisation or institution allows individuals to gain a better understanding of that institution, thus helping to override impressionistic or stereotypical representations. Even in less-than-ideal social situations, interaction with institutions equips individuals with knowledge of that institution (Zaller 1992; Kramer & Tyler 1995; Lupia et al. 2000). Military service has the capacity to instil attitudinal and behavioural traits that influence an individual's opinion formation later in life. For example, results from three decades of US national cross-sectional data found that previous military experience has a largely positive influence on the likelihood of voter turnout among men (Teigen 2006). This suggests that close attention should be paid towards individuals' military experience when considering their attitudes towards the armed forces in South Africa.

The network perspective extends the predictions of this contact hypothesis. Beyond direct contact, the composition of an individual's core network will have an impact on his/her attitudes. Empirical research (e.g. McPherson et al. 2008; Hampton et al. 2010) shows that core networks are likely to influence opinion formation. Individuals with whom we choose to associate will influence our attitudes and behaviour. Survey data on social networks has been used in studies covering a wide range of topics, including social integration, psychological mood and well-being, as well as recruitment into social movements. Interpersonal networks are often more dominated by kinship ties. In the context of the present study, the contact that close friends and family had with the Defence Force may also have an indirect bearing on one's behaviour, opinions and preferences

### 3.1.1. MILITARY TRAINING (AND/OR EXPERIENCE) AMONGST THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC

This section examines patterns of individual military training (and/or experience), including both personal and indirect forms of military exposure. Respondents were firstly asked whether they have ever had any military experience or training. This included any training or experience; whether in the paramilitary, non-state military (such as the Umkhonto we Sizwe), or in the national military. A distinction was made between those who had served in the Defence Force before and after 1994. To capture indirect contact, respondents were also asked: 'Has a family member or close friend ever had any military experience or training?', using the same response scale. From **Table 3**, it is evident that only a relatively small share of the population has had some form of personal or indirect military experience. In the 2020 survey round, 13% reported personal experience, and 20% indirect experience. Taken together, approximately a quarter (23%) of the adult population had either direct or indirect military contact, compared to 72% reporting no prior contact. If we compare these figures to both the 2014 and 2017 rounds of surveying, we find a largely consistent pattern of results.

The pattern of contact and non-contact across a select set of socio-demographic attributes is presented in **Table 4**. A broad definition of contact has been used in this instance, including both personal and indirect military experience. A marginal gender effect is observed, with men marginally more inclined to report contact than women (25% vs. 22%), with this gap smaller than what one might expect. While military exposure is slightly higher among age groups, especially among those aged 50-64 years and 65+ years, the aggregate age-based differences observed in the table did not achieve statistical significance. There were distinct racial differences in reported military exposure, with white adults reporting levels of contact that were higher (39%) than black African, coloured and Indian adults (19-29%). This is due to higher personal and indirect contact, and partly reflects military conscription for white South Africans before 1994. Coloured adults also reported higher military exposure than black African and Indian adults. In terms of class-based differences in reported military contact, we find no significant employment status effect, though there was some sign of an education effect. Those with a tertiary-level education report higher levels of military exposure on average. There is a weaker, though significant subjective poverty status effect, with the non-poor reporting higher military exposure than the vulnerable and poor.


**TABLE 3: PERSONAL AND CORE NETWORK MILITARY EXPERIENCE (COLUMN %)**

	2014	2017	2020
<b>Personal military experience</b>			
Yes (total)	8	7	13
<i>Before 1994</i>	4	3	3
<i>After 1994</i>	2	2	4
<i>Both before and after 1994</i>	2	1	6
No, never	87	92	81
(Do not know)	5	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Indirect military experience</b>			
Yes (total)	18	16	20
<i>Before 1994</i>	7	5	6
<i>After 1994</i>	7	6	7
<i>Both before and after 1994</i>	4	5	8
No, never	74	79	70
(Do not know)	8	5	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Both personal and indirect experience</b>			
No contact	76	80	72
Contact (total)	20	19	23
<i>Personal contact only</i>	2	2	3
<i>Indirect contact only</i>	12	12	10
<i>Personal and indirect contact</i>	6	4	10
(Don't know)	5	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Number</b>	<b>3 080</b>	<b>3 029</b>	<b>2 843</b>

Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Finally, from a spatial perspective, there was no clear difference between urban and rural residents, though there were appreciable provincial differences. Levels of military exposure were especially high in the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, Free State and North West, while it was lowest in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga.

Logistic regression analysis was conducted to test which variables were most significantly associated with reported direct and indirect military exposure when all the socio-demographic attributes in the table were considered simultaneously. We found that age, education and province remained the dominant predictors of military experience, with population group effects playing a small, if not negligible, role when controlling for other factors.

**TABLE 4: SELF-REPORTED MILITARY EXPERIENCE, BY SELECT SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES (ROW %)**

	No contact	Contact (personal or indirect)	(Don't know)	Total	Chi-2 p-value
South Africa	72	23	4	100	...
<b>Gender (*)</b>					
Male	72	25	3	100	0.0316
Female	73	22	6	100	
<b>Population group (***)</b>					
Black African	75	21	4	100	0.0003
Coloured	65	29	6	100	
Indian	76	19	5	100	
White	56	39	4	100	
<b>Age group (n.s.)</b>					
16-24	76	20	4	100	0.0594
25-34	75	20	5	100	
35-49	73	23	4	100	
50-64	64	31	4	100	
65+	66	29	5	100	
<b>Employment status (n.s.)</b>					
Employed full-time	69	28	3	100	0.0541
Employed part-time	69	26	6	100	
Unemployed	75	20	5	100	
Outside the labour market	71	25	4	100	
<b>Educational attainment (**)</b>					
Junior primary	75	16	9	100	0.0032
Senior primary	70	24	6	100	
Incomplete secondary	76	21	3	100	
Matric	72	24	4	100	
Post-matric	67	31	1	100	
<b>Subjective poverty status (*)</b>					
Non-poor	67	28	4	100	0.0105
Just getting by	76	21	4	100	
Poor	74	20	6	100	
<b>Geographic location (n.s.)</b>					
Urban	73	24	4	100	0.0656
Rural	71	23	6	100	
<b>Province (***)</b>					
Western Cape	67	27	6	100	0.0000
Eastern Cape	64	35	1	100	
Northern Cape	54	42	4	100	
Free State	58	33	9	100	
KwaZulu-Natal	87	8	5	100	
North West	60	30	10	100	
Gauteng	75	23	2	100	
Mpumalanga	86	13	0	100	
Limpopo	62	30	8	100	

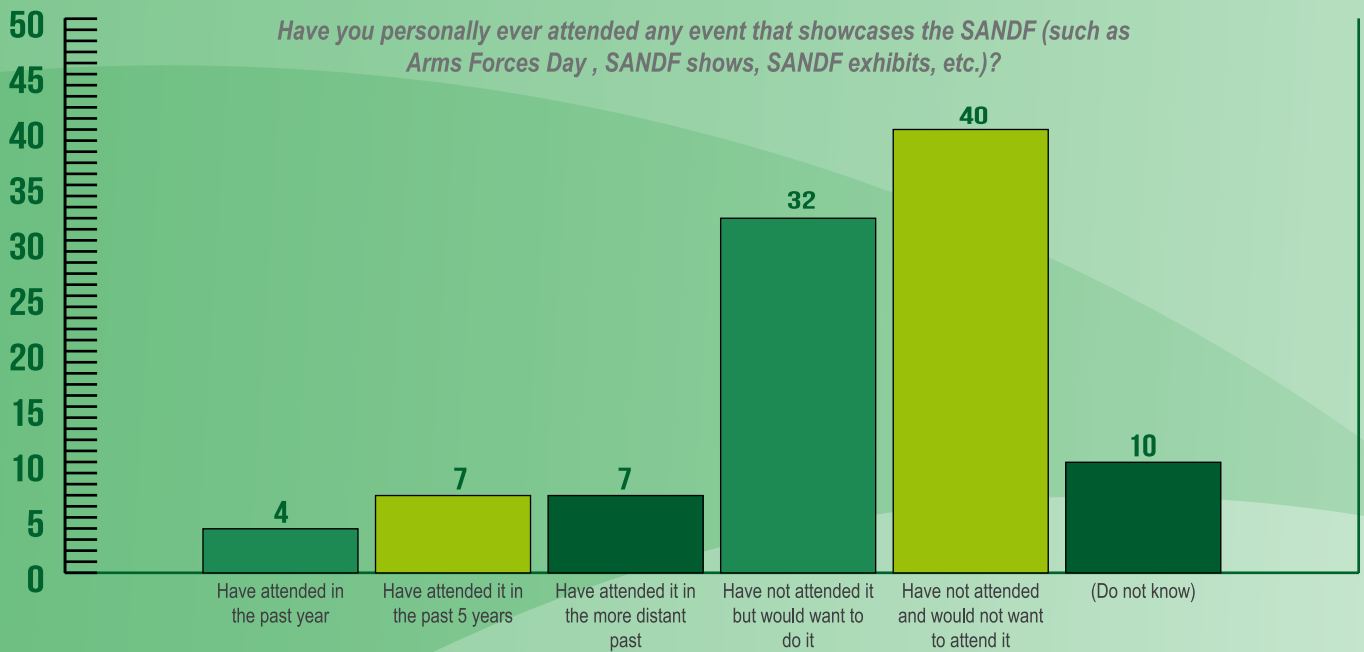
Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

### 3.1.2. ATTENDANCE OF SANDF EVENTS AND SHOWS

Throughout history, military displays, shows and parades have been a fairly common practice used by warlords and presidents to showcase their military’s hardware and commemorate important historical moments. South Africa is no different and the country has a long history of various kinds of military parades and shows. Apart from the obvious aim of affirming support to the powers that be and pledging to defend the territorial integrity of the nation, events such as Armed Forces Days (AFD), shows and exhibitions also enable the SANDF to interact with the public and educate the population about the essential functions of the armed forces. In addition, these events are important opportunities for recruitment, and serve to encourage South Africans (especially youngsters) to consider joining the armed services.

National results of attendance of SANDF events for SASAS 2020 are showcased in **Figure 7** and reveal that only about a fifth of South Africans have ever attended an event that showcased the SANDF. Of those who attended, four percent have attended in the past year, seven percent in the past five years and a further seven percent in the more distant past. We differentiated those non-attendees by intention to attend future events. Almost a third (32%) of South Africans have never attended but would like to participate in such an event. Finally, two-fifths (40%) said they have not attended such an event and would also not be interested in attending any military show or exhibition in future.

**FIGURE 7: PUBLIC ATTENDANCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY EVENTS (SUCH AS SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS) AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTION, 2020 (%)**



In order to further analyse attendance and profile those interested in going to future events, five categories were created, namely (i) those who have previously attended events in the past year; (ii) those who had attended in the more distant past; (iii) those who have never attended but would like to attend, and (iv) those who have never attended and have no interest in attending. A fifth (labelled ‘uncertain’) category was created to capture who could not remember if they had attended a military show or exhibition. After grouping these respondents, a subgroup analysis was undertaken to identify which socio-demographic groups were most likely to fall in each of these categories (**Table 5**). From the results, it is clear that certain groups have been much more exposed to SANDF events than others.

Considerable attendance behaviour differences were not found between age groups in the table. Substantial age group variations among non-attendees were noted,

however, with younger people more liable to indicate a willingness to attend upcoming events. The current visibility and marketing strategy of the SANDF to actively involve schools to promote SANDF shows and exhibitions appears to be working, enticing a constituent who already has an implicit interest in such events. A considerable educational attainment effect was noted on attendance behaviour. More educated individuals were more predisposed to say that they had attended a military show or exhibition (6% past year; 20% distant past) than other educational attainment groups. Interestingly, non-attendees with high levels of education were also more likely to indicate a willingness to attend future events. This is consistent with what has been observed in past SASAS rounds. A Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 test ( $\chi^2(15) = 94; p=0.000$ ) confirmed that these observed educational attainment differences were statistically significant at the 0.01% level.

**TABLE 5: PUBLIC ATTENDANCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY EVENTS (SUCH AS SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS) AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTION BY SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS**

	Attended in the past year	Attended in the distant past	Have not attended, but would want to	Have not attended and don't want to	Uncertain	Chi-2 (p-value)	
All	4	13	32	40	10		
<b>Gender</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 89	0.000
Male	7	15	37	35	7		
Female	2	12	28	45	12		
<b>Age group</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 95	0.001
16-24	3	10	43	38	6		
25-34	5	16	36	33	11		
35-49	6	14	28	41	11		
50-64	5	13	23	50	9		
65+	3	14	24	49	9		
<b>Population group</b>					6	chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 158	0.000
Black African	4	10	35	41	9		
Coloured	4	19	27	38	13		
Indian / Asian	1	15	30	47	7		
White	7	34	15	35	9		
<b>Education level</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (15) = 94	0.000
Post-matric	6	20	32	38	5		
Matric	6	15	34	36	9		
Incomplete secondary	3	10	34	45	8		
No or primary	4	8	26	47	15		
<b>Employment status</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 85	0.008
Full time	7	19	30	37	7		
Part-time	6	14	29	42	10		
Previously worked)	3	9	43	40	6		
Unemployed (never worked)	5	11	30	41	14		
Labour inactive	3	13	33	44	8		
<b>Geotype</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 45	0.001
Urban	5	7	39	41	8		
Rural	3	6	39	39	14		
<b>Subjective poverty</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (8) = 103	0.000
Non-poor	8	18	27	39	9		
Just getting by	2	13	35	41	9		
Poor	3	8	36	41	13		
<b>Social media</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 170	0.000
Not active	3	9	28	49	10		
Infrequent active	5	12	32	38	12		
Frequently active	5	19	39	33	3		
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 154	0.000
Incorrect	5	4	35	44	13		
Correct	4	12	49	33	3		
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (8) = 306	0.000
Low	1	2	27	46	24		
Medium	4	7	42	41	6		
High	9	11	44	32	4		

Note: Pearson (uncorrected) Ch<sup>2</sup> test results displayed.

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

We observed a substantial population group effect in the table. When compared to other groups, members of the white minority (7% past year; 34% distant past) were far more likely to have attended a military show or

exhibition. A Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 test ( $\chi^2(12) = 158; p=0.000$ ) verified that these observed population group variations were statistically significant at the 0.01% level. This outcome is not surprising. During the pre-democratic period, members of the white minority were regularly conscripted to serve in the SADF. Regular military parades, exhibitions and air shows were hosted by the SADF for the white community. Military tattoos were especially important for impressive displays of SADF discipline and professionalism. Many white adults, especially the older members, have maintained a tradition of attending demonstrations of SANDF personnel and equipment. Interestingly, population group was not a significant determinant of behavioural intention among non-attendees. When compared to other groups, white non-attendees were not more liable to report a desire to attend future shows and exhibitions.

Knowledge of the SANDF appeared to be a robust correlate of whether an individual had attended military shows or exhibitions. This can be noted if we look at objective knowledge groups. Those classified as objectively knowledgeable were more likely to have attended (4% past year; 12% distant past) than their unknowledgeable counterparts (5% past year; 4% distant past). Even greater attendance differences were observed among the different self-reported knowledge groups. Those with high levels of self-reported knowledge were more prone to attendance than other self-reported knowledge groups. This outcome could be due to the fact that military displays of various kinds tend to impart greater familiarity on attendees. On the other hand, it could be that those most aware of the military are also most predisposed to seek out military shows and

exhibitions. Behavioural intention among non-attendees was also affected by knowledge. Those non-attendees classified as knowledgeable were more liable to indicate an intention to attend forthcoming military events than those who were unknowledgeable about the military. This seems to show that individuals who are interested in the SANDF are more willing to indicate a willingness to attend future events.

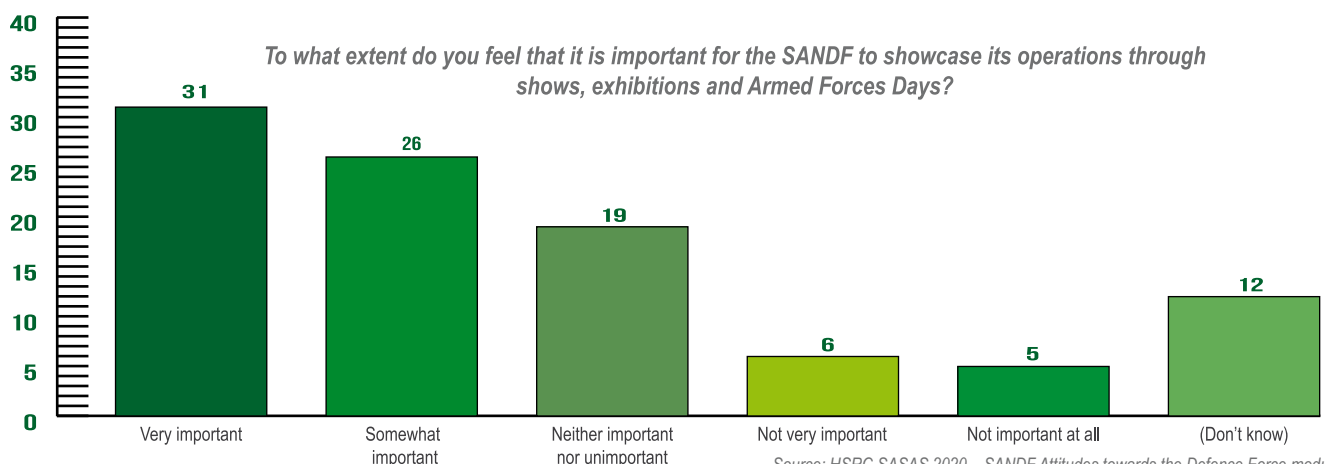
We noted a distinct class effect in **Table 5**, with the less affluent reporting a lower propensity to attend military shows and exhibitions. This can be clearly observed if we examined attendance levels among different subjective poverty groups. Roughly a quarter (8% past year; 18% distant past) of the non-poor had attended a military event. This can be compared to a sixth (2% past year; 13% distant past) of those who are just getting along and around a tenth (3% past year; 8% distant past) of the poor. Subjective poverty usage also had an effect on behavioural intention among non-attendees. However, the size of this effect was more muted than the observed behaviour effect. In addition, we found a substantial social media effect with more active users (5% past year; 19% distant past), more liable to report higher levels of attendance. Social media usage also had an effect on behavioural intention among non-attendees. These observed social media differentials could be accounted for by the forementioned class effect; active users tend to be wealthier than other usage groups. Among non-attendees, more active users were also more liable to report that they wanted to attend upcoming events than non-users and inactive users. This may be due to the fact that social media users are often more knowledgeable about the SANDF than non-users.

### 3.1.3. PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF MILITARY SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS

Military parades are costly affairs, and the hosting of a single event such as AFD can cost around R25 million (Mapisa-Nqakula, 2017). This has led to some South African politicians questioning the cost-benefit ratio of such events. These politicians have questioned the utility of such events for the national fiscus. Given this, the relative importance of shows and events by the SANDF needed to be determined and survey participants in SASAS were asked to evaluate the significance attached to military events (such as Armed

Forces Day). Respondents were asked how valuable it is for the SANDF to showcase its operations through events such as shows, exhibitions and Armed Forces Days. The answer scale was a six-point scale, ranging from very important to not at all important. This data will allow us to understand whether the public thinks that government should expend money on SANDF events. Public responses to this question are portrayed for SASAS 2020 in **Figure 8**.

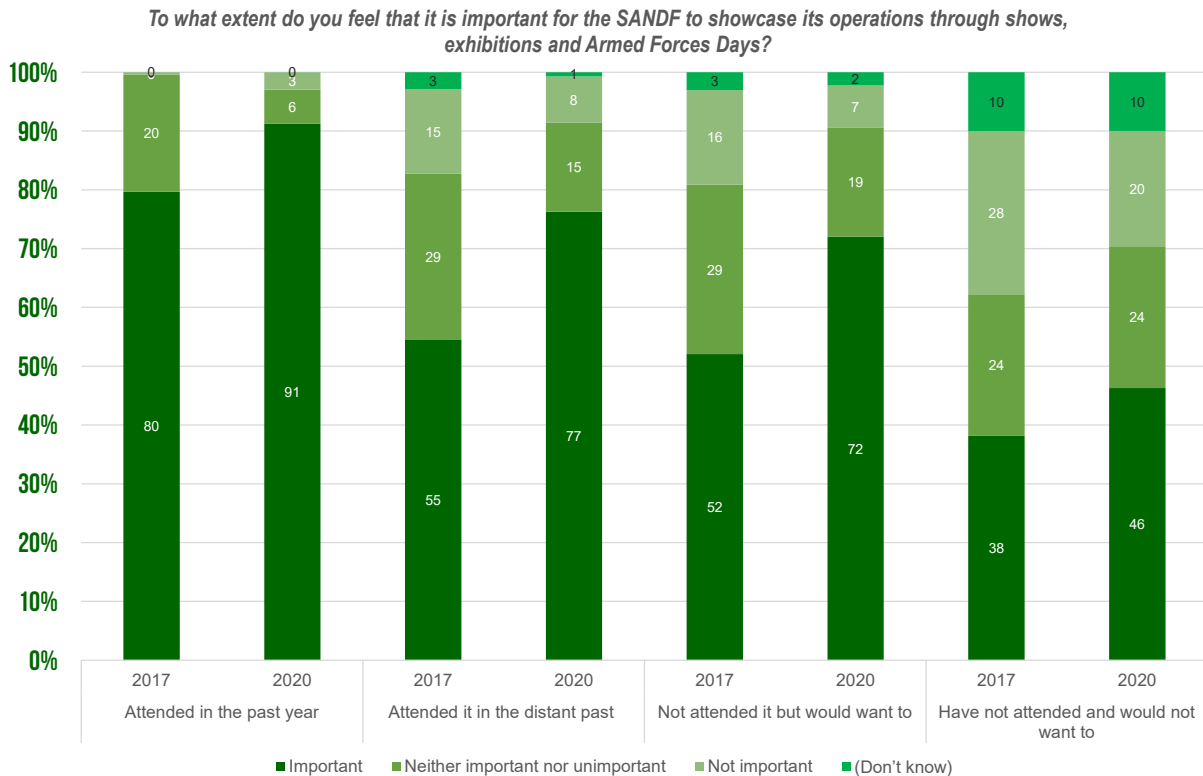
**FIGURE 8: PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE SHOWCASING ITS OPERATIONS THROUGH MILITARY EVENTS (SUCH AS SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS), 2020**



Answers to the question on the value of events hosted by the SANDF yielded the following results: Almost a third (32%) of the adult populace felt SANDF shows were very important and 26% felt such events were somewhat important. About a fifth (19%) thought that it was neither important nor unimportant to showcase the SANDF through shows and exhibitions. Only a small minority (11%) said it was not important for the armed forces to showcase its operations through public

demonstrations and displays. This is comparable with what was observed in previous SASAS rounds and suggests that the majority of the adult populace supports the SANDF hosting events (such as parades) to showcase its military discipline and hardware. **Figure 9** examines responses to this question by attendance of events (such as Armed Forces Day) to show how personal experiences of SANDF demonstrations and displays influence attitude formation.

**FIGURE 9: PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE SHOWCASING ITS OPERATIONS THROUGH MILITARY EVENTS (SUCH AS SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS) IN 2017 AND 2020, BY EVENT ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTION (PERCENTAGE COLUMN)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

There was a well-defined disparity in the assessment of the importance of the SANDF events by whether an individual had attended a military show or exhibition. The observed disparity is quite apparent from Figure 19 and shows that past attendees were more predisposed to think that the armed forces should host events. Those who had attended an SANDF event in the last year were more liable to support the SANDF policy of hosting shows or exhibitions than those who had attended events in the more distant past. We noted that behavioural intention acted as a significant determinant of attitudes towards the importance of SANDF events among non-attendees. Non-attendees, who showed an interest in attending future events, were more inclined to support the SANDF policy of hosting Defence Force shows or exhibitions than those non-attendees, with no interest in going to upcoming events. This behavioural intention disparity was more robust in SASAS 2020 than in SASAS 2014. A subgroup analysis was undertaken to identify which socio-demographic groups were most likely to assert that military shows and exhibitions were important (**Table 6**).

We noted a distinct class effect in the table with the less affluent reporting a lower propensity to attend events hosted by the SANDF. This can be clearly observed if we examined attendance levels among different educational attainment groups. About three-fifths (32% very; 25% somewhat important) of those with a post-secondary education said that public demonstrations of the SANDF were crucial. This can be compared to about half (27% very; 24% somewhat) of those with an incomplete secondary education and half (27% very; 23% somewhat) of those with no secondary education. Similar results were observed if we looked at the subjective poverty differential in Table 6. In addition, we found a gender effect in the table. Men were more liable to believe that SANDF displays and exhibitions were important than women. Interestingly, women were more likely than men to be uncertain of how to answer this question (15% versus 8%). In addition, we noted an interesting urbanisation effect in Table 6, with rural dwellers less prone to state that SANDF expositions were important (25% very; 29% somewhat) than their urban peers (34% very; 25% somewhat).



**TABLE 6: PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE SHOWCASING ITS OPERATIONS THROUGH MILITARY EVENTS BY SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS**

	Very important	Somewhat important	Neither important nor unimportant	Not important	(Un-certain)	Chi-2 (p-value)	
All	31	26	19	12	12		
<b>Gender</b>						chi2(4) = 72	0.000
Male	37	27	18	10	8		
Female	26	25	20	14	15		
<b>Age group</b>						chi2(16) = 36	0.450
16-24	34	25	20	9	11		
25-34	33	25	18	11	12		
35-49	28	28	21	14	10		
50-64	34	21	17	14	14		
65+	26	33	17	11	14		
<b>Population group</b>					6	chi2(12) = 40	0.055
Black African	32	25	19	11	12		
Coloured	31	28	17	10	14		
Indian / Asian	33	32	20	11	4		
White	26	29	16	21	8		
<b>Education level</b>						chi2(16) = 115	0.000
Post-matric	37	25	18	13	7		
Matric	35	28	16	12	8		
Incomplete secondary	27	24	24	11	13		
No secondary	27	23	16	11	22		
<b>Employment status</b>						chi2(16) = 77	0.007
Full time	36	23	20	15	6		
Part-time	25	34	15	12	13		
Previously worked)	39	25	16	8	12		
Unemployed (never worked)	25	27	20	12	15		
Labour inactive	32	28	19	10	11		
<b>Geotype</b>						chi2(4) = 69	0.002
Urban	34	25	20	12	9		
Rural	25	29	17	11	18		
<b>Subjective poverty</b>						chi2(8) = 91	0.000
Non-poor	29	26	23	14	8		
Just getting by	35	26	18	9	11		
Poor	29	26	14	11	20		
<b>Social media</b>						chi2(12) = 215	0.000
Not active	26	26	20	12	16		
Infrequent active	26	29	23	10	11		
Frequently active	46	22	13	13	5		
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>						chi2(4) = 294	0.000
Incorrect	23	26	20	15	16		
Correct	51	25	15	6	2		
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>						chi2(8) = 745	0.000
Low	15	17	18	17	34		
Medium	28	32	23	12	6		
High	68	16	7	6	3		

Note: Pearson (uncorrected) Ch<sup>2</sup> test results displayed.

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

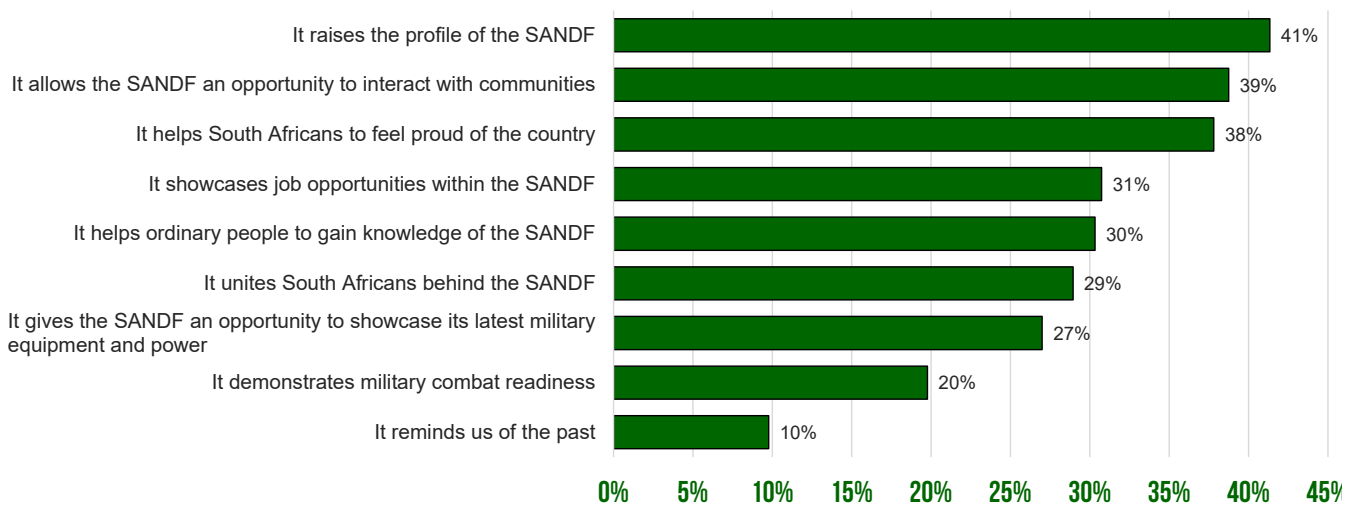
Knowledge of the SANDF had a significant effect on whether an individual thought that military shows or exhibitions were important. This can be noted if we examined objective knowledge groups. Those classified as objectively knowledgeable were more likely to think such events were important (51% very; 25% somewhat) than their unknowledgeable counterparts (23% very; 26% somewhat). Even greater attitudinal variances were observed among the different self-reported knowledge groups. Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 tests confirmed that the objective knowledge variable ( $\chi^2(4) = 294$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) had a weaker effect on attitude formation than the subjective knowledge variable ( $\chi^2(8) = 294$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). In addition, we found a substantial social media effect differential in Table 6. Active users were more liable (46% very; 22% somewhat) to state that military shows and exhibitions were important than inactive users (26% very; 29% somewhat) and non-users (26% very; 26% somewhat). This may be due to the forementioned knowledge effect. Social media users

were discovered to be far more familiar with the SANDF and its different branches than non-users.

Respondents were asked to give the most important reasons why they felt military shows and exhibitions should be held. The results convincingly demonstrate that respondents felt that it raises the profile of the SANDF with 41% of all South Africans believing this. More than a third of South Africans further believed that these types of events allow interactions with the public and have a positive effect on national pride. Between a quarter and a third of South Africans also believed that these events showcase job opportunities (31%), help the public gain knowledge of the SANDF (30%), help unite people behind the SANDF (29%) and give the SANDF an opportunity to showcase military equipment and power. Respondents felt shows were less important for demonstrating combat readiness or to serve as reminders of the past.

**FIGURE 10: PROPORTION WHO IDENTIFIED IMPORTANT REASONS THAT THE ARMED FORCES SHOULD HOST MILITARY SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS**

*In your view, which of the following are the most important reasons why the SANDF should hold shows and exhibitions?*



Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

In **Table 7**, we include the most important reasons and disaggregate findings by those who have attended shows (or not). As is evident from the table, those who have never attended and do not want to attend, tend to be very sceptical of all these reasons. Lower proportions among this group therefore consider any of these reasons as important. However, among those who

have never attended but would want to attend, there is a resolute belief that shows would raise the profile of the SANDF, allow contact with the SANDF and would help them feel proud of the country. Having Armed Forces Days as well as military events are important since there is a belief, even among those that have never attended, that it would have positive spin-offs for the SANDF.

**TABLE 7: PROPORTION WHO IDENTIFIED MOST IMPORTANT REASONS THAT THE ARMED FORCES SHOULD HOST MILITARY SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS BY EVENT ATTENDANCE BEHAVIOUR AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTION**

	Attended in the past year		Attended it in the distant past		Not attended it but would want to		Have not attended and would not want to	
It raises the profile of the SANDF	0.540	(0.088)	0.428	(0.043)	0.501	(0.027)	0.388	(0.023)
It allows the SANDF to interact with communities	0.287	(0.070)	0.413	(0.044)	0.484	(0.027)	0.378	(0.024)
It helps South Africans to feel proud of the country	0.281	(0.068)	0.393	(0.044)	0.504	(0.027)	0.357	(0.023)
It unites South Africans behind the SANDF	0.228	(0.061)	0.355	(0.043)	0.362	(0.027)	0.271	(0.022)
To showcase its latest military equipment and power	0.181	(0.058)	0.341	(0.045)	0.343	(0.027)	0.247	(0.020)
It showcases job opportunities within the SANDF	0.181	(0.058)	0.346	(0.046)	0.392	(0.027)	0.301	(0.024)
It helps ordinary people gain knowledge of the SANDF	0.205	(0.063)	0.350	(0.044)	0.433	(0.028)	0.262	(0.022)
It demonstrates military combat readiness	0.102	(0.044)	0.257	(0.038)	0.266	(0.025)	0.176	(0.018)
It reminds us of the past	0.153	(0.081)	0.159	(0.032)	0.090	(0.018)	0.094	(0.014)

Note: Standard errors in parenthesis.

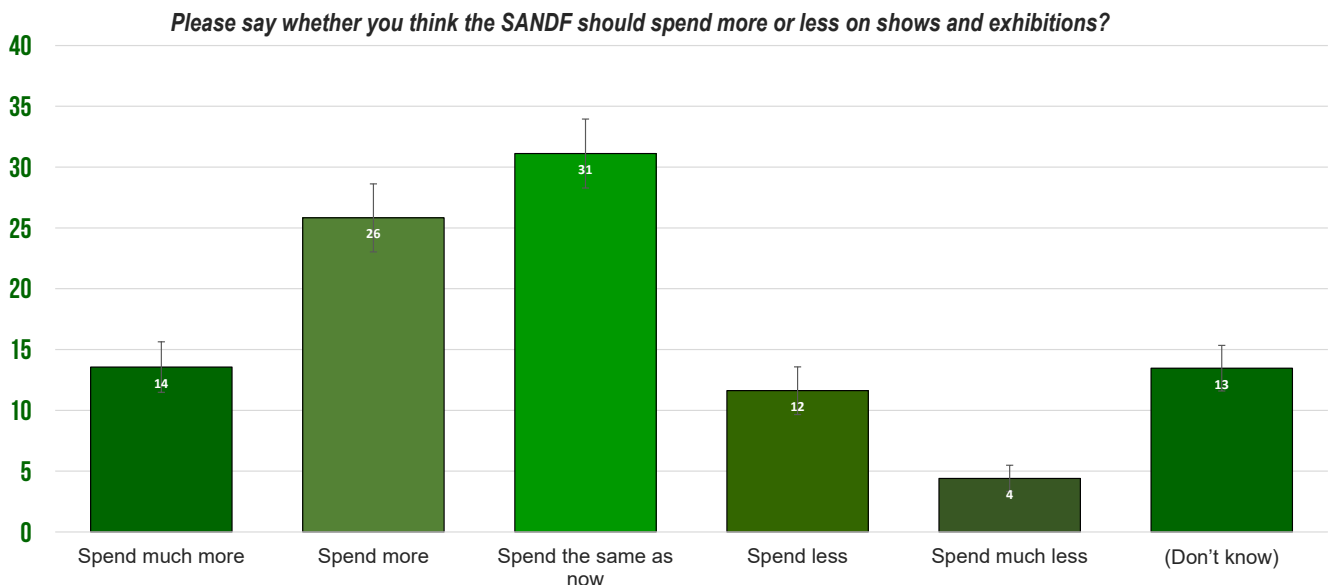
Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

### 3.1.4. PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR SPENDING MORE OR LESS CAPITAL ON SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY EVENTS (SUCH AS SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS)

As a follow-up to the question of how important it is for the SANDF to showcase its operations outlined in the previous section, respondents were asked if the SANDF should spend more or less on shows and exhibitions. The answer categories on this question were on a five-points scale, this scale ranged from spend much more to spend much less. Responses for this question are depicted for SASAS 2020 in **Figure 11**. Just over an eighth (14%)

thought it was necessary for the SANDF to spend a lot on such events, while 26% felt more should be spent. About a third (31%) believed that the government should expend the same amount of capital as now. The minority (16%) told fieldworkers that less should be spent on this issue. The remainder (13%) of the adult population was undecided on how to respond.

**FIGURE 11: PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR SPENDING MORE OR LESS CAPITAL ON SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY EVENTS (SUCH AS SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS), 2020**

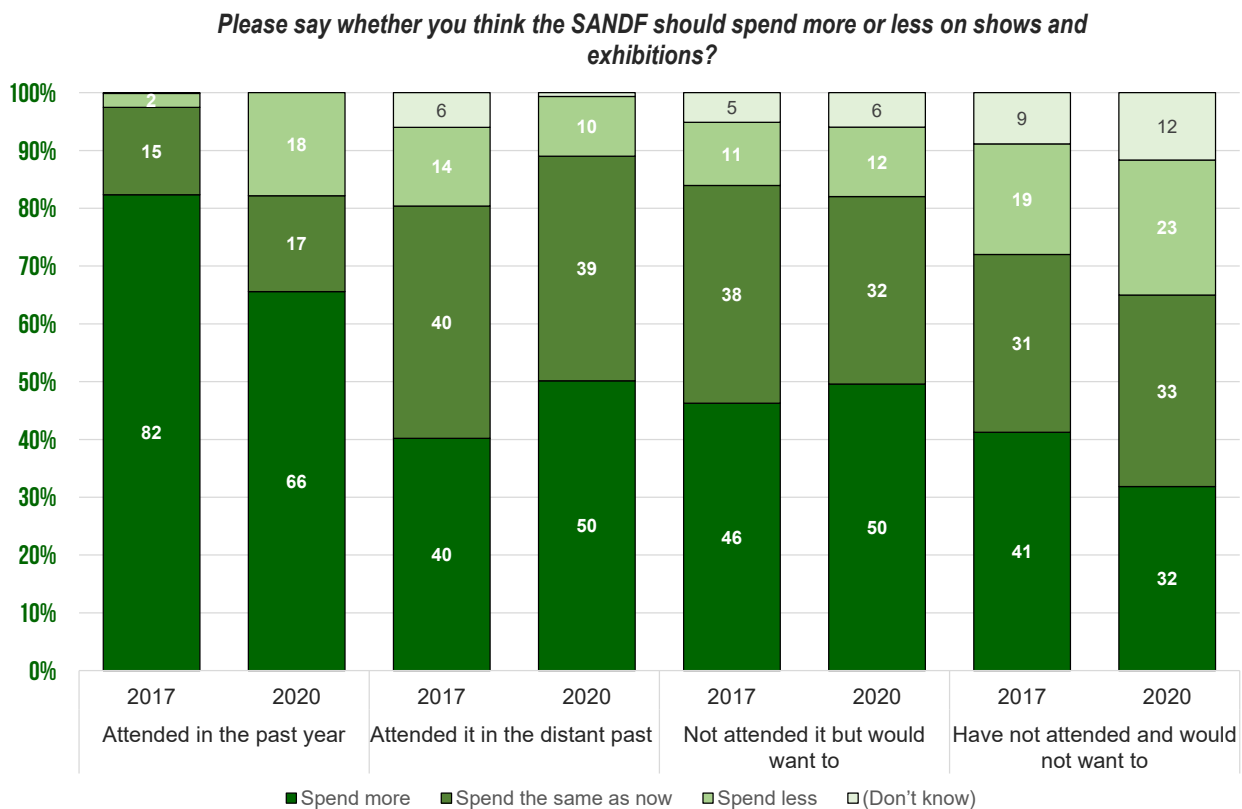


Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

In **Figure 12**, we examined responses to this question by attendance at military shows and exhibitions to show how experiences at such events affect preferences for military funding. Attending SANDF shows and exhibitions (like Armed Forces Day) was a determinant of whether an individual preferred to spend more. The size of the effect was especially large if we looked at those who had attended an SANDF event in the last year. About two-thirds of this group favoured greater expenditure in SASAS 2020. This can be contrasted with half of those who had attended an event in the more distant past. We noted that behavioural intention acted as a significant determinant of attitudes towards public spending on

public displays of SANDF hardware and personnel among non-attendees. Non-attendees, who showed an interest in attending future events, were more liable to endorse greater funding for military shows or exhibitions than those non-attendees with no interest in SANDF events. The size of this differential was greater in SASAS 2020 than in SASAS 2017. The reason for this variance was the decline in support for military shows and exhibition expenditure among non-attendees with no interest in upcoming events. The proportion of this group who favoured greater capital outlay fell from 41% at the start of the period to 32% at the end.

**FIGURE 12: PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR SPENDING MORE OR LESS CAPITAL ON SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY EVENTS (SUCH AS SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS) BY EVENT ATTENDANCE BEHAVIOUR AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTION, 2017 & 2020 (%)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2017; 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF



A subgroup examination was performed to discover which socio-demographic groups were most prone to favour increasing funds for military shows and exhibitions (**Table 8**). We noted a mild class differential in the table with the less prosperous reporting a lower predisposition to favour military event spending. This can be clearly observed if we investigate attitudinal variances among the various educational attainment groups. This was mainly due to the fact that the less educated were less able to provide an answer to the question. Consider, for instance, that about a quarter (23%) of those with no secondary education did not know how to answer the question. This can be compared to a tenth of those with a post-secondary education or a completed secondary education. In addition, we found a gender effect in the table. A Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 test ( $\chi^2(15) = 94; p=0.000$ ) validated that these detected educational attainment differences were statistically significant at the 1% level. A comparable result can be observed if we explored the effect of subjective poverty on attitude formation in the table.

**TABLE 8: PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR SPENDING MORE OR LESS CAPITAL ON SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY EVENTS (SUCH AS SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS) BY SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS**

	Spend much more	Spend more	Spend the same as now	Spend less	Uncertain	Chi-2 (p-value)	
All	14	26	31	16	13		
<b>Gender</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 45	0.002
Male	14	28	33	16	9		
Female	13	24	30	16	18		
<b>Age group</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 45	0.272
16-24	16	27	30	15	12		
25-34	15	27	32	11	16		
35-49	11	26	32	19	11		
50-64	15	24	29	19	13		
65+	9	23	33	19	16		
<b>Population group</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 43	0.023
Black African	15	25	31	15	14		
Coloured	12	29	31	13	14		
Indian / Asian	6	19	41	25	8		
White	8	32	29	23	8		
<b>Education level</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 92	0.001
Post-matric	14	30	30	16	10		
Matric or equivalent	15	26	32	16	10		
Incomplete secondary	12	25	33	16	14		
No secondary	15	22	26	15	23		
<b>Employment status</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 62	0.054
Employed full-time	13	29	30	20	7		
Employed part-time	14	30	32	12	13		
Previously worked	17	27	29	16	12		
Unemployed (never worked)	14	21	34	12	18		
Labour inactive	12	28	30	16	14		
<b>Geotype</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 28	0.002
Urban	14	26	32	17	11		
Rural	14	25	29	14	18		
<b>Subjective poverty</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (8) = 58	0.003
Non-poor	12	28	32	18	10		
Just getting by	15	26	31	16	12		
Poor	14	23	31	12	21		
<b>Social media</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 117	0.001
Not active	12	23	31	17	17		
Infrequent active	11	26	35	16	12		
Frequently active	19	29	30	15	7		
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 134	0.000
Incorrect	11	23	31	17	18		
Correct	19	32	32	13	4		
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (8) = 445	0.000
Low	13	13	20	20	35		
Medium	11	28	36	17	9		
High	24	36	29	9	3		

Note: Pearson (uncorrected) Ch<sup>2</sup> test results displayed.

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Knowledge of the SANDF had a major effect on whether an individual thought that spending on military shows or exhibitions should be increased. This trend is clearly evident if we inspect the objective knowledge groups. Those classed as objectively knowledgeable have a greater tendency to think expenditure should grow (19% much more; 32% more) than their unknowledgeable peers (11% much more; 23% more). Even more substantiated attitudinal discrepancies could be discerned among the various self-reported knowledge groups. Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 tests verified that attitudinal differences among the objective knowledge groups ( $\chi^2(4) = 134$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) were weaker than among the subjective knowledge groups ( $\chi^2(8) = 445$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). Furthermore, we discovered a sizeable social media differential in **Table 8**. Active users were more liable (19% much more; 29% more) to think that more capital should be devoted to this issue than inactive users (11% much more; 26% more) and non-users (12% much more; 23% more). This may be because of the documented relationship between social media usage and public familiarity with the SANDF.

No statistically significant age group effect could be observed in the table. A Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 test ( $\chi^2(16) = 45$ ;  $p=0.272$ ) substantiated that age group differences observed in **Table 8** were not statistically significant at the 5% level. There was a moderate population group differential detected in our examination with white and Indian/Asian adults more liable to think that spending levels should decline. Consider that about a quarter of these two groups thought that the government should spend less on public demonstrations of the SANDF (such as Armed Forces Day). This can be compared to 13% of the coloured minority and 15% of the black African majority. Attitudes towards capital outlay on military events also differed modestly by gender. Men (14% much more; 28% more) were more predisposed to favour greater expenditure on SANDF shows and exhibitions than women (13% much more; 24% more). Interestingly, women were more likely than men to be uncertain of how to answer this question (18% versus 9%).

## 3.2. KNOWLEDGE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE

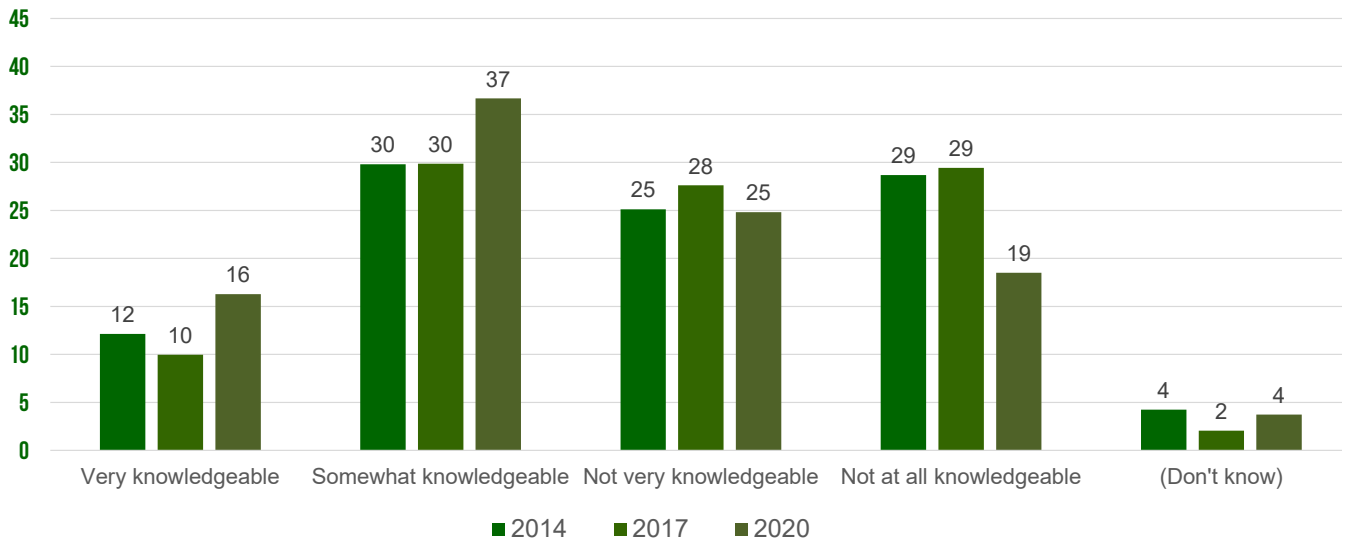
This section concerns itself with the degree of knowledge the adult population has of the South African military. It is suggested that the degree to which the public is familiar and knowledgeable of an institution will ultimately have a bearing on attitudes and preferences towards it. Individuals with low levels of institutional knowledge may make ill-informed judgements about that institution (Zaller 1992; Carpini and Keeter 1996; Lupia, McCubbins and Popkin 2000). Scholarship has suggested that when people make judgements about an institution, they lack awareness of, they demonstrate a tendency to be more critical than average in their appraisals. It has subsequently been argued that public scepticism about an organisation would diminish if the public were more well-informed about that organisation (Gaziano 1983). The surveying conducted for this survey has therefore examined knowledge of the SANDF as a key conceptual construct that has the potential to inform general attitudes toward this institution. In this section, we examine responses to both subjective and more 'objective' lines of questioning, as well as the information sources trusted to provide information about the Defence Force.

### 3.2.1. SELF-RATED KNOWLEDGE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE

To better understand knowledge of the post-apartheid military, respondents were first asked to rate their own level of knowledge of the SANDF. Specifically, respondents were required to classify themselves as very knowledgeable, somewhat knowledgeable, not very knowledgeable or not at all knowledgeable of the SANDF. In the 2020 survey, 16% of South African adults stated they were 'very knowledgeable' about the country's armed forces, while a further 37% reported that they were 'somewhat knowledgeable' (**Figure 13**). This suggests that slightly over half (53%) of South Africans had at least a basic familiarity with the SANDF at the time of surveying, based on their own estimation. By contrast, a quarter (25%) reported being 'not very knowledgeable', with approximately a fifth (19%) of adults indicating that they were 'not at all knowledgeable' about the SANDF. Lack of awareness of the SANDF is therefore common to a considerable minority share (43%) of the public in the country.

Levels of subjective knowledge appear to have increased slightly in 2020, relative to what was observed in the 2014 and 2017 survey rounds. The differences between 2014 and 2017 were negligible, but in 2020, the shares answering 'very' and 'somewhat knowledgeable' increased six to seven percentage points, with a corresponding decline of ten percentage points in the share responding, 'not at all knowledgeable'. Regression analysis confirmed that the changes evident from the 2020 data were statistically significant. Future rounds of surveying will determine whether this marks a definitive sign of progress in knowledge of the SANDF. Despite the encouraging upswing in self-reported knowledge, the ultimate impression is of a public that remains evenly divided among those with and without awareness of the country's modern Defence Force. The extent to which this pattern of knowledge instrumentally shapes attitudes towards the SANDF will be examined later in the report.

**FIGURE 13: SELF-RATED KNOWLEDGE OF THE SANDF, 2014, 2017 AND 2020 COMPARED (%)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

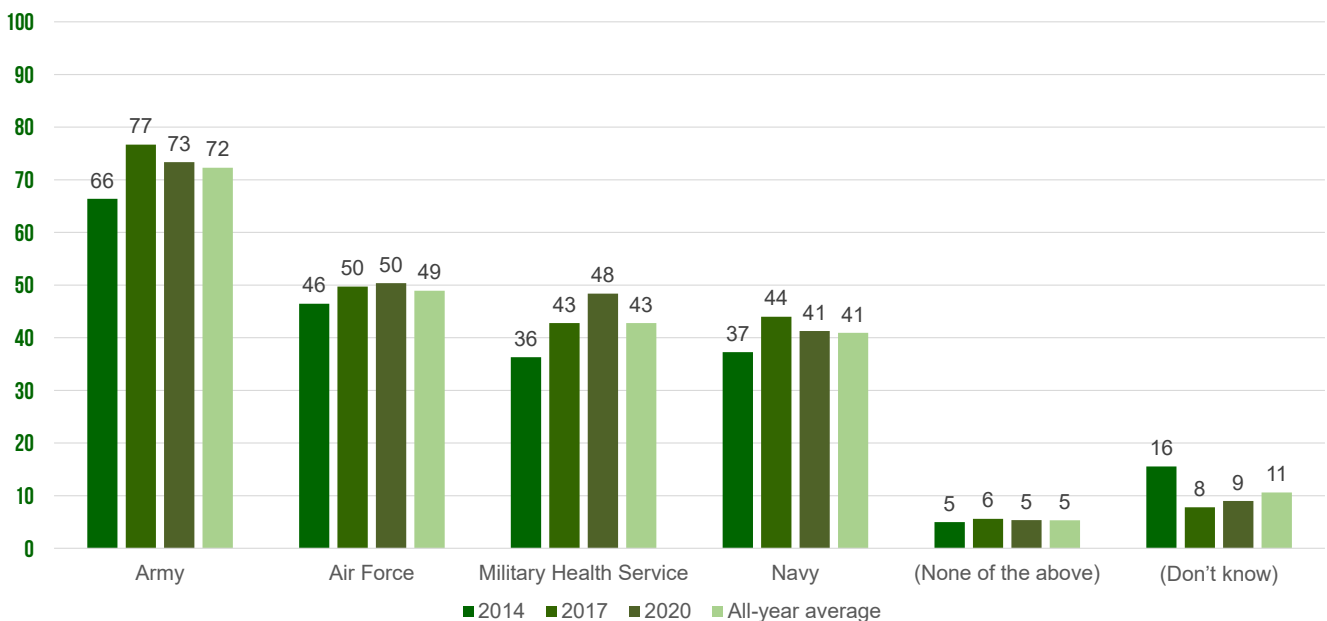
### 3.2.2. KNOWLEDGE OF THE BRANCHES OF THE SANDF

One of the key issues regarding subjective knowledge measures is how accurately individuals estimate their level of familiarity and understanding of an institution such as the SANDF. Given the possibility of error in self-reported evaluation (either upwardly or downwardly biasing the level of knowledge), survey respondents were also asked a follow-up question focusing on their ability to identify the four branches of the Defence Force. This is taken as a more objective measure of knowledge, which is used together with self-rated knowledge, to provide a composite picture of the influence of awareness of the SANDF on various attitudes towards the institution.

In the 2020 survey round, three-quarters (73%) of adults were familiar with, and correctly identified the Army

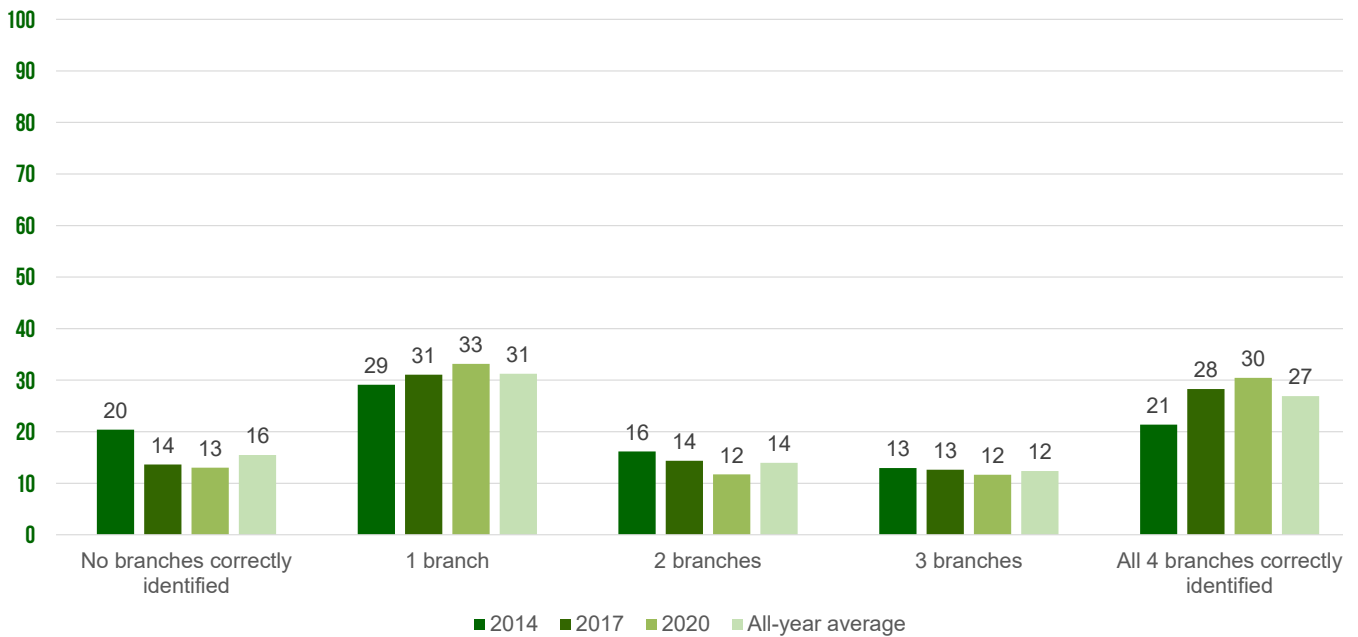
(**Figure 14**). However, the share correctly identifying the other three branches was substantially lower, ranging between 41% in the case of the Navy to 50% in the case of the Air Force. There is a reasonable degree of consistency over the three survey rounds between 2014 and 2020. The share correctly identifying the Army was higher in 2017 and 2020, relative to 2014 (7 to 11 percentage points higher). Familiarity with the Military Health Service has shown consistently, statistically significant increases with each round of surveying, rising from 36% in 2014 to 48% in 2020. Knowledge of the Air Force and Navy was slightly higher in 2020 than 2014, though these are not particularly large increments.

**FIGURE 14: KNOWLEDGE OF SANDF BRANCHES, 2014, 2017 AND 2020 COMPARED (%)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

**FIGURE 15: NUMBER OF SANDF BRANCHES CORRECTLY IDENTIFIED, 2014, 2017 AND 2020 COMPARED (%)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

The pattern of responses described above was converted into a count measure of the number of branches correctly identified by respondents (Figure 15). In 2020, approximately a third (30%) of the adult public was able to correctly identify all four branches of the SANDF. The figures for both 2020 and 2017 are significantly higher than in 2014, when only 21% of the population correctly identified all branches. At the other extreme, the share unable to correctly identify any branches fell from a fifth in 2014 to slightly over a tenth in 2017 and 2020. On aggregate, despite the modest increase in the share able to correctly identify all four branches, the picture is one of general consistency over time. There certainly remains considerable latitude for improving public knowledge on this important issue.



### 3.2.3. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIATION IN THE PATTERNING OF SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SANDF

To examine differentials in both self-rated and objective knowledge of the SANDF across demographic and socio-economic groups in the country, we transformed the responses to both questions into 0-100 scales, with 0 representing the lowest level of knowledge and 100 the highest. All ‘don’t know’ responses were coded as 0. In **Table 9**, the mean scores for the subjective and objective knowledge indices are presented for a select set of socio-demographic variables, together with the results of significance testing based on One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

There is a strong gender effect present in the cases of both knowledge measures, with men generally more knowledgeable of the SANDF than women. While only weak population group differences are evident in relation to subjective knowledge, there is a strong effect underlying objective knowledge, with white and Indian adults reporting higher levels of knowledge than black

African and coloured adults. There is an inconsistent age pattern across the two measures. In the case of subjective knowledge, the main difference was between those of pensionable age and those aged 50-64 years, with latter displaying higher knowledge than the former (mean score= 52 vs. 44). By contrast, younger adults displayed greater objective knowledge of SANDF branches on average, and those aged 25-34 years displayed significantly a higher mean score than those aged 35-49 years and 65+ years.

There is a clear socio-economic divide in knowledge of the SANDF. Those in full-time employment displayed higher levels of subjective and objective knowledge. Educational differences were especially stark, with those with a tertiary or matric-level education considerably more knowledgeable than those with lower levels of educational attainment. As for subjective poverty status, the non-poor were more knowledgeable than the poor



using both measures.

Spatial variation in knowledge is also apparent from the results presented in the table. Urban-based South Africans demonstrated higher levels of self-rated and objective knowledge compared to rural-based adults. A common finding across both measures is that residents in KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and North West had below-average knowledge levels in general. By contrast, higher knowledge levels were recorded in Mpumalanga, Gauteng, the Free State and Western Cape. While residents in the Eastern Cape possessed an above-average level of subjective knowledge; from the objective knowledge results this seems to be an overestimation of familiarity with the Defence Force, with this province ranked last overall with an especially poor awareness of

the different branches of the SANDF (mean score of 35 compared to the national average of 53).

The table finally shows patterns of knowledge based on personal and indirect exposure to the SANDF and suggests that this exerts a stronger influence on subjective relative to objective knowledge. Exposure clearly informs subjective knowledge assessments, with those personally serving in the Defence Force, or having a friend or family member serving, reported significantly higher awareness than those without such exposure. In the case of objective knowledge, personal exposure has no effect at all, though indirect knowledge was associated with an increase in the mean score of 10 on the 0-100 scale.

**TABLE 9: SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SANDF IN 2020, BY SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES (MEAN SCORES, 0-100 SCALE)**

	Subjective knowledge (mean, 0-100 score)	ANOVA Chi-2 p-value	Objective knowledge (mean, 0-100 score)	ANOVA Chi-2 p-value
South African average	49.0		53.3	
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	53.8	0.0000	60.3	0.0000
Female	44.5	***	46.9	***
<b>Population group</b>				
Black African	48.2	0.0387	51.0	0.0000
Coloured	49.7	*	54.2	***
Indian	51.7		66.7	
White	54.3		68.2	
<b>Age group</b>				
16-24	46.5	0.0073	56.3	0.0002
25-34	49.7	**	56.6	***
35-49	50.1		49.8	
50-64	52.2		52.8	
65+	44.1		48.0	
<b>Employment status</b>				
Employed full-time	56.6	0.0000	61.9	0.0000
Employed part-time	49.7	***	47.2	***
Unemployed	45.1		48.4	
Outside the labour market	48.1		54.5	
<b>Educational attainment</b>				
Junior primary	36.9	0.0000	35.1	0.0000
Senior primary	40.7	***	37.8	***
Incomplete secondary	45.9		48.6	
Matric	52.1		57.4	
Post-matric	56.9		69.4	
<b>Subjective poverty status</b>				
Non-poor	53.2	0.0000	54.8	0.0000
Just getting by	48.2	***	56.5	***
Poor	43.3		46.9	
<b>Geographic location</b>				
Urban	53.8	0.0000	58.2	0.0000
Rural	38.0	***	42.3	***

	Subjective knowledge (mean, 0-100 score)	ANOVA Chi-2 p-value	Objective knowledge (mean, 0-100 score)	ANOVA Chi-2 p-value
<b>Province</b>				
Western Cape	54.1	0.0000	59.9	0.0000
Eastern Cape	50.8	***	34.5	***
Northern Cape	50.3		55.9	
Free State	54.5		64.0	
KwaZulu-Natal	31.8		44.8	
North West	46.0		43.0	
Gauteng	56.8		63.1	
Mpumalanga	57.6		66.9	
Limpopo	42.8		44.1	
<b>Personal exposure to SANDF</b>				
No	46.8	0.0000	53.5	0.6652
Yes	64.0	***	52.6	n.s.
<b>Indirect exposure to SANDF</b>				
No	46.4	0.0000	51.3	0.0000
Yes	59.2	***	61.2	***
Range of values:	[31.8 - 64.0]		[34.5 - 69.4]	

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Multivariate analysis using ordered logistic regressions was used to determine the predominant factor underlying subjective and objective knowledge of the SANDF. The results of the subjective knowledge models showed that gender, educational attainment, urban-rural

location, province of residence, and personal exposure to the Defence Force mattered most. As for objective knowledge, the strongest determinants were gender, age, education level, province and indirect exposure to the SANDF.

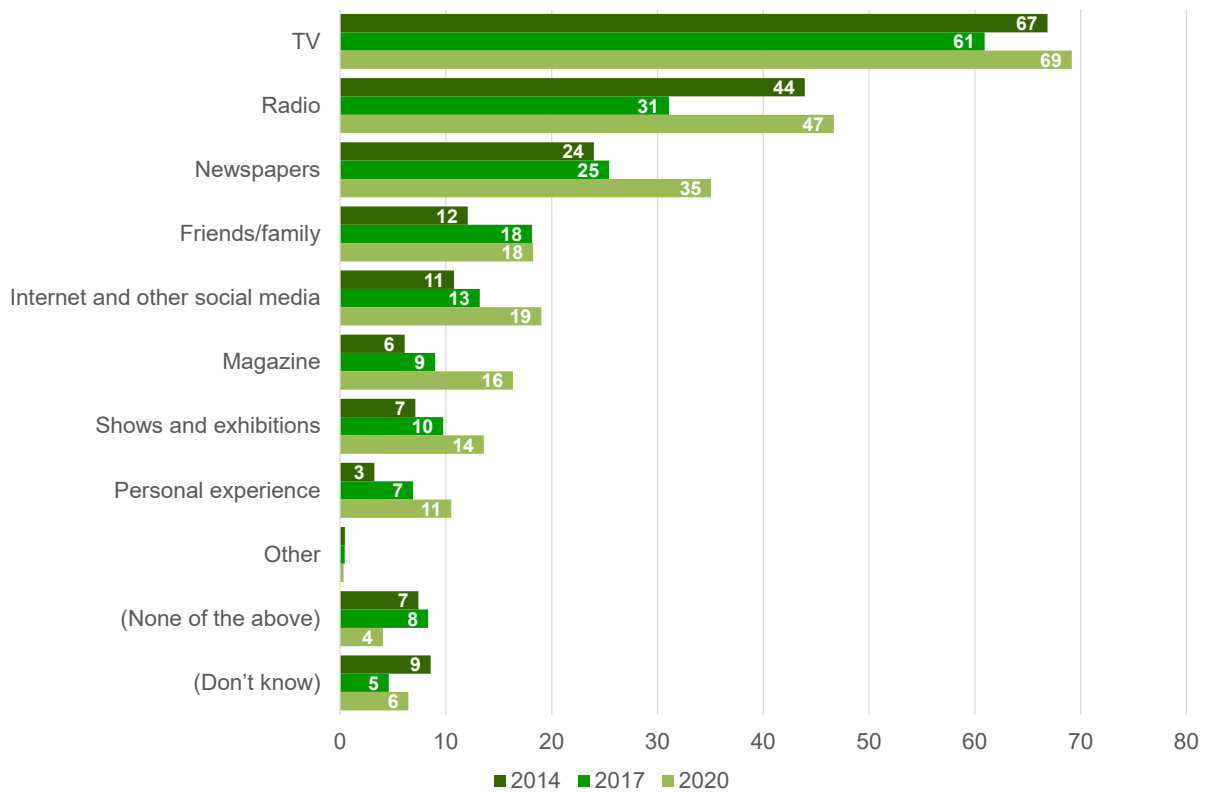
### 3.2.4. MOST TRUSTED SOURCES FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE DEFENCE FORCE

News media plays a central role as an information source from which people can learn about important institutions (such as the South African military). This informational function is important for several different reasons, the most vital of which is the connection between levels of institutional knowledge, attitudes and participation in institutional activities (such as civic volunteerism; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). The survey included a multiple response question that aimed to evaluate which source(s) the general population trusted mostly to acquire information on the Defence Force. Respondents to the 2014, 2017 and 2020 survey rounds were specifically asked: 'When you think of the South African National Defence Force, which of the following sources would you say provide you with the best/most information?' The options from which they could select were (i) shows and exhibitions; (ii) radio; (iii) television; (iv) newspapers; (v) magazines; (vi) internet and other social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter); (vii) personal experience; (viii) friends and/or family; and (ix) other source (specify). This data can be used to profile the sources the public relies on mostly to gain information about the SANDF, as well as the degree of consistency and change over time. In Figure 16, the SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 responses are presented, ranking from

most to least mentioned source based on the 2020 results.

Conventional sources of broadcast media were rated as providing the best information on the country's military. Of these, the most popular (by a considerable margin) in all three survey years was television. This was mentioned by 69% in 2020, with figures fluctuating modestly over the 2014-2020 period (61-69%). Radio was the second highest ranked information source in all three survey rounds, mentioned by 44% and 47% in 2014 and 2020, respectively. There was an appreciable dip to 31% in 2017, but this seems to have been short-lived. Newspapers are a form of print media that was consistently ranked as third most trusted information source by the public across the three survey rounds. It was mentioned by a quarter of the public in both 2014 and 2017, but rose to just over a third (35%) in 2020. Newspapers – including community papers – therefore continue to remain a key source for promoting SANDF-related news and developments. Taken together, these three conventional sources (television, radio, and newspapers) remain dominant channels through which the public accesses defence news.

**FIGURE 16: SOURCES PROVIDING THE BEST/MOST INFORMATION ABOUT THE SANDF, 2014, 2017 AND 2020 (%)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014-2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

In 2020, around a fifth of adult South Africans (19%) rated the internet (and social media) as the media source with the 'best/most information' about the SANDF. This represents a distinct increase relative to 2014 and 2017 (11% and 13% respectively) and is fast becoming a key secondary informational channel of note. Given technological and generational change, it is envisaged that this will assume increasing importance in coming years. Similarly, the role of shows and exhibitions in promoting information about defence-related developments has shown a slight upward tendency during the past decade, rising from 7% in 2014 to 14% in 2020. This may reflect ongoing outreach efforts, including the rotating provincial hosting of annual Armed Forces Day commemorations, and regular appearances at events such as the Royal Show in KwaZulu-Natal and the Rand Easter Show in Gauteng.

Unlike newspapers, magazines tend to have a lower circulation and it was therefore unsurprising to note that this form of media was lower ranked as a relatively less important information source. However, while this source was mentioned by less than a tenth of the adult public in both 2014 and 2017, this source increased somewhat to 16% in 2020. Finally, the role of informal sources of information, such as family and friends, and personal direct experience of the SANDF were mentioned by approximately a fifth and a tenth of the public respectively, both increasing slightly over time.

Subgroup differences in preferences for individual information source types are presented in Table 10. This allows us to ascertain which information sources are regarded as the most useful by which subgroups. As can be clearly observed, television is popular with all subgroups in the table, mentioned by between 49% and 77%. There is substantially more variation in the shares mentioning radio and newspapers as a key source of information on the SANDF. As expected, usage of the internet and social media as a trusted information source varies by age and class, with younger and better-off adults more likely to identify online media as an important source. There is also a slight urban tendency among internet and social media users.



**TABLE 10: BEST/MOST INFORMATION OF TRADITIONAL MASS MEDIA, INTERNET MEDIA, AS WELL AS SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS BY SELECT SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES (CELL %, ALL-YEAR AVERAGE 2014-2020)**

	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet / social media	Friends / family	Magazine	Shows and exhibitions	Personal experience
South African average	66	41	28	15	16	11	10	7
<b>Gender</b>								
Male	67	42	32	18	18	11	12	8
Female	64	39	25	11	14	10	8	6
<b>Race</b>								
Black African	67	44	27	13	17	10	9	7
Coloured	62	33	32	14	14	12	14	6
Indian or Asian	64	24	39	24	10	10	14	3
White	61	28	33	24	12	16	16	10
<b>Age group</b>								
16-24	67	37	27	20	19	11	12	7
25-34	68	38	28	18	17	11	10	7
35-49	65	44	31	13	14	11	11	7
50-64	65	43	28	7	15	10	9	8
65+	58	44	27	6	16	8	9	6
<b>Education</b>								
Junior primary or less	49	43	17	3	11	7	5	8
Senior primary	56	45	21	5	16	6	7	6
Incomplete secondary	66	41	25	9	16	10	9	6
Matric	70	41	32	20	19	12	11	8
Post-matric	68	35	40	25	13	17	15	10
<b>Subjective poverty</b>								
Non-poor	72	41	35	19	14	13	12	7
Just getting by	68	48	27	16	19	11	11	9
Poor	62	48	26	9	13	10	7	5
<b>Geographic location</b>								
Urban	67	39	30	16	17	11	12	7
Rural	62	45	25	11	16	9	7	8
<b>Province</b>								
Western Cape	62	34	33	17	9	13	13	6
Eastern Cape	65	49	26	7	15	13	5	3
Northern Cape	63	31	25	14	28	7	10	14
Free State	67	50	21	16	12	6	12	7
KwaZulu-Natal	65	41	28	14	19	8	11	7
North West	65	44	31	19	10	10	11	9
Gauteng	68	40	32	18	22	14	12	8
Mpumalanga	71	35	22	13	17	12	11	4
Limpopo	62	42	25	9	9	5	5	10
<b>Personal exposure</b>								
No	66	40	27	15	16	10	10	6
Yes	67	42	39	12	15	15	16	18
<b>Indirect exposure</b>								
No	65	40	27	13	14	10	9	6
Yes	67	42	34	20	26	14	15	12
Range of values	[49-77]	[24-61]	[17-40]	[3-25]	[9-28]	[5-18]	[5-17]	[3-18]

Note: green-shaded cells represent above-average percentages.

Source: HSRC SASAS 2014-2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

We end this section by considering whether knowledge of the SANDF tends to be demonstrably higher depending on the sources from which individuals receive their information about the SANDF. This will allow us to understand whether a clear relationship exists between knowledge of the country's armed forces and the different types of information sources adult South Africans mentioned above. The pattern of results is presented in Table 11. The results show that there is not much variation in self-rated knowledge of the SANDF across the different informational sources. The mean scores vary only between 54 and 59 on the 0-100 scale. There was slightly more variance in objective knowledge

scores. The highest objective knowledge scores were evident among those relying on personal experience (mean=74), the internet and social media (mean=72), and shows and exhibitions (mean=71), while lower scores were evident among those relying on television, radio and newspapers (mean=60-64). This suggests that while the public relies on conventional media sources the most for SANDF information, the most impactful sources on objective knowledge (correctly identifying SANDF branches) is personal experience of the SANDF, attending shows and demonstrations, and modern forms on online media.

**TABLE 11: MEAN LEVELS OF SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE 2020, BY INFORMATION SOURCES (MEAN SCORES, 0-100 SCALE)**

	Subjective knowledge (mean, 0-100 scale)	Objective knowledge (mean, 0-100 scale)	N
South African average	49	53	2,844
Shows and exhibitions	58	71	389
Radio	54	62	1,285
TV	55	60	1,896
Newspapers	55	64	959
Magazines	58	67	418
Internet and other social media	55	72	478
Personal experience	57	74	258
Friends/family	56	68	403
Other	59	47	10
(None of the above)	21	22	132
(Don't know)	9	5	186

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

The results in the table also show convincingly that those who said they did not access defence information from any of the listed information sources or unable to answer the question displayed extremely low mean knowledge scores.

### 3.3. OVERALL CONFIDENCE IN THE DEFENCE FORCE

Due to South Africa's history and specifically the struggle against apartheid, the SANDF does not enjoy uniform historical legitimacy often found in other countries with more stable political cultures. Prior to 1994, the South African military force was known as the South African Defence Force (SADF), protecting white minority rule, and consisted of mainly white conscripted South Africans. Indian and coloured citizens with white ancestry were allowed to join the SADF and units such as the 32 Battalion had black volunteers, but for the most part the SADF consisted of white South Africans. During this time, the SADF had to defend the country from external threats and had to form a function of countering possible internal revolt against the apartheid regime (Bains, 2008). The SADF often had to operate alongside the South African Police to oppress resistance against the regime and was instrumental in upholding minority rule. Prior to 1994, the SADF was therefore perceived by a majority as the aggressor, upholding apartheid policies. After 1994 one of the biggest challenges faced by the new government was to transform the SADF to become a national asset, serving all South Africans.

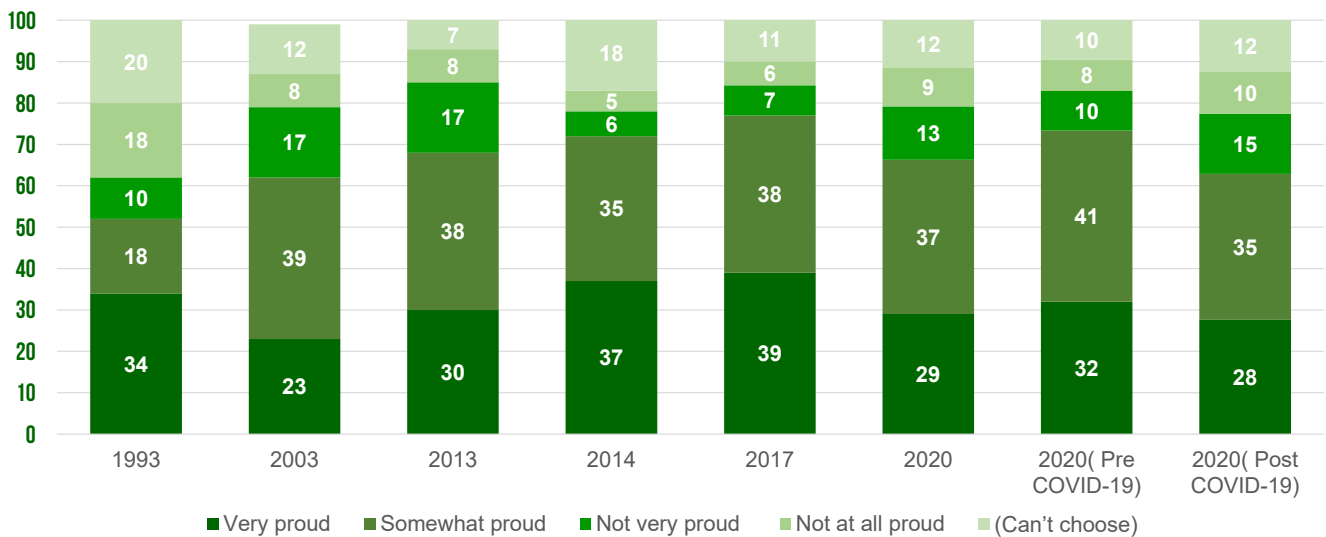
The transformative agenda of the SANDF had at its core the intention of becoming a trusted institution in South Africa, representing and supporting all race groups, gender groups and age groups. Its ultimate aim was (and is) to serve the South African public as a whole and to represent all South Africans, enabling and maintaining a co-operative social climate which embraces a sense of personal and national security. This trust and public confidence in the military is considered critical, since it enables the military to support and participate more readily in community and civic affairs. Confidence in the SANDF therefore helps build the co-operation between the military and civil society upon which peaceful, stable and efficient democracies depend (Luckham 1994). In the following sections, we discuss overall pride and trust in the SANDF, elements fundamental to being a trustworthy and accepted institution.

### 3.3.1. FEELING PROUD OF THE DEFENCE FORCE, 1993 TO 2020

In April 1993, the Department of Defence commissioned a module in the HSRC’s Omnibus Public Opinion Survey Study on the image of the South African Defence Force (SADF). One of the key measures focused on levels of pride in the institution and the following question was asked: Are you proud of the South African Defence Force? Answer options included: (1) Yes, definitely; (2) Yes, to a certain extent; (3) Not sure; (4) No, not really;

and (5) No, not at all. The results (Figure 17) showed that, at the time, a third (34%) of South Africans were unequivocally proud of the SADF, a further fifth (18%) expressed moderate levels of pride, a further fifth were unsure, while the remaining 28% responded in the negative. In 1993, a year before the dawn of democracy in South Africa, just more than half (52%) of South Africans therefore felt proud of the SADF.

**FIGURE 17: CHANGING PRIDE IN THE DEFENCE FORCE OVER TWO DECADES, 1993-2017 (PERCENT)**



Source: HSRC Omnibus 1993; HSRC SASAS 2003, 2013; HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017, 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

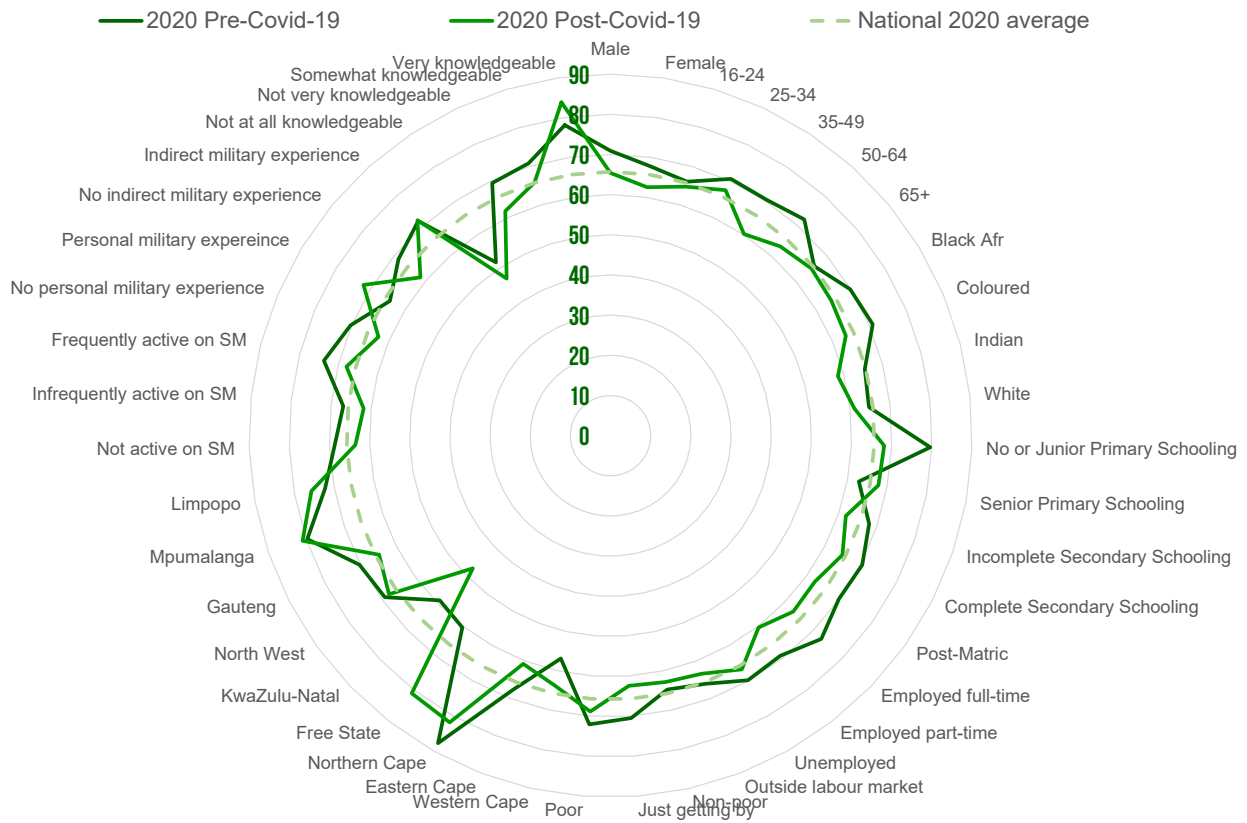
A decade later, in 2003 and onwards, the South African population was again asked about how proud they are of the SANDF. The question was phrased slightly different and asked: How proud are you of the South African Armed Forces? Answer options ranged from Very proud to Not proud at all. Although the questions were not similarly phrased, it is comparable and shows that significant changes occurred between 1993 and 2003. In 1993 a third (34%) of South Africans were resolutely proud of the SADF with a fifth (18%) somewhat proud. In 2003, a smaller proportion was very proud (23%) but a much higher proportion (39%) was somewhat proud. During this period, the proportion of South Africans who were not at all proud of the SANDF dropped significantly (from 18% in 1993 to 8% in 2003).

As is evident from Figure 17, pride in the SANDF steadily increased from 2003 to 2017, but dropped again in 2020. In 2017 almost four fifths (77%) of the adult public reported that they were either 'very' or 'somewhat' proud of the SANDF, a tenth (13%) 'not very' or 'not at all proud', while 10% were undecided. In 2020 there was a reversal in this positive trend and pride in the SANDF

dropped with just over a quarter (29%) stating they were 'very proud' of the SANDF, a further two-fifths (37%) 'somewhat proud' and the rest either 'not very proud' (13%), 'not proud at all' (9%) or 'unsure' (12%). As is evident from the figure, the big change between 2017 and 2020 was in the category 'very proud', where a drop of 10% is noted between 2017 and 2020.

Comparing pre- and post-COVID-19 levels, we find that the proportion of South Africans feeling 'very proud' of the SANDF reduced from 32% to 28% and the 'somewhat proud' from 41% to 35%. Added together, it seems that the COVID-19 pandemic and particularly the role that the SANDF played during the pandemic, resulted in an overall drop in pride of 10%. Conversely, those not proud of the SANDF increased by 7%, from 18% to 25%. This finding seems to suggest that the actions of the SANDF during the pandemic were not always sanctioned and influenced general pride in the SANDF, which partly explains the drop in overall pride between 2017 and 2020. The media attention around SANDF callousness in residential areas might be the cause of these negative sentiments.

**FIGURE 18: PRE-AND POST COVID-19 RESULTS BY SUBGROUP**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

As can be seen from results in Figure 18, the overall tendency among virtually all subgroups was lower pride levels post-COVID-19. The only exceptions being among those with a senior primary schooling education, those with personal military experience and those that professed to be very knowledgeable of the SANDF. From these findings, it is possible to deduce that the actions of the SANDF during the COVID-19 pandemic did not instil confidence in the SANDF. The actions of the SANDF during the COVID-19 pandemic therefore

almost universally impacted pride levels.

Even prior to considering the pre- and post-COVID-19 results, we noticed that there was a decline in pride since 2017. The decline in pride levels can therefore not universally be ascribed to the COVID-19 pandemic and it is important to consider changes in pride levels since 2017. In the next section, we compare pride levels in 2017 to general pride levels in 2020 and determine where changes took place.



**TABLE 12: PRIDE IN THE DEFENCE FORCE IN SOUTH AFRICA BY SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES, 2017 AND 2020 COMPARED (MEAN SCORES)**

	2017 SASAS			2020 SASAS			Difference
	Mean score	Sig.	ANOVA p	Mean score	Sig.	ANOVA p	
South Africa	74,4			65,7			
Male	75,5	*	Male > Female	67,3	*	Male > Female	-8.20
Female	72,8			64,2			-8.60
Black African	76,7	***	Black African > rest	66,2	ns		-10.50
Coloured	67,1			66,2			-0.90
Indian/Asian	60,0			63,0			3.00
White	62,4			62,1			-0.30
16-24	73,0	ns.	25-34 > 35-49	65,2	*		-7.80
25-34	75,2			68,5			-6.70
35-49	74,6			63,3			-11.30
50-64	74,2			66,4			-7.80
65+	72,2			65,4			-6.80
Primary and lower	74,8	ns.		68,3	ns.		-6.50
Incomplete secondary	75,7			64,0			-11.70
Matric	72,8			66,7			-6.10
Tertiary	72,8			64,1			-8.70
Urban areas	73,2	***	Rural farms > urban areas	65,9	ns.		-7.30
Rural trad. auth areas	74,2			65,1			-9.10
Rural farms	84,0			66,8			-17.20
Western Cape	67,8	***	WC, GT, KZN < LP, FS WC < EC	62,4	***	KZN < EC, WC,GT, NW,LP < NC, MP,FS	-5.40
Eastern Cape	78,5			61,6			-16.90
Northern Cape	76,9			84,4			7.50
Free State	80,0			78,1			-1.90
Kwa-Zulu Natal	74,5			51,4			-23.10
North West	75,9			68,4			-7.50
Gauteng	68,8			66,5			-2.30
Mpumalanga	76,3			80,1			3.80
Limpopo	83,8			73,9			-9.90
Very knowledgeable	85,7	***		Not at all < not very < very/ somewhat knowledgeable < Very knowledgeable	81,5		***
Somewhat	79,5		67,5			-12.00	
Not very	70,8		64,1			-6.70	
Not at all knowledgeable	66,9		48,0			-18.90	
No personal experience	73,9	*	Personal military experience > none	65,3	*	Personal military experience > none	-8.60
Personal experience	78,4			70,0			-8.40
No indirect experience	74,0	**	Indirect military experience > none	64,0	***	Indirect military experience > none	-10.00
Indirect experience	82,5			71,9			-10.60

Source: HSRC SASAS 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Table 12 provides an analysis of socio-demographic differences based on both the 2017 and 2020 results, using mean scores from 0-100. In the analysis, 'do not know' responses were dropped and the scale was reversed and transformed into a 0-100 index, with higher scores representing better performance evaluations. Similar to 2017, 2020 results show moderate gender differences in reported pride levels with males being moderately prouder than females. The most impactful finding is in relation to population group. In 2017, the black African race group significantly differed from other race groups, being resolutely prouder of the SANDF than other race groups. In 2020, this changed, and no

significant difference was found between race groups. This finding is directly attributable to pride levels dropping among black African respondents.

No difference was noted in 2017 among the age groups and in 2020 the differences were moderate with the 25-24-year-olds prouder than the 35-to-49-year-olds. Education yielded no significant differences. In 2020, no significant differences were found for geotype and urban and rural residents had similar pride levels. Provincial differences were highly significant with KwaZulu-Natal residents significantly less proud of the SANDF than other provinces. Residents from the Northern Cape,



Mpumalanga and Free State exhibited the highest pride levels. Knowledge had an incrementally positive association with pride rating, implying that the more knowledgeable, the more positive the pride rating. Personal military experience of the SANDF, but more specifically indirect exposure via friends and family of the SANDF, biased answers on pride towards the positive.

Given the decline among African black adults in pride between 2017 and 2020, it is prudent to analyse the trends since 1993 between the race groups regarding pride in the SANDF (Figure 19). As can be expected,

support varied among the different population groups over this period. White South Africans (57%) were especially proud of the SADF in 1993, although white Afrikaans-speakers were found to be much prouder of the SADF than English speaking whites. The Coloured and Indian race groups were also relatively proud of the SADF in 1993. Understandably, much smaller proportions of the Black African majority were proud of the SADF in 1993 and also more ambivalent about the SADF.

**FIGURE 19: PRIDE IN THE SADF AND SANDF BY RACE GROUP (%)**



Source: HSRC Omnibus 1993; HSRC SASAS 2003, 2013; HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017, 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

In 2017, the reversal was true, with the black African majority much prouder of the SANDF than the minority groups. In 2020 there was a steep decline in the 'very proud' category among the black African group to the extent that this category is almost similar to 1993 (26%

versus 30%). Despite decline, it remains safe to say that the SANDF has transformed to an institution that is much more acceptable to a larger majority of people, although scepticism remain, which should be monitored, especially among the black African adult population.

### 3.3.2. TRUST IN THE DEFENCE FORCE

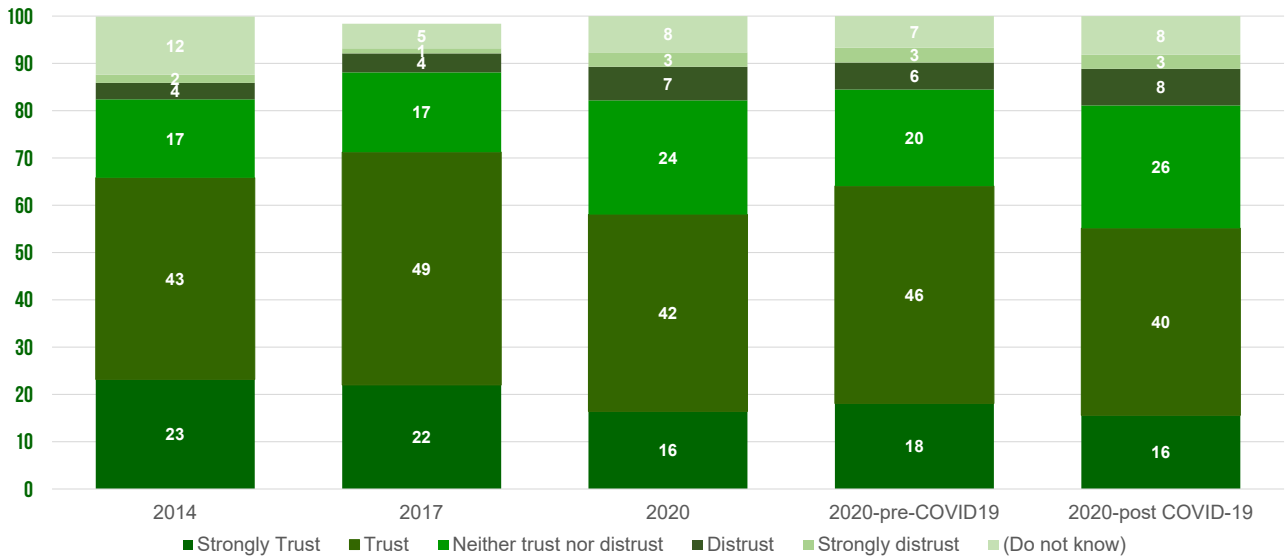
A second measure included in the 2020 SANDF and SASAS surveys that addresses overall confidence is a more direct item that asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they presently trust the SANDF. Existing literature suggests that the individual decision to trust an institution (such as the national defence force) tends to involve a basic two-stage judgement. Individuals firstly consider the values of the organisation, and then assess their confidence in that organisation's perceived effectiveness (Metlay 1999). The product of these two considerations produces institutional trust.

Using the SANDF survey measure of trust over time (Figure 20), it was found that more than half (58%) of people in 2020 expressed trust in the SANDF. Of this figure, under a fifth (16%) expressed strong trust and a further two-fifths (42%) voiced moderate levels of

trust. By contrast, 7% reported moderate distrust and 3% strong distrust. The remainder were either neutral (24%) or uncertain (8%). Compared to the 2017 SANDF SASAS results, it is evident that between 2017 and 2020 there has been a decrease in trust and specifically a net loss in those that strongly trust (-6%) and trust (-7%) the SANDF. In relation to 2014, the general tendency was also a net loss of trust.

Concerning the pre-COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 results, we notice a similar trend to what was found when analysing pride. Similar to the pride, the COVID-19 pandemic had a pull-down effect on trust in the SANDF and post-COVID-19 results indicate a decline of 8% in overall trust when compared to pre-COVID-19 results. The socio-demographic groups most affected were similar to those found with regards to pride.

**FIGURE 20: TRUST IN THE SANDF 2014, 2017, 2020**



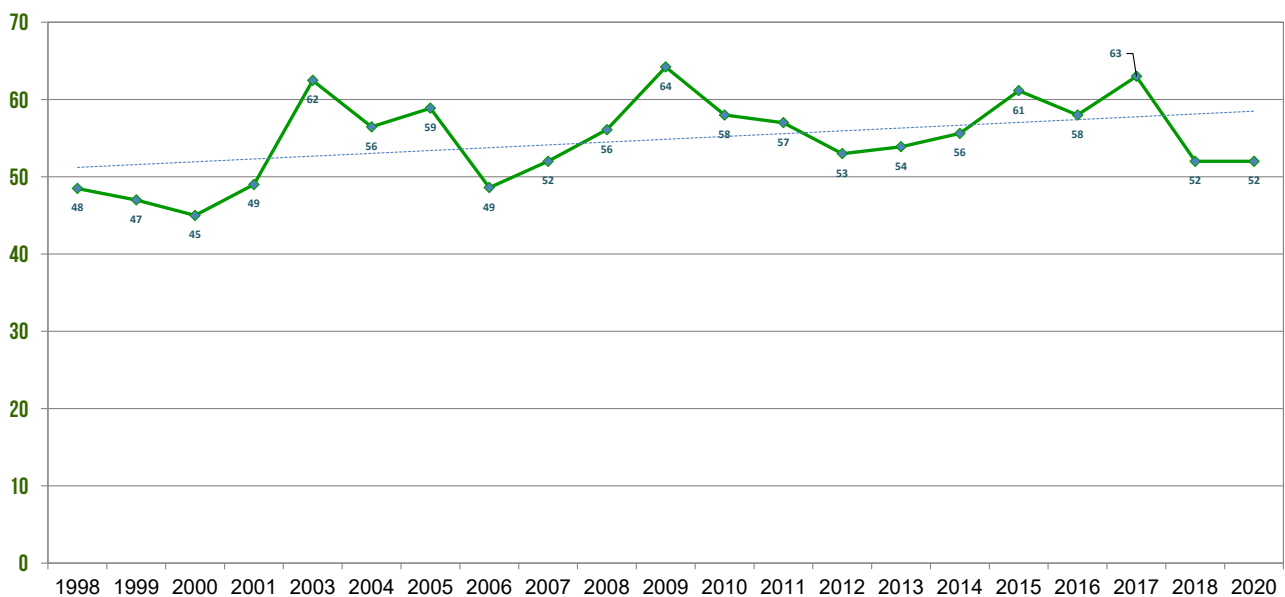
Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017, 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

To supplement the findings above and to get a longitudinal view of trust in the SANDF, we examined levels of trust between 1998 and 2018 (measured as part of the core in the SASAS survey series). It is important to clarify a methodological issue in relation to the different results in the bar graph and line graph (Figure 21). As indicated earlier, the SASAS questionnaire version containing the SANDF module (bar graph) suggested that 58% trusted the institution in 2020, though the line graph shows 52%. This is because the results presented in the line graph are from the main SASAS questionnaire version, containing the full set of institutional trust items. The ordering and framing of the questions in the main instrument have been consistent for more than a decade. It is for this reason that we presented this figure rather than the figure from the SANDF module. The percentage

point difference between the two questionnaire versions suggests that there may be a methodological effect to including the trust item in an in-depth Defence Force module, leading to a modest upward bias in reporting.

Two broad trends are worth noting. The first is that there have been modest fluctuations in trust over the period, ranging from a low of 45% in 2000 to a high of 64% in 2009. Yet, in spite of such variation, it is also important to note that the linear trendline plotted across the full interval shows an upward trajectory on average. This indicates that confidence in the SANDF is generally improving, in spite of episodic ebbs and flows in sentiment. A worrying trend is however the 2018 and 2020 results, which show a significant decline in trust.

**FIGURE 21: TRUST IN THE DEFENCE FORCE, 2003-2020 (PERCENTAGE THAT STRONGLY OR SOMEWHAT TRUST)**



Sources: HSRC Evaluation of Public Opinion (EPOP) Surveys 1998-2001; HSRC SASAS 2003-2020 (2020 unweighted)

Despite fluctuations in trust of late, it should be acknowledged that South Africans do tend to have trust in the SANDF. This becomes more apparent when one examines trust in the SANDF relative to other core institutions. In order to get a comparative perspective on trust in the SANDF, we report on a trust measure that has been included in the Evaluation of Public Opinion Programme (EPOP) and SASAS series. The reporting of trust in these social and political institutions enables us to examine whether trust in the Defence Force approximates or differs from other key institutions in the country. In Table 13, the patterns of trust in a range of institutions are presented over the 1998 to 2018 period. For ease of use in the table below, we have clustered the results into two categories: the first set relates to the core institutions of the political system such as the three levels of government, parliament, political parties and politicians, while the second set includes a variety of other social and political institutions.

In terms of the core political system, in 2020, barely a third of South Africans trusted any of these institutions. The highest trust was recorded for national government

and despite being the highest, just over a third (34%) trusted parliament. Parliament received a positive evaluation by a mere 32% while extremely low public confidence levels is noted for local government (30%), political parties (22%) and even lower levels for politicians (19%).

The level of trust evident among the other social and political institutions that were examined is wide-ranging. Only three institutions in 2018 were able to command trust from more than half the South African population: Religious institutions were trusted by 57% of South Africans; the SANDF received the trust of 52% of all adults, while the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) was trusted by 51%. Just under half (46%) trusted the IEC. Two-fifths or fewer of South Africans expressed trust in the key institutions of law and order in the country, with the courts receiving the confidence of 40% of the public and the South African Police Service receiving the trust of a mere 35% and trade unions 32%. Based upon these results, the level of trust placed in the SANDF in 2020 means that it ranks second of the eleven institutions examined.

**TABLE 13: LEVELS OF TRUST IN POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS, 1998-2020**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2020
<b>Political system</b>																					
Nat. gov.	47	60	43	52	57	69	64	59	52	52	61	52	51	46	44	41	46	33	28	30	34
Local gov.	37	48	32	38	45	55	48	44	34	38	40	36	36	34	34	32	36	34	29	30	30
Parliament	..	..	..	..	57	65	59	55	46	48	56	49	45	44	37	33	38	28	26	33	32
Political parties	30	39	29	27	..	..	42	37	27	29	34	29	29	25	25	22	26	23	18	23	22
Politicians	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	32	22	26	29	24	25	21	22	18	25	19	14	18	19
<b>Other social and political institutions</b>																					
Religious inst.	82	81	74	81	84	81	81	82	82	83	84	81	79	77	76	78	74	67	71	58	57
The SABC	..	..	..	..	75	73	71	72	..	73	73	74	65	69	67	63	73	61	64	57	51
IEC	..	54	49	63	63	69	65	68	..	67	72	71	61	60	63	55	66	62	56	50	46
Defence force	48	..	45	49	62	56	59	49	..	56	64	58	57	53	54	56	61	58	63	52	52
Courts	42	45	37	45	50	58	56	52	49	50	57	54	50	48	46	45	54	50	49	42	40
The police	42	47	39	40	42	46	45	39	39	40	41	41	41	36	35	34	42	24	35	31	35
Trade unions	38	38	26	38	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	34	43	29	30	28	45	37	29	30	32

Sources: HSRC Evaluation of Public Opinion Programme survey 1998-2002; HSRC South African Social Attitudes

Note 1: The reported percentages combine 'strongly trust' or 'trust' in each of the institutions in South Africa. 2: Figures shaded in green indicate year-on-year improvements; figures in red represent year-on-year declines in trust. Cells that are not shaded represent unchanged levels of trust or an absence of data to assess year-on-year changes.

Turning to trends in institutional trust since 1998, the results show a demonstrable improvement in public confidence in governmental institutions between 1998 and 2004. In contrast, public trust in governmental institutions declined significantly over the 2004 to 2007 period. Following this period of declining confidence in government and other institutions of representative democracy, 2008 and 2009 brought a levelling off in trust and slight improvements were experienced in most instances. This stabilisation and recovery period was relatively short-lived and the 2010 to 2014 period was characterised by declining trust. Between 2009 and 2014, political and social institutions with available data exhibited falling trust levels, with the largest decline in

public confidence witnessed in relation to Parliament and national government falling by 23 and 20 percentage points, respectively. In 2015 a positive upswing in trust for most institutions was noted, but this was again short-lived and the net gain was reversed in 2016. The negative trend continued, and in 2017 trust scores for political institutions were the lowest recorded since the inception of the trust measure in 1998. Four socio-political institutions (including the SANDF) managed to reverse the negative trend of 2016 in 2017. In 2018, all core political institutions showed an increase in ratings compared to the low in 2017, but the reversal was not true for the other social and political institutions which, with the exception of trade unions, all showed a decline

in trust. This downward trend for social and political institutions continued in 2020, with the exception of the SANDF which rating remained similar to 2018 and the Police where an increase in trust was noticed. These comparative findings are important for the SANDF since they position this institution among other institutions and reflect a trend that might be due to broader socio-political issues.

With regard to subgroup differences, males and females were equally trusting of the SANDF, as well as the different age groups. Coloured South Africans were more trusting of the SANDF than white South Africans. Contrary to previous years, the tertiary educated exhibited the highest levels of trust, with the mean trust scores higher than all other education groupings. KwaZulu-Natal residents exhibited the lowest trust in the SANDF, while

Mpumalanga and Northern Cape residents exhibited higher trust scores than all other provinces. Knowledge and experience of the Defence Force again matter for patterns of trust. There was a clear, positive association between self-rated knowledge and trust, with a weaker patterning. Those more knowledgeable of the SANDF were therefore incrementally more trusting. Having direct experience of the Defence Force had a modest positive effect on trust, but having indirect exposure to the SANDF had an even greater positive effect on trust. Interestingly, if you were a frequent user of social media you were significantly more likely to trust the SANDF. Trust in the SANDF was significantly higher prior to the COVID-19 pandemic than after the pandemic had started. The issue of civic participation in the SANDF is an issue that clearly affects pride and trust and should be considered by the SANDF.

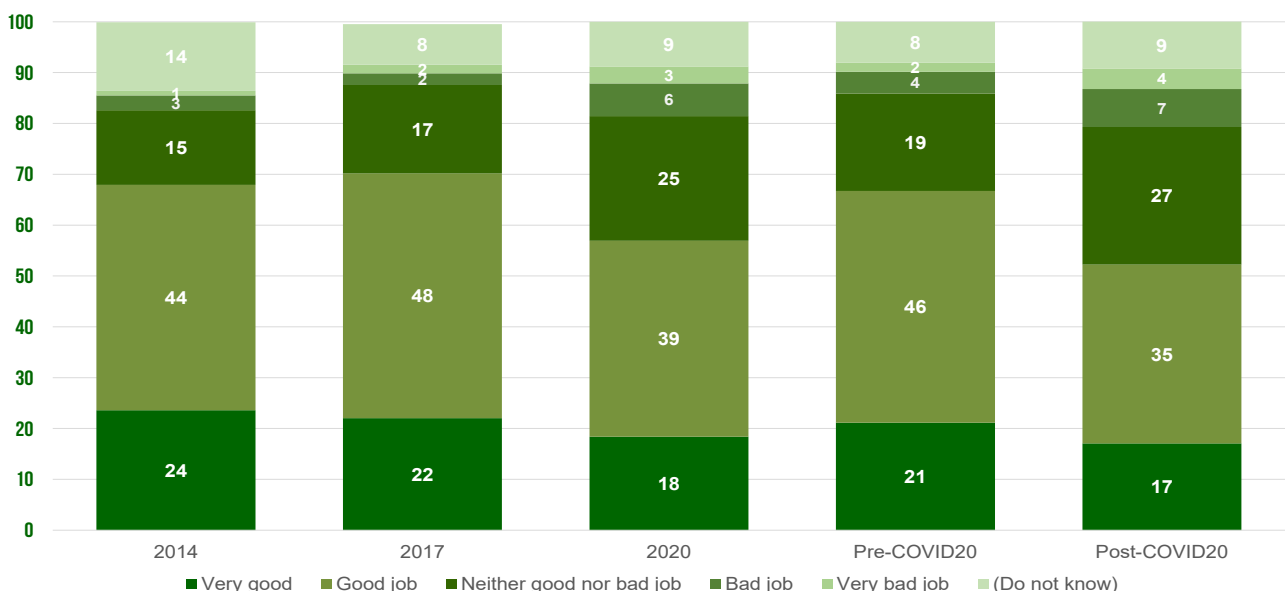
### 3.3.3. OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE

A third and final measure included in the survey, which allows for the examination of general confidence in the SANDF, focuses on performance and derives from similar items included in a module on confidence in the criminal justice system, included in the fifth round of the European Social Survey (ESS) in 2010 and 2011. Specifically, the SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 respondents were asked the following: 'Taking into account all the things that you expect the South African National Defence Force to do, to what extent do you believe they are doing a good job or a bad job?' Responses ranged from one (very good job) to five (very bad job).

population (18%) felt that the SANDF was doing a very good job, with two-fifths (39%) expressing the view that they are doing a good job. Therefore, in total, more than half (57%) felt that the SANDF was doing a good job. About a tenth (9%) of respondents were of the opinion the SANDF was doing a bad job. The remainder of the respondents were divided between those who expressed neutrality (25%) and those unsure how to respond (10%). These figures differ from the 2017 results in that the ratings are universally more negative than in 2017. At this stage, it is again prudent to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on these ratings. As can be seen from Figure 22, the impact of COVID-19 on the perceptions of the performance of the SANDF was obvious.

On average, in 2020 less than a fifth of the adult

**FIGURE 22: OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE SANDF, 2020 (PERCENTAGE)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Pre-and post-COVID-19 trust levels are compared in Table 14 by the various socio-demographic attributes. The table provides an analysis of mean scores from 0-100. In the analysis, 'do not know' responses were dropped and the scale was reversed and transformed into a 0-100 index, with higher scores representing better performance evaluations. As is evident from the table,

the average mean score for overall performance of the SANDF pre-COVID-19 was 69,9, significantly higher than the 63, 4 score post-COVID-19. When analysing the subgroups, it is evident that there was no significant difference between the genders pre-COVID-19, but post-COVID-19 males seemed to be slightly more positive in their rating of the performance of the SANDF. Pre-

COVID-19, black African adults rated the performance of the SANDF highest, particularly higher than the Indian/Asian adults, but post-COVID-19 results showed no significant differences between the population groups. Significant differences were found between the age groups with those in the 25-34 age bracket, rating the performance of the SANDF post-COVID-19 much higher than the 35–49-year-old group.

A socio-economic gradient was not evident. Education levels and socio-economic status did therefore not contribute to different pre- and post-COVID-19 ratings.

In terms of province, a negative COVID-19 impact was most noticeable in KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape. In all these provinces the post-COVID-19 performance rating of the SANDF fell with more than 10 percentage points. The SANDF should pay specific attention to these provinces to determine the cause of these negative impacts. As found in previous sections, knowledge of the SANDF contributed to a more positive performance rating but as is evident in the table, even those knowledgeable of the SANDF were more sceptical of the performance of the SANDF post-COVID-19.

**TABLE 14: PERFORMANCE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE IN SOUTH AFRICA BY SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES, 2020 COMPARED PRE- AND POST-COVID-19**

	2020 Pre-COVID-19			2020 Post-COVID-19			Difference
	Mean score	Sig.	ANOVA p	Mean score	Sig.	ANOVA p	
South Africa	69,9			63,4			-6.5
Male	70,6	Ns.		64,7	*	Male >Female	-5.9
Female	69,4			62,2			-7.2
Black African	71,1	*		64,1	ns		-7
Coloured	65,7			59,7			-6
Indian	65,5		Indian < black African	58,6			-6.9
White	66,3			62,6			-3.7
16-24	66,9	*	16-25 <	62,3	***		-4.6
25-34	70,7		25- 34 < 35-49	68,3			-2.4
35-49	72,6			60,4		25- 34 > 35-49	-12.2
50-64	70,4			61,4		25- 34 > 50-64	-9
65+	67,7			65,4			-2.3
Junior Primary Schooling or less	70,3	***		64,1	ns		-6.2
Incomplete Secondary	66,9		Post matric >	62,5			-4.4
Matric	71,7		incomplete secondary	64,4			-7.3
Post-Matric	76,1			60,7			-15.4
Non-poor	66,3	ns		62,2	ns		-4.02
Just getting by	70,7			64,0			-6.64
Poor	72,5			64,7			-7.75
Western Cape	71.1	***		61,1	***		-10
Eastern Cape	74,3			64,1			-10.2
Northern Cape	73.0		MP >	70,6			-2.4
Free State	75,3		KZN	75,1			-0.2
KwaZulu-Natal	65,3			52,9			-12.4
North West	63.0			65,9		KZN < WC, EC, NC, NW,	2.9
Gauteng	71,9			65,9		GT,	-6
Mpumalanga	76.2			77,1		MP > WC	0.9
Limpopo	66,8			66,5		FS > WC	-0.3
No personal military experience	71,2	ns		64,6	**	No experience > experience	-6.51
Personal military experience	67,8			59,6			-8.16
No indirect military experience	70,7	ns		63,4	ns		-7.28
Indirect military experience	71,1			64,0			-7.09
Not at all knowledgeable	56,8	***	Not at all <	52,3	***	Not at all <	-4.44
Not very knowledgeable	69,2		Not very <	63,2		Not very <	-5.93
Somewhat knowledgeable	72,0	**	Somewhat <	66,0		Somewhat <	-5.94
Very knowledgeable	79,6		Very knowledgeable	75,1		Very knowledgeable	-4.44

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

In summary, this section has shown, based on the descriptive analysis of the three general measures of pride, trust and performance, that the SANDF is an institution that on average has the support and confidence of the South African public. Furthermore, there is a reasonable degree of correspondence between the three measures, which suggests that respondents tend to respond in a broadly uniform manner to the indicators. When considering these measures over time, it is apparent that over the past three years there has been a decline in pride, trust and performance ratings among almost all groupings in South Africa. This is, however, more apparent for black African adults. This group

was in the previous survey significantly prouder and trusting of the SANDF and had the highest performance ratings. The 2020 results show that these ratings have decreased and that black Africans are now similar in their ratings of the SANDF to other population groups. Another critical finding is the impact of COVID-19. Pre- and post-COVID-19 interviews show a marked decline in trust, pride and performance ratings of the SANDF after COVID-19 pandemic. The SANDF should be aware of this critical finding. SANDF involvement in civic matters should be carefully managed and controlled since it has an immediate bearing on perceptions of the SANDF.

## 3.4. THE PERCEIVED ROLE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

Countries like the United Kingdom, the United States and France have relatively entrenched, long-lasting military traditions. These histories can become sources of public support which policymakers can use to maintain what might be termed a 'baseline of legitimacy' (Harries-Jenkins & Doorn 1976; Finer 2002). By contrast, the military history of South Africa is less accessible as a source of pride and legitimacy. The majority of South Africans see the history of the apartheid- and colonial- era military as illegitimate. The government has endeavoured to address the military's 'legitimacy deficit' by giving the modern armed forces new tasks and strategic goals, such as peacekeeping in Africa. But, given the institution's difficult history, it is worth asking: What role and general importance do the adult public give to the modern South African military? The aim of this section is to explore this important question.

### 3.4.1. PERCEIVED NECESSITY OF THE DEFENCE FORCE IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

In the mid-1990s, the South African armed forces were transforming, their original mission changing along with the political landscape of the country. In order to better understand this challenge, the Department of Defence commissioned a module in the HSRC's Omnibus survey in May 1995 to determine public opinion towards a range of defence and security-related issues. One of the items included in the survey examines the public demand for a strong defence force in the country. Specifically, respondents were asked 'compared to the past and

considering the degree to which the country is now threatened, to what extent does South Africa still need a strong defence force?' Responses were captured using a five-point scale, as follows: 'much needed', 'needed', 'neither needed nor unnecessary', 'unnecessary' or 'very unnecessary'. Close to three-fifths (56%) of the general public responded affirmatively, a fifth (20%) felt a strong defence force was unnecessary, a tenth (11%) was neutral, while the remainder of South Africans were uncertain about how to respond.

**TABLE 15: MAIN REASON FOR HAVING A STRONG DEFENCE FORCE, 1995**

	Percentage support
A country should always be prepared	26
To defeat an enemy attack	20
Support police in their fight against crime	11
Counter an internal uprising or civil war	8
To provide more jobs	8
International peacekeeping operations	2
(No need for a strong defence force)	17
(Don't know)	8

Source: HSRC Omnibus 1995

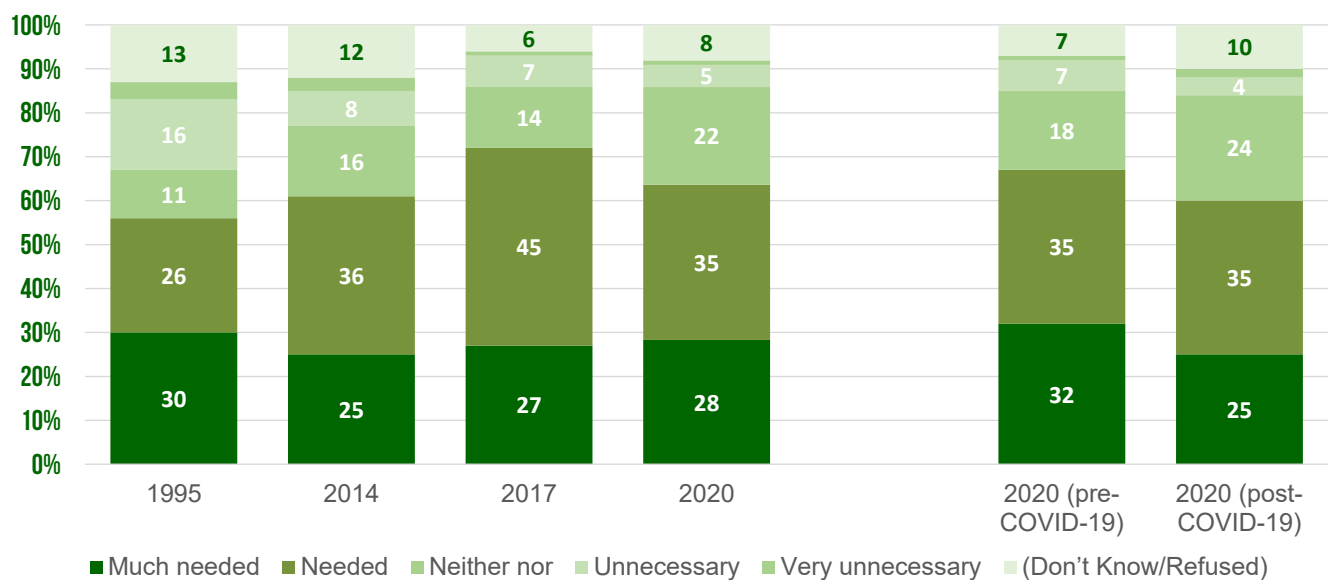
Note: Data is weighted to be nationally representative of the adult South Africans in 1995.

There were discernible population group differences underlying the relative ranking of these motivations. While there was consistency in the ranking of ‘a country should always be prepared’ as the top consideration and ‘international peacekeeping’ as the least cited reason, there was variation in the level of emphasis placed on other reasons. Most notable of these was the greater emphasis placed on responding to external threats (enemy attack) by black African adults and on addressing internal instability and disorder (internal uprising/civil war, crime) by white, coloured and Indian adults. In sum, it would appear that the majority of the adult population in 1995 believed that the country required a strong defence force, with readiness to respond to external security threats as the dominant consideration.

Looking ahead two decades, to what extent have such preferences changed? Do adult South Africans continue to exhibit a fairly resolute demand for defence or are there signs that preferences have shifted in line with changing times? To assess this, the original HSRC Omnibus Survey question was re-fielded, including the same

phrasing and coding structure. The national frequency distribution in response to the question in 1995, 2014, 2017 and 2020 is presented in Figure 23. In early 2014, 61% of the adult population expressed favourable views in respect of the need for a strong defence force, of which a quarter (25%) voiced strong support. By contrast, less than a fifth (16%) adults were neutral and around a tenth (11%) felt that a strong defence force was not required, and a similar share (12%) of adults were unsure how to respond. In 2017, the positive sentiment continued with almost three-quarters (72%) expressing favourable views. This trend was somewhat reversed in 2020, but still positive in nature. In 2020, 28% of the general population strongly agreed with the statement and 35% simply agreed. This was less than what was observed in 2017. Considering the pre- and post-COVID-19 results, it is evident that the COVID-19 pandemic had negatively impacted the demand for a strong defence force. Pre-COVID-19, two-thirds of South Africans agreed they wanted a strong defence force, but post-COVID-19 interviewing showed the share had diminished to 60%

**FIGURE 23: DEMAND FOR A STRONG DEFENCE FORCE IN 1995, 2015, 2017, 2020 (COLUMN PERCENTAGES)**



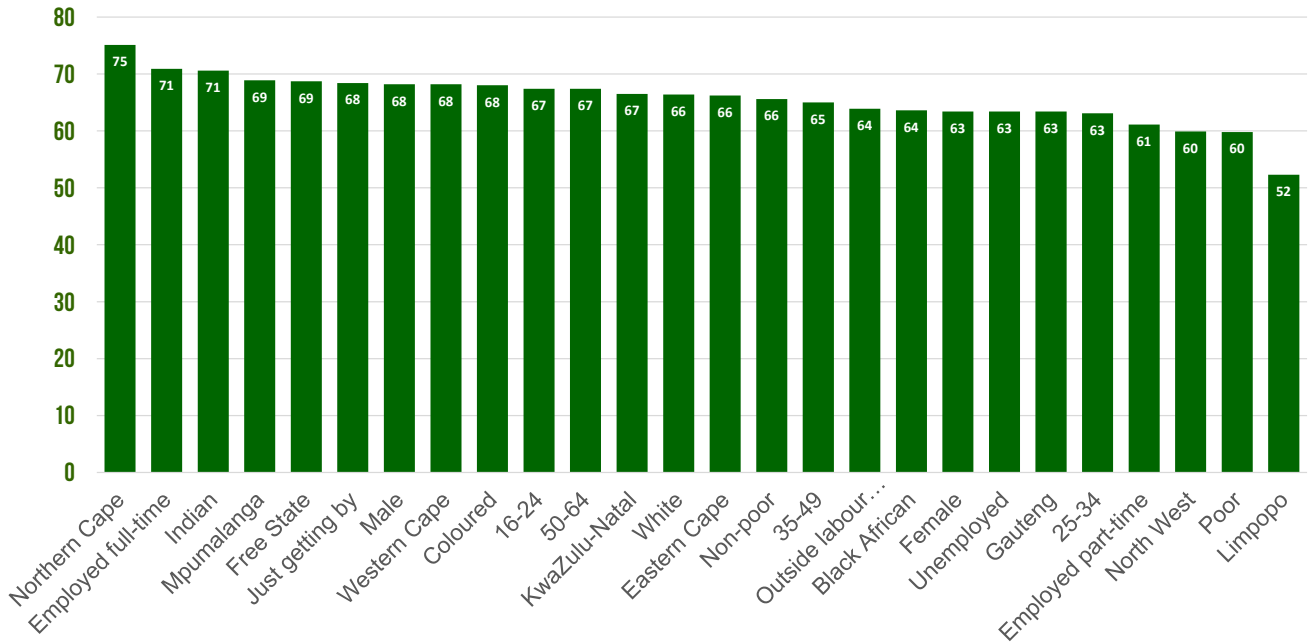
Source: HSRC Omnibus Survey 1995; HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

To provide a more nuanced sense of the demand for a defence force, we now examine select subgroup differences. The percentage favouring a robust defence force for each of the attributes is presented in Figure 24. In many instances the variation is modest, though most notable are demand variations per province.

Consistent with previous findings, males were more convinced that a strong defence force is needed than females. Contrary to previous years, black Africans rated lowest on need for a strong defence force, while the Indian/Asian group rated highest. A socio-economic gradient was evident with those employed full-time

and financially getting by more convinced that a strong defence force is needed compared to the poor and the unemployed. The largest variations were, however, found with regards to province, with the people in the Northern Cape, Mpumalanga, Free State and Western Cape much more convinced of the need for a strong defence force than residents of Gauteng, North West and Limpopo. Although the reasons for this finding have not been interrogated, the SANDF should be cognisant of these provincial variations and attempt to understand the reasons behind this phenomenon.

**FIGURE 24: DEMAND FOR A STRONG DEFERENCE FORCE IN 2020, BY SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES (% SAYING A STRONG DEFERENCE FORCE IS NEEDED), RANKED BY PERCENTAGES IN DESCENDING ORDER**



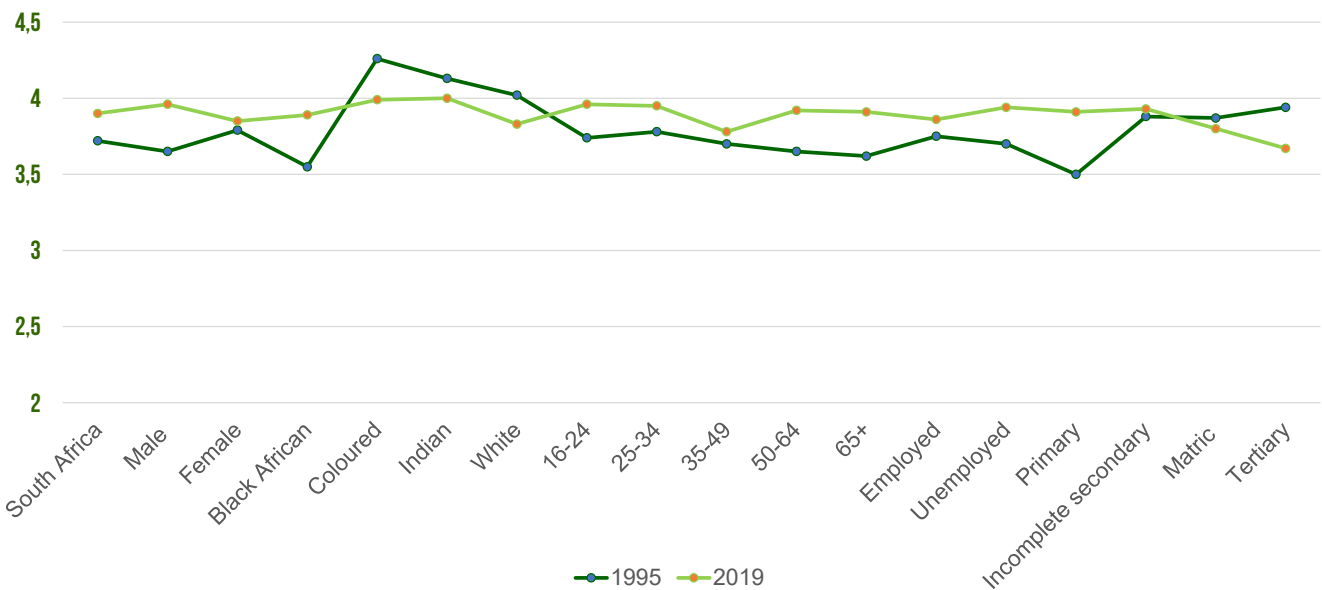
Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module.

Note: Mean scores in the second figure are based on a reversed scale, where 1=“very unnecessary” and 5=“much needed”. ‘Do not know’ responses have been omitted.

In order to get a further understanding of the changes in demand for a strong defence force in the past two-and-a-half decades, the 1995 and 2020 results are compared. As can be seen from Figure 25, the demand for a strong defence force has increased between 1995 and 2020

among most socio-demographic groupings. The only exceptions are the minority race groups and those with a matric or tertiary education who became less convinced of the demand for a strong defence force over time.

**FIGURE 25: DEMAND FOR A STRONG DEFERENCE FORCE IN 1995 AND 2020 COMPARED, BY SELECT SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES (PERCENTAGE SAYING A STRONG DEFERENCE FORCE IS NEEDED - MEAN SCORES)**



Source: HSRC Omnibus 1995; HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Note: mean scores in the second figure are based on a reversed scale, where 1=“very unnecessary” and 5=“much needed”. ‘Do not know’ responses have been omitted.



### 3.4.2. THE NEED FOR A DEFENCE FORCE DURING TIMES OF PEACE

As a further test of the strength of public sentiment regarding the demand for a defence force in the country, the following question was posed to respondents: 'To what extent do you agree or disagree that there is a role for the South African National Defence Force during times of peace?' Responses were captured using a conventional five-point agreement scale. The purpose was to determine whether South Africans' belief in the need for a strong defence force continues to apply even in periods of relative peace when no clear threat to the nation state is apparent.

The response was positive in nature. Around six out of every ten adults (59%) supported this statement, with a seventh (17%) expressing strong agreement. Conversely, a tenth disagreed with the statement, while 21% adults were neutral and 10% unsure how to respond. Consistent with previous sections, the findings are less positive than in 2017. In 2017 around six out of every ten adults (69.7%) supported this statement, with a quarter (25.6%) expressing strong agreement. Conversely, less

than a tenth (6.1%) disagreed with the statement, while 14% adults were neutral and 11 percent unsure how to respond.

Significant differences were only present in relation to gender and province, with men offering more favourable views than women. In terms of province, views varied profoundly ranging from 47% agreement found among KwaZulu-Natal residents to 79% agreement in the Free State. Free State residents voiced the strongest support followed by Mpumalanga (73%), Northern Cape (69%), Gauteng (66%) and Eastern Cape (64%). Lower support was found in North West (55%), Western Cape (53%), Limpopo (48%) and KwaZulu-Natal. The provincial variation on this measure is interesting and a matter to be investigated by the SANDF. The biggest share of South Africans however do support having a defence force in times of peace, but a worrisome trend is that almost a third (31%) of South Africans are ambivalent about the issue.

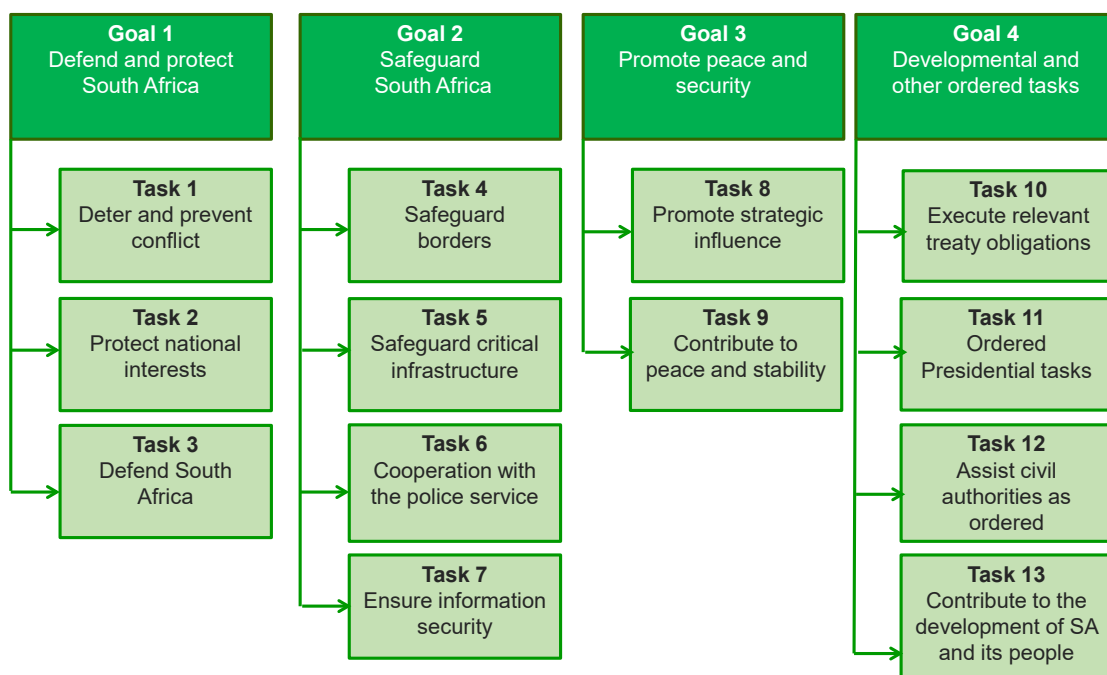
### 3.4.3. THE PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC DEFENCE GOALS AND TASKS

The 2014 Defence Review outlined a number of strategic defence goals and tasks for the South African Defence Force (Figure 26). Some of these related to traditional, core aspects of the military mandate, while others were less conventional but have been proposed as possibilities for a more expansive and developmental approach to defence. Given the importance of this discussion about the specific roles in society of a defence force in the medium- to the long-term structuring of the SANDF, a series of questions was included in the 2014, 2017 and 2020 SASAS modules, relating to these roles. These questions were designed to gain a better understanding of the views of the public concerning the roles they deem

important. In framing the survey questions, an attempt was made to cover each of the four overarching goals in addition to certain core tasks, falling within each goal.

Ultimately, eight items were included in the module: One relating to Goal 1, two pertaining to Goals 2 and 4, and three items linking to Goal 3 (see Table 16). For each of the possible roles presented to respondents, they were asked to indicate the level of importance they ascribe to it. A five-point importance scale was used, ranging from 'very important' to 'not important at all'. These scores were converted to a means score ranging from 0-100, excluding the don't knows.

**FIGURE 26: DEFENCE GOALS AND TASKS AS OUTLINED IN THE 2014 DEFENCE REVIEW**

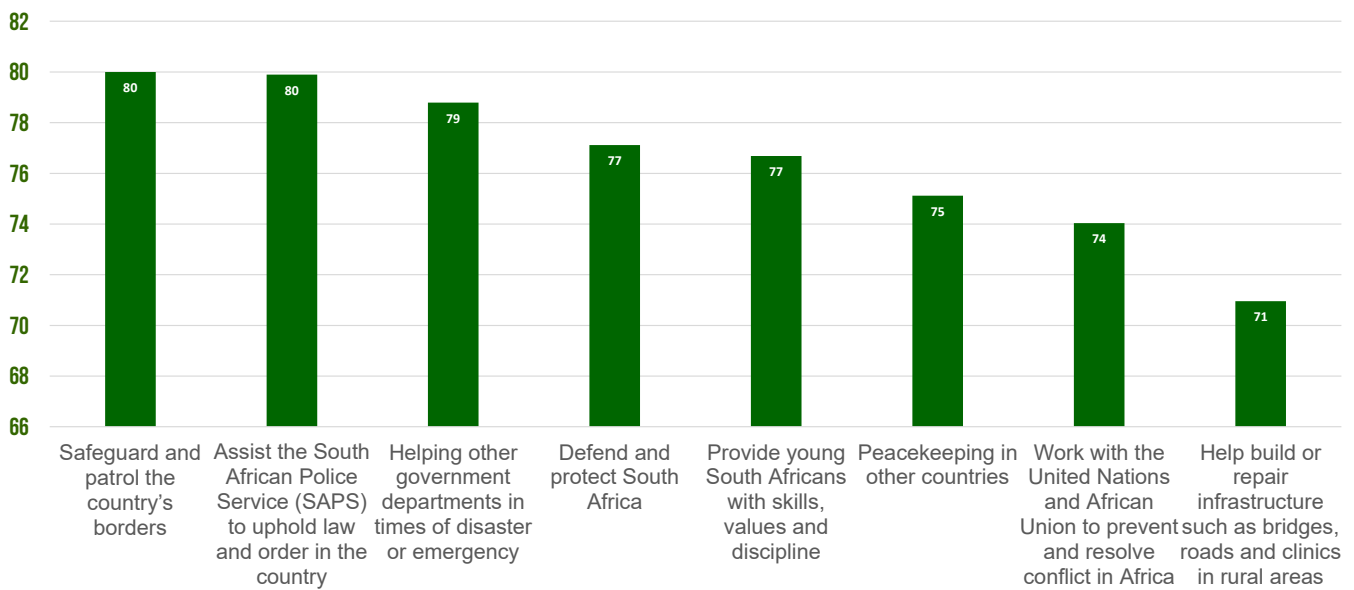


As can be seen from Figure 27, the goals deemed most important by the public were safeguard and patrol the borders, assisting SAPS to uphold law and order, and helping other departments in times of disaster. In 2020, on average eight out of ten South Africans deemed this an important role for the Defence Force to perform. Other roles that were also found to be important but to a slightly lesser extent were defending and protecting South Africa and providing young South Africans with skills, values, and discipline.

The SANDF roles that were flagged as least important for the general public was to help build or repair infrastructure

(such as bridges, roads and clinics) in rural areas. This was followed by working with supranational organisations (such as the United Nations and Africa Union) to resolve conflict in Africa. Peacekeeping in other countries was also considered among the lowest three priorities. From this analysis it seems that South Africans, in general, prefer the Defence Force to pursue a more internally focussed function and are less enthusiastic about the military taking an expansionary role, especially if it is external to South Africa. The SANDF needs to focus on persuading the general population of the importance of these goals and how they positively affect the country as a whole.

**FIGURE 27: IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO DEFENCE GOALS, 2020 (MEAN SCORE)**



Source: SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on evaluations, and it is important to determine if the pandemic had influenced preferences for certain goals. The first observation that can be made from Table 16 is that preferences for all these goals were higher pre-COVID than post-COVID. Regardless of the goal and whether it was domestically or internationally focused, South Africans regarded defence goals as less important. This might be as a result of actions of the SANDF during the pandemic or a result of people being concerned with other more immediate issues.

In 2014 as well as 2017, a factor analysis of these items was done which showed two groupings. The factor loadings showed that defending and protecting the country and safeguarding its borders are most closely associated with the first factor, followed by disaster or emergency relief, assisting the police in maintaining law and order, and lastly by providing young citizens with skills, values and discipline. The second dimension or factor embraces a more developmental and internationalist

perspective, characterised predominantly with strongly envisaged roles in respect of infrastructure development and maintenance, as well as peacekeeping and conflict resolution in Africa. In 2020, we did a similar factor analysis but found that these items all loaded onto one factor, implying a convergence of the importance attached to all of these goals and roles.



**TABLE 16: PREFERENCE FOR DEFENCE GOALS PRE-AND POST-COVID-19**

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not important at all	(Don't know)	Mean score
<b>GOAL 1 – DEFEND &amp; PROTECT SOUTH AFRICA</b>						
Defend and protect South Africa (pre-COVID-19)	51	35	7	1	6	81
Defend and protect South Africa (post-COVID-19)	41	35	13	3	9	75
<b>GOAL 2 – SAFEGUARD SOUTH AFRICA</b>						
Safeguard and patrol the country's borders (pre-COVID-19)	55	31	7	1	6	83
Safeguard and patrol the country's borders (post-COVID-19)	46	34	10	1	9	78
Assist SAPS to uphold law and order in the country (pre-COVID-19)	53	32	7	1	7	82
Assist SAPS to uphold law and order in the country (post-COVID-19)	45	35	10	1	9	79
<b>GOAL 3 – PROMOTE PEACE &amp; SECURITY</b>						
Help gov. departments in times of disaster/ emergency. (pre-COVID-19)	50	36	6	1	7	81
Help gov. departments in times of disaster/ emergency. (post-COVID-19)	42	37	8	3	10	78
Peacekeeping in other countries (pre-COVID-19)	41	38	10	3	7	75
Peacekeeping in other countries (post-COVID-19)	39	39	12	2	9	75
Work with the UN /AU to prevent & resolve conflict in Africa (pre-COVID-19)	44	33	10	5	8	77
Work with the UN /AU to prevent & resolve conflict in Africa (post-COVID-19)	34	42	11	4	9	73
<b>GOAL 4 – DEVELOPMENTAL &amp; OTHER ORDERED TASKS</b>						
Provide young South Africans with skills, values & discipline (pre-COVID-19)	49	35	8	1	7	81
Provide young South Africans with skills, values & discipline (post-COVID-19)	37	41	11	2	9	75
Help build/repair infrastructure i.e. bridges, roads & clinics (pre-COVID-19)	37	30	16	9	8	74
Help build/repair infrastructure i.e. bridges, roads & clinics (post-COVID-19)	33	38	15	5	9	70

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module.

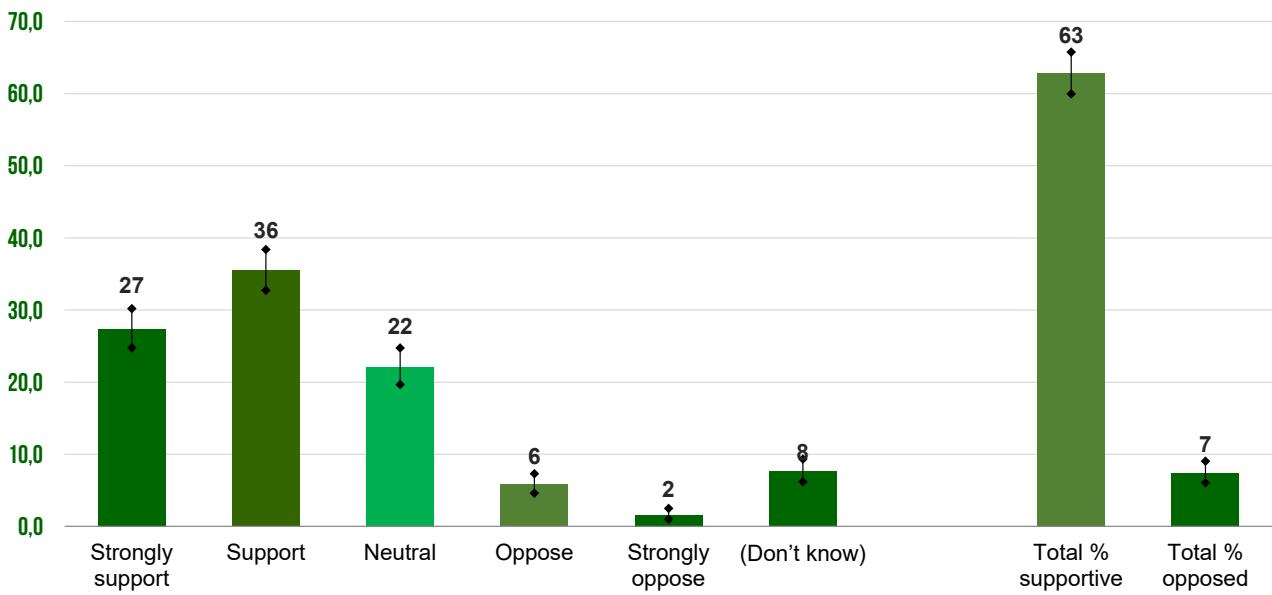
### 3.4.4. SUPPORT FOR SANDF DEPLOYMENT TO ASSIST WITH CRIME REDUCTION

In July 2019, the SANDF was deployed to provide temporary assistance to the South African Police Service (SAPS) in gang-affected hotspots on the Cape Flats in the City of Cape Town, Western Cape. The deployment was initially scheduled to end in September 2020, but President Ramaphosa extended the deployment until March 2020. By the end of March 2020, the SANDF was deployed nationally to assist with the enforcement of the COVID-19 national lockdown regulations. The SASAS surveying period began in late February 2020 and was

disrupted due to the lockdown in late March, at which time approximately 40% of the fieldwork was complete. The fieldwork resumed in early November and was finalised by mid-February 2021. The period covered by the survey includes the pre- and post-COVID lockdown samples, provides a good opportunity to examine views of SANDF deployment to assist the SAPS in crime reduction efforts, while also allowing to determine whether the lockdown deployment altered public opinion on this issue



**FIGURE 28: LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR SANDF DEPLOYMENT TO ASSIST IN CRIME AND GANGSTER HOTSPOTS, 2020 (%)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

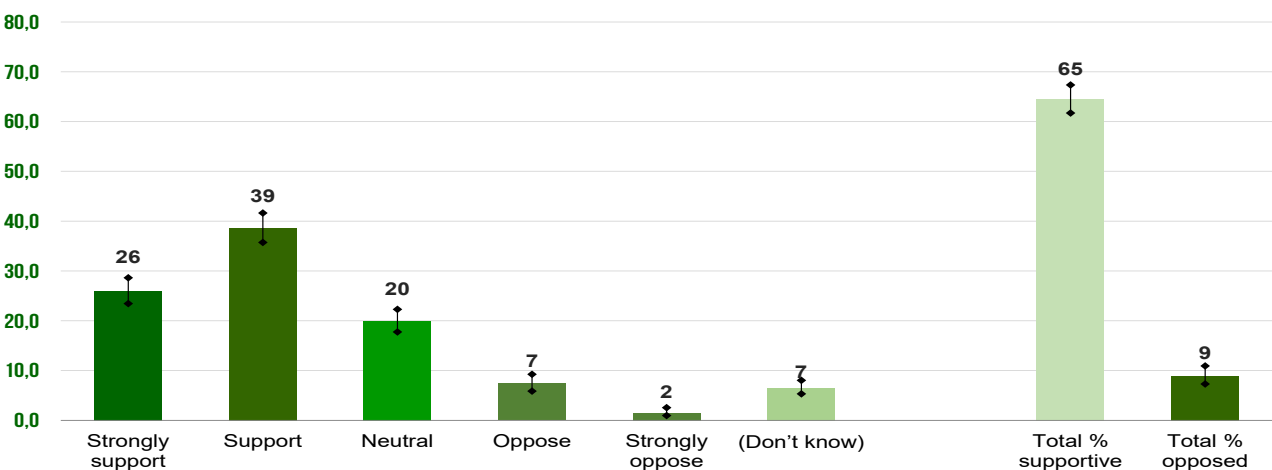
Note: 95% confidence intervals based on the point estimates are represented by the vertical lines superimposed on the bars in the chart.

In relation to this theme, the 2020 survey firstly asked respondents the following general question of deployment to assist in the fight against crime: ‘To what extent would you support or oppose the SANDF being sent to patrol areas with high levels of crime and gangsterism?’. Responses were captured using a five-point scale, ranging from strong support to strong opposition. The results in Figure 28 suggest that the public was broadly in favour of this form of deployment, in line with the expanded defence roles articulated in the Defence Review. An estimated 63% voiced support in principle (95% CI: 60-66%) for the SANDF being deployed to patrol crime hotspot areas, of which 27% expressed strong support and 36% moderate support. Only 7% of the adult public was opposed to this suggestion, while a fifth (22%) was neutral and 8% uncertain.

whether the general support observed above diminishes if the military deployment is to one’s own place of residence, respondents were presented with a follow-up question, which was phrased as: ‘To what extent would you support or oppose the SANDF being sent to patrol your neighbourhood to help fight crime?’ The distribution of responses to the question, as shown in Figure 29, is almost equivalent to the general support for deployment question. Nearly two-thirds of residents (65%; 95% CI: 62-67%) were in favour of the SANDF patrolling their own areas for crime reduction purposes, with 26% strongly supportive of this idea. By contrast, only 9% opposed the suggestion, with 20% neutral and 7% uncertain. The Spearman’s correlation coefficient for responses to the two deployment support measures was 0.85, suggesting that a sizeable majority of adults provided the same answers to both questions.

The deployment in 2019 was to a specific crime and gangsterism locality in the Western Cape. To ascertain

**FIGURE 29: LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR SANDF DEPLOYMENT TO HELP FIGHT CRIME IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD, 2020 (%)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

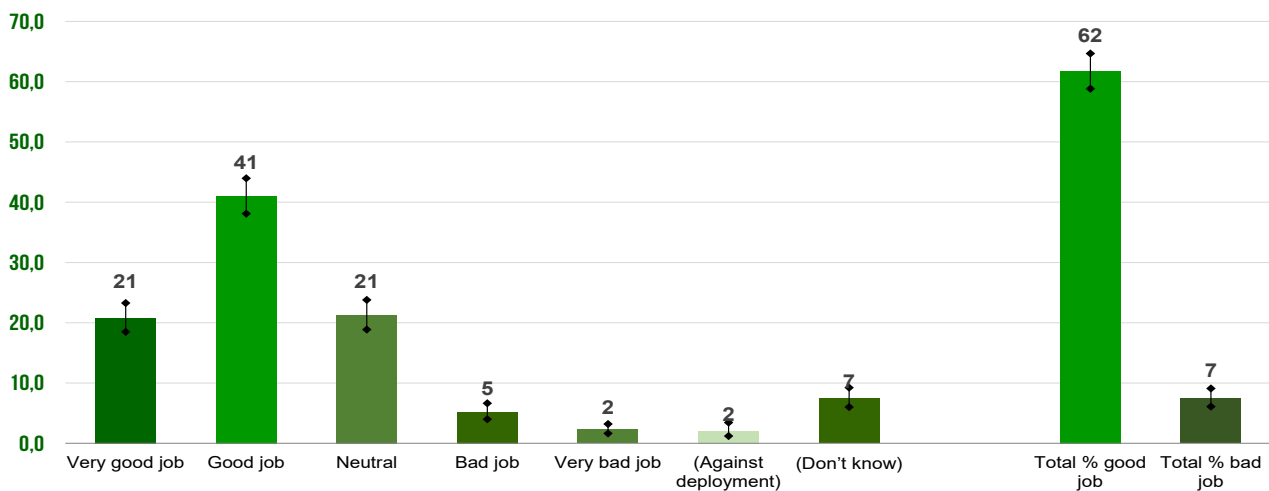
Note: Ninety-five percent confidence intervals based on the point estimates are represented by the vertical lines superimposed on the bars in the chart.

The third and final measure on this topic focused on perceived effectiveness of such deployment to fight crime in communities. Respondents were asked: ‘If the SANDF was sent to fight crime in communities, do you think they would do a good job or a bad job?’, with responses recorded using a five-point scale ranging from ‘very good job’ to ‘very bad job’. An additional code was included for those expressing an unequivocal anti-deployment stance (‘I do not support the SANDF being sent to fight crime in communities’). From Figure 30, it is again apparent that the dominant response is a positive one, with 62% on aggregate stating that the SANDF would be effective in fighting crime at community-level (95% CI: 59-65%), of which 21% South Africans were confident that the Defence Force would do a ‘very good

job’ in this role. Again, less than a tenth (7%) of South Africans expressed doubt about the likelihood of the SANDF being successful if they were to be deployed to assist in crime-beleaguered communities.

The results of the three survey questions on deployment seem to suggest that the public was behind the decision to send the army to patrol the Cape Flats to help bring crime and gangsterism under control. While there have been mixed views on the decision to deploy, as well as the success of the operation, it appears that the public vests confidence and hope that such expanded defence roles might make the difference in addressing crime at community level.

**FIGURE 30: PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF SANDF DEPLOYMENT TO HELP FIGHT CRIME, 2020 (%)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Note: Ninety-five percent confidence intervals based on the point estimates are represented by the vertical lines superimposed on the bars in the chart.

The extent to which these attitudes and preferences differed before and after the introduction of the national COVID-19 lockdown on 27 March 2020 is examined in Table 17. There was an 11-percentage point decline in support for sending the SANDF to patrol areas to help fight crime, and a corresponding increase in neutral and negative views. These changes were mirrored in relation to views on deploying the SANDF to one’s own neighbourhood to help with crime reduction efforts. A more modest but nonetheless statistically significant change was evident with respect to the perceived confidence in the SANDF in successfully fulfilling this potential crime reduction role. The share mentioning that the Defence Force would perform well dropped five percentage points, with the share responding that the SANDF would perform poorly rising four percentage points. These findings were all confirmed by means of multiple logistic regression analysis. While the public remains committed to a role for the SANDF in crime reduction with a supportive position, the dominant response both before and after the COVID lockdown shows this support has eroded to some degree. This is likely to be related in part to experiences and public debate over the national deployment of the SANDF to communities to help enforce COVID regulations as implemented under the Disaster Management Act.

The extent to which these attitudes and preferences differed before and after the introduction of the national COVID-19 lockdown on 27 March 2020 is examined in Table 17. There was an 11-percentage point decline in support for sending the SANDF to patrol areas to help fight crime, and a corresponding increase in neutral and negative views. These changes were mirrored in relation to views on deploying the SANDF to one’s own neighbourhood to help with crime reduction efforts. A more modest but nonetheless statistically significant change was evident with respect to the perceived confidence in the SANDF in successfully fulfilling this potential crime reduction role. The share mentioning that the Defence Force would perform well dropped five percentage points, with the share responding that the SANDF would perform poorly rising four percentage points. These findings were all confirmed by means of multiple logistic regression analysis. While the public remains committed to a role for the SANDF in crime reduction with a supportive position, the dominant response both before and after the COVID lockdown shows this support has eroded to some degree. This is likely to be related in part to experiences and public debate over the national deployment of the SANDF to communities to help enforce COVID regulations as implemented under the Disaster Management Act.

**TABLE 17: CHANGE IN VIEWS ON DEPLOYMENT TO CONTROL CRIME, BEFORE AND AFTER NATIONAL COVID-19 LOCKDOWN IN MARCH 2020 (%)**

	Pre-Covid lockdown interviews	Post-Covid lockdown interviews	Change (percentage point)
<b>Sending SANDF to patrol areas with high levels of crime and gangsterism</b>			
Support	70	59	-11
Neutral	18	24	+7
Opposed	5	9	+4
(Don't know)	7	8	+1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Sending SANDF to help fight crime in your neighbourhood</b>			
Support	72	61	-11
Neutral	15	22	+7
Opposed	6	10	+4
(Don't know)	6	7	+1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Perceived effectiveness if SANDF were sent to fight crime in communities</b>			
Good job	65	60	-5
Neutral	20	22	+3
Bad job	5	9	+4
(I do not)	2	2	0
(Don't know)	9	7	-2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Differences in views of deployment for crime reduction purposes based on socio-demographic attributes is presented in

Table 18. In terms of general support for this SANDF role, there is a slight gender effect, with men more supportive than women. No significant population group differences were found, though there is a weak age effect. Older citizens, especially those of pensionable age, were marginally more supportive of army deployment to fight crime. As for class measures, employment status has not bearing, though education level and subjective poverty status both do. Those with a matric education and who are poor or vulnerable expressed somewhat higher support. Urban residents were more inclined than rural residents to express support for SANDF deployment. Persons living in the Free State, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape were most favourable towards this defence role, while those in Limpopo, North West and Eastern Cape were least supportive. Interesting, those

with personal exposure to the SANDF were less open to this form of deployment than those with no such contact (65% vs 48%). Indirect exposure to the SANDF has no significant effect on this preference.

With respect to support for deployment of the army to patrol one's own neighbourhood to fight crime, no effect was present based on gender, population group, or age, and only a weak employment effect. Similar education, poverty status, geographic and SANDF exposure effects were apparent. As for perceived effectiveness, variation was only evident in relation to subjective poverty status, province, and personal exposure. All other traits were statistically insignificant or marginally significant. Very strong knowledge effects underlie all three sets of results, with higher subjective and objective knowledge of the SANDF linked to greater support for deployment and a belief that the Defence Force would be successful in such a crime reduction role.

**TABLE 18: VIEWS ON THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE SANDF TO HELP FIGHT CRIME IN 2020, BY SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES (% SUPPORT / GOOD JOB)**

	General support for deployment	ANOVA Chi-2 p-value	Support for deployment to own area	ANOVA Chi-2 p-value	Perceived efficacy (good job)	ANOVA Chi-2 p-value
<b>South African average</b>	63		65		62	
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	65	0.0081	67	0.0268	63	0.1156
Female	61	**	63	*	60	n.s.
<b>Population group</b>						
Black African	63	0.7717	65	0.0607	63	0.0461
Coloured	63	n.s.	58	n.s.	56	*
Indian	66		70		65	
White	60		61		57	
<b>Age group</b>						
16-24	63	0.0049	66	0.1024	65	0.1031
25-34	67	**	67	n.s.	63	n.s.
35-49	58		61		58	
50-64	64		64		62	
65+	66		67		60	
<b>Employment status</b>						
Employed full-time	65	0.1862	67	0.0424	65	0.1938
Employed part-time	57	n.s.	62	*	62	n.s.
Unemployed	63		67		62	
Outside the labour market	64		62		59	
<b>Educational attainment</b>						
Junior primary	59	0.0010	57	0.0008	63	0.9038
Senior primary	60	**	69	***	60	n.s.
Incomplete secondary	61		62		62	
Matric	68		69		62	
Post-matric	59		61		60	
<b>Subjective poverty status</b>						
Non-poor	57	0.0000	59	0.0000	57	0.0004
Just getting by	69	***	71	***	65	***
Poor	64		63		64	
<b>Geographic location</b>						
Urban	65	0.0002	67	0.0002	63	0.0115
Rural	58	***	58	***	58	*
<b>Province</b>						
Western Cape	64	0.0000	64	0.0000	63	0.0000
Eastern Cape	56	***	56	***	55	***
Northern Cape	72		68		67	
Free State	80		78		79	
KwaZulu-Natal	64		69		64	
North West	49		52		56	
Gauteng	66		69		61	
Mpumalanga	78		72		71	
Limpopo	43		47		53	
<b>Personal exposure to SANDF</b>						
No	65	0.0000	66	0.0000	63	0.0000
Yes	48	***	52	***	51	***
<b>Indirect exposure to SANDF</b>						
No	63	0.5802	64	0.6946	62	0.9902
Yes	64	n.s.	65	n.s.	62	n.s.
Range of values:	[43 - 80]		[47 - 78]		[51 - 79]	

Note: green-shaded cells represent above-average values.

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Logistic regression of the three variables showed that, when entering all the variables jointly into a model, subjective poverty status, personal exposure to the SANDF, and both self-rated and objective knowledge were the common predictors. Being poor or vulnerable, and having higher levels of knowledge of the Defence

Force promoted greater support and effectiveness ratings, while personally serving in the Defence Force reduced support for deployment and confidence in the ability of the SANDF to perform well in helping to fight crime.

### 3.5. PERCEIVED LEGITIMACY OF THE DEFENCE FORCE

Do ordinary South Africans see the South African military as legitimate? Here we are defining ‘legitimate’ as stable, fair and efficient in their implementation of their functions. This definition is grounded in insights from democratic theory which link institutional legitimacy to the ability of institutions to deliver normatively desirable outcomes (Levi et al. 2009; Tyler & Blader 2013). When people perceive an organisation to be fair, virtuous, and principled, they are more likely to view the organisation as legitimate. Therefore, legitimacy is shaped through individuals’ normative judgements of an institution’s actions. In this section, we examine public evaluations of the SANDF. Firstly, we examine whether the armed forces are seen as fair and successful. Then we investigate whether the organisation is perceived to be succeeding according to their own strategic goals. Finally, we explore how attitudes towards the performance of the SANDF influence individual willingness to join the organisation.

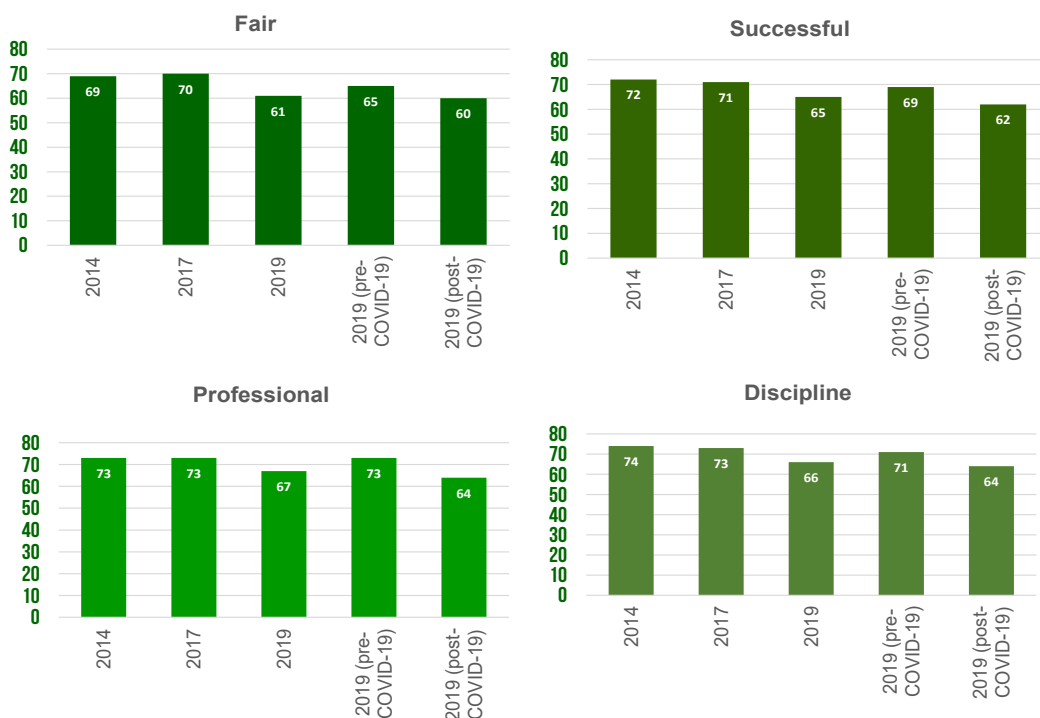
#### 3.5.1. PERCEIVED FAIRNESS AND SUCCESS OF THE DEFENCE FORCE

The 2014, 2017 and 2020 survey module included a set of four items relating to perceived trust in the fairness and effectiveness of the Defence Force. Respondents were asked the following:

*‘Think about the job that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) is doing. As far as you are concerned personally on a scale from one to seven, do you think that the SANDF is... (i) fair or unfair; (ii) successful or unsuccessful; (iii) professional or unprofessional; and (iv) disciplined or undisciplined?’*

End-anchored scaling was used to capture responses, whereby only codes 1 and 7 were labelled, with code 1 representing the positive end of the scale and code 7 the negative. The first, third and fourth items touch on elements of public trust in fairness. The first is a more general assessment of fairness, while professionalism and discipline could be seen as (admittedly imperfect) proxy measures for procedural fairness, which relate to confidence in the manner in which the Defence Force treats people and makes decisions. The indicator relating to whether the SANDF is successful or not is a more standard perceived effectiveness measure. The distribution based on these four indicators of public trust in the Defence Force is presented in Figure 31.

**FIGURE 31: DIMENSIONS OF PUBLIC TRUST IN THE DEFENCE FORCE, 2014, 2017 AND 2020 (PERCENTAGE BARS)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module



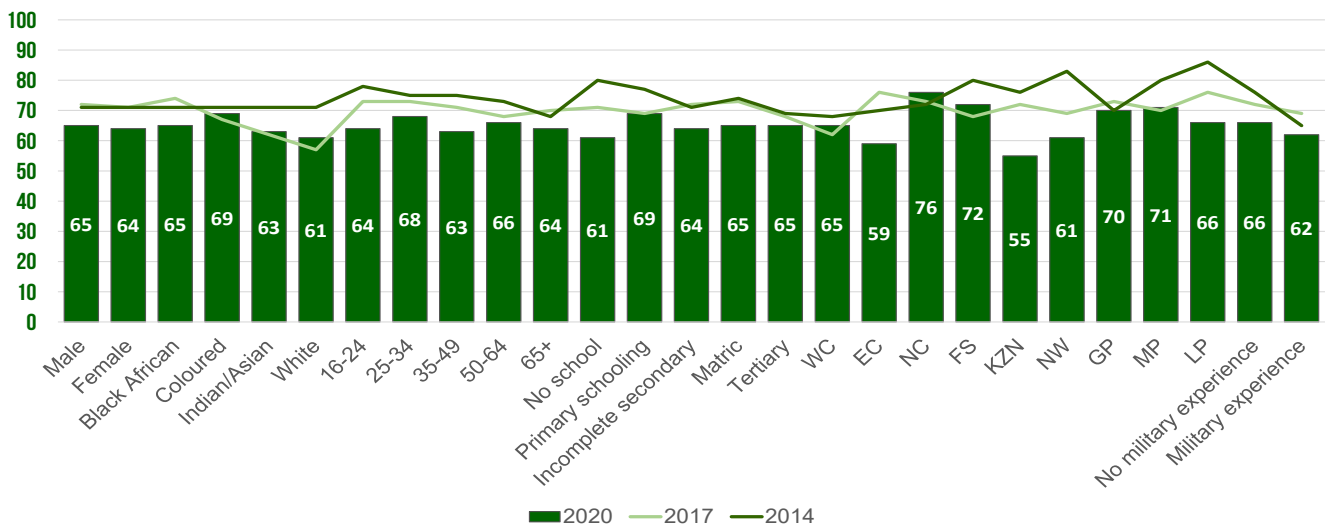
The results show a fair degree of consistency between the three periods under discussion. In all years, adult South Africans demonstrated positive attitudes towards the military and tended to rate this institution overall as fair, successful, professional and disciplined. The results depict a public that is overall content with the manner in which the SANDF operates. However, compared to 2014 and 2017, it is clear that the country was somewhat more negative on all of these domains in 2020. In terms of fairness, 61% of adults in 2020 felt that the SANDF was fair, representing a 9% decrease from 2017. The COVID-19 pandemic seems to have affected ratings of fairness, given that interviews taken prior to COVID-19 showed fairness ratings of 65% while post COVID-19 ratings were down by 5%, averaging 60%. Similar patterns were noticed for the other three domains, but the COVID-19 effect was especially pronounced in terms of the professionalism rating of the SANDF where pre-and post- COVID-19 interviews showed a decline of 9%. It seems that overall, the COVID-19 pandemic and specifically the role that the SANDF played during the pandemic affected perceptions of the SANDF in terms of its fairness, successfulness, professionalism and discipline.

In order to ascertain the total perceived effectiveness of the SANDF, a single composite index was created by combining the four indicators into a single 0-100 index.

To test the validity of this single index, a correlation matrix (or covariance matrix) between four items was produced. The correlations of all variables in the table were significant and positive. A Cronbach alpha test was undertaken to further corroborate the reliability of such a scale (0.88), and the findings indicate that the creation of an effectiveness index, based on these four measures, would yield a highly reliable indicator. In sum, the results of the statistical tests support the combining of the four scales into a single index.

Subgroup analysis based on this Perceived Effectiveness Index is presented in Figure 32 for select socio-demographic attributes. As can be seen from the graph, for the majority of subgroups, the mean trust score was lower in 2020 than in 2014 and 2017. Considering gender in 2020, no significant differences were found between men and women on the Perceived Effectiveness Index. Of all population groups, we find that white and Indian adults had significantly lower index scores in all years than coloured and black Africans. It may be that members of these groups have become, on average, more cynical about the capacity of South African institutions in the last four years. It could also be that these groups have become more willing to believe that the SANDF does not represent people like them. More research is clearly needed to understand this interesting differential.

**FIGURE 32: MEAN PUBLIC TRUST SCORES IN 2014, 2017 AND 2020, BY SELECT SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES (MEAN SCORES BASED ON A 0-100 INDEX)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

In 2020, 25–34-year-olds perceived the SANDF as more effective than those aged between 35–49 years and those aged 65 years and older. Those with a primary school qualification scored highest on the index, while those with no schooling scored lowest. There was a noticeable weakening of perceived performance in some of the country’s provinces. Index scores have declined by more than 10 points considering previous rounds in

the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Effectiveness Index scores in these provinces were lower than 60%. Relative to other provinces, in 2020 Northern Cape and Free State residents scored the highest on this Index, therefore being the most satisfied with these dimensions of the SANDF. Effectiveness scores for the majority of subgroups were therefore lower in 2020 than in 2017 and 2014.

### 3.5.2. EVALUATIONS OF SANDF PERFORMANCE IN RELATION TO SPECIFIC GOALS AND TASKS

In 2014, 2017 and 2020 SASAS rounds included questions pertaining to the perceived performance of the Defence Force in relation to five roles that address aspects of the four overarching goals articulated in the 2014 Defence Review. Respondents were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the SANDF in terms of 'defending and protecting South Africa' (Goal 1), 'safeguarding and patrolling the country's borders' (Goal 2), 'helping other countries in times of disaster or emergency' and 'peacekeeping in other countries' (both Goal 3), and lastly 'providing young South Africans with skills, values and discipline' (Goal 4). The phrasing in each of these items intentionally matches the items included in subsection 3.5.2, which looked at the perceived importance of different roles of the SANDF. Responses to these task-specific performance evaluations were captured using an 11-point end-anchored scale, where zero represents 'extremely unsuccessful' and 10 represents 'extremely

successful'.

The national results are presented in Table 19 on the five strategic tasks outlined above. Across each of the five defence tasks, the evaluations by the public are generally positive but in 2020 the evaluations were less positive. There are minor variations in emphasis across the five tasks. Defending and protecting the country (Goal 1) received the most positive appraisal in all years, while imparting skills, values and discipline to the youth (Goal 4) was the lowest. By examining the skewness and kurtosis of each indicator, we can confirm that distribution of each is symmetric with well-behaved tails. The distribution on each is clustered towards the right of the indicators' mid-point. With each consecutive round, each indicator has become less skewed, which confirms the findings that the general public has become more sceptical of the functioning of the SANDF.

**TABLE 19: TASK-SPECIFIC EVALUATIONS OF SANDF PERFORMANCE (MEAN)**

		Helping other countries in times of disaster or emergency	Defend and protect South Africa	Peacekeeping in other countries	Safeguard and patrol the country's borders	Provide young South Africans with skills, values and discipline
2014	Mean	7.58	7.86	7.38	7.26	6.97
	Std. Err.	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.05
	Skewness	-0.75	-1.12	-0.76	-0.91	-0.64
	Kurtosis	2.88	3.65	2.86	3.05	2.60
2017	Mean	6.71	7.11	6.82	6.42	6.11
	Std. Err.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.05
	Skewness	-0.46	-0.64	-0.48	-0.55	-0.38
	Kurtosis	2.81	2.82	2.71	2.63	2.47
2020	Mean	5.95	6.20	6.13	5.92	5.92
	Std. Err.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
	Skewness	-0.16	-0.15	-0.09	-0.19	-0.14
	Kurtosis	-0.75	-0.43	-0.49	-0.38	-0.42

Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017, 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

To determine in more detail the extent to which these performance evaluations are consistent across different segments of South African society, an index was constructed by averaging together the scores provided by respondents on the five items. The national mean score on this index – labelled the Goal Performance Effectiveness (GPE) Index – declined by almost 14 points between 2014 and 2020. In 2014 the national GPE Index mean was 74, decreasing to 66 in 2017 and even further in 2020 (60). In order to better understand the variation in mean scores, the GPE Index scores for each year are presented across selected socio-demographic groups in Figure 33.

When considering the 2020 results by the various subgroups, it is evident that results are fairly constant among the subgroups. Apart from race and province, no significant differences were found between other subgroups. Looking at how attitudes changed between 2014, 2017 and 2020, we note that for both males and females and among the various age groups, the

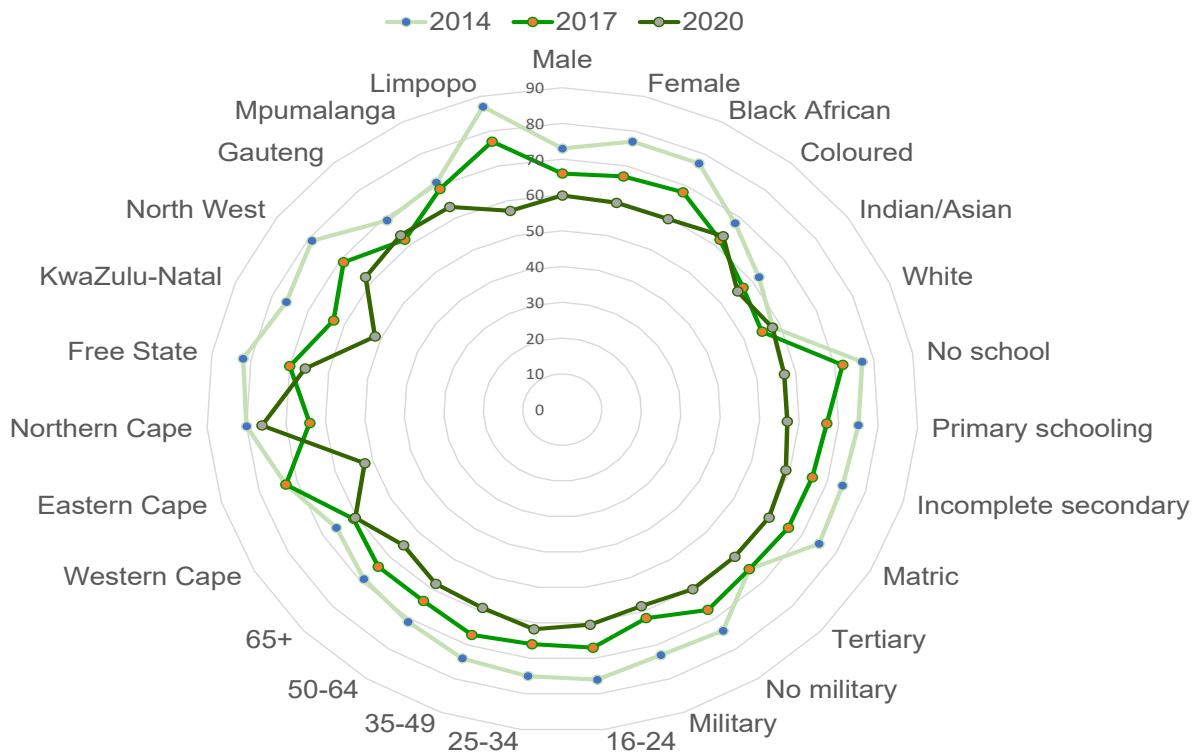
GPEI score decreased gradually from 2014 to 2020. If population groups are considered, it is evident that the GPEI for the black African population group decreased drastically over the three survey rounds (from 77 in 2014 to 59 in 2020), while it remained much more stable over the period for other population groups. Considering educational groups, the greatest decrease in the GPEI over the period was found among those who have no formal schooling, implying a loss of faith in the effectiveness of the SANDF among this group.

Distinct provincial patterns were noted in how different groups altered the way they evaluated the country's armed forces over this period. The only province where evaluations of the SANDF were more positive in 2020 than 2017 was in the Northern Cape. Eastern Cape and Gauteng residents evaluated the SANDF similar to 2017. In all other provinces, a decline in the average GPE Index score was noted. The largest negative changes occurred in Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. Further analysis is required to understand

why residents in these provinces have become much more negative in their assessment of the SANDF's performance on the five identified strategic tasks. The

handling of the COVID-19 situation in these provinces should be considered.

**FIGURE 33: MEAN SCORE DIFFERENCES BASED ON THE GOAL PERFORMANCE EFFECTIVENESS INDEX**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Note: The performance effectiveness index was constructed by averaging responses to the five task-specific evaluation questions. As such, the scaling is still from 0-100, where 0='extremely unsuccessful' and 100='extremely successful'

### 3.5.3. WILLINGNESS TO SERVE IN THE DEFENCE FORCE

In 1957 a system of military conscription was introduced in South Africa by the then relatively new apartheid government. From 1968 this policy of conscription was compulsory. This policy was seen as key to the state's counterinsurgency operations against African nationalism. Over the 25 years that conscription was law, military service increased from nine months to a total of 720 days (including camps). South Africa ended military conscription in 1994 when the country became a democracy.

In mid-2015 ANC Secretary-General, Gwede Mantashe told City Press that he would support the reintroduction of military conscription and stated that South Africa had moved away from the system prematurely. Mantashe went on to say: 'The army is the most equipped structure that could deal with young people in a structured way. Actually, the best engineering capacity in the country is in the army. So that's what we should be thinking about' (quoted in City Press 17/07/2015). Understanding attitudes towards serving in the military is, therefore, important. Comprehending such attitudes was also important in the pre-democratic period. In an effort to increase knowledge of how the public viewed the South African military, the Department of Defence commissioned a public opinion study in 1994 on

individuals' attitudes towards serving in the military. In 1994 survey respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they were personally willing to perform part-time military service in the citizen force or commandos of the SANDF.

As could be expected, young people (aged 16-34) in 1994 were more willing to participate in the military than older people. Of the 16-24-year-old group, 40% were willing to serve in the military, while 37% among the 25-34-year-olds were willing to serve, followed by 32% among 35-49-year-olds, 28% among the 50-64-year-olds and 26% among those aged 65 and older. It is interesting to note that in 1994 young women were just as likely as young men to indicate a desire to serve in the armed forces. Those survey participants who did not want to serve, were asked what was the single most important reason why they would not want to serve (part-time) in the military. The main reason given by older people in 1994 was that they were too old – this reason was given by more than three-fifths (62%) of those in the 50-64 age cohort and almost eight-ninths (85%) of those in the 65+ age cohort. The main reason given by young respondents was discontent or disillusionment with the Defence Force – this reason was given by more than a third (34%) of the 16-24 age cohort in 1994.

**TABLE 20: WILLINGNESS TO SERVE IN THE NATIONAL DEFENCE IN 2014, 2017 AND 2020, BY SELECTED SUBGROUPS (MEAN SCORES BASED ON A 1-7 SCALE)**

	2014		2017		2020	
	Mean	Scheffe Sig.	Mean	Scheffe Sig.	Mean	Scheffe Sig.
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	5.37		5.17		4.9	
Female	5	*	5.06	*	4.9	ns
<b>Population group</b>						
Black African	5.22		5.22		4.9	ns
Coloured	5.03		4.57	***	5	
Indian	4.38	***	5.26		4.7	
White	5.29		4.74		4.8	
<b>Military service</b>						
No experience	5.22		5.11		4.9	
Experience	4.95	*	5.31	*	5	ns
<b>Age Group</b>						
16-24 years	5.21	ns	5.19	*	5	***
25-34 years	5.26		5.14		5	
35-49 years	5.22		5.17		4.9	
50-64 years	5		4.97		4.9	
65+ years	5.12		4.86		4.5	

Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017, 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

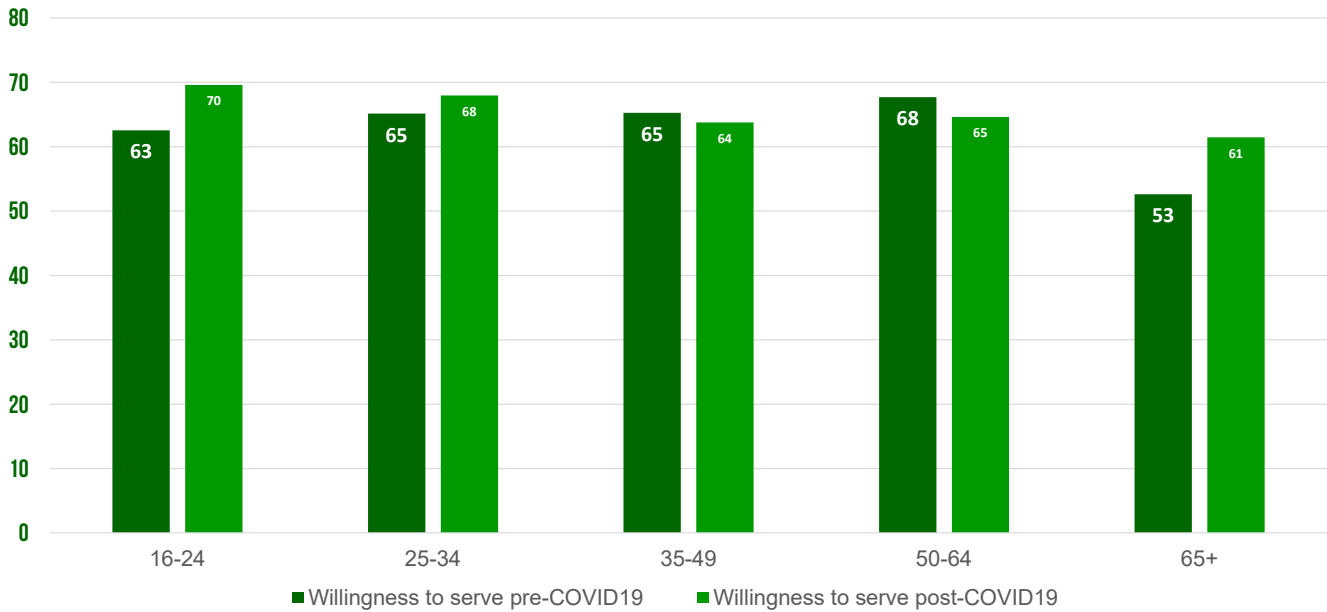
Note: Reported levels of statistically significant are based on ANOVA testing. The signs \*, \*\* and \*\*\* indicate that the differences in mean scores are significantly different at the five percent ( $p < 0.05$ ), one percent ( $p < 0.01$ ) and 0.5 percent ( $p < 0.001$ ) levels, respectively.

In order to update the attitudinal data from 1994, we examined attitudes towards serving in the military in the more recent period. In SASAS 2020, respondents were asked how important it was to be willing to serve in the military in a time of need. Respondents were asked to rank the SANDF on a scale of one to seven on whether they thought they would be willing to serve in the South African military in a time of need. A high score on the scale indicates a willingness to serve. Those respondents who answered 'don't know' to this question were coded as missing. Due to the scaling of the question, a direct comparison with the 1994 data is not possible but some deductions can be made. One observation is that the mean willingness score to serve in the military in 2020 was 65. Willingness to serve in the military therefore seems to have increased since 1994.

Subgroup analysis shows mean scores on willingness to serve in the SANDF in 2020 did not differ by gender, population group or experience. The only significant difference was found for age group, with the oldest age group least willing to serve in the SANDF. These results show a different tendency than previous years where population group, gender group and experience

differentiated willingness to serve in the SANDF. In 2020, apart from age, these socio-demographics did not differentiate willingness to serve. The 2020 result might indicate that the civilian contact with the SANDF during the pandemic had affected people to understand the expanded role of the SANDF and the potential of all being able to play a role in the SANDF.

Given the negative impact of COVID-19 on the image of the SANDF, it is important to see if the willingness to serve in the SANDF increased or decreased post COVID-19. In order to determine this, a mean score was calculated (out of 100) where the 'don't knows' were recoded to missing. In Figure 34 we analyse willingness to serve by age. From this figure it is evident that the tendency among the two youngest age cohorts (16-24 and 25-34 years) was more willingness to serve in the SANDF post-COVID-19. This tendency was also noticed among the 65 years and older age group. This finding can be considered as encouraging and indicates that the COVID-19 pandemic has not deterred willingness to serve in the SANDF, but actually increased willingness, especially among the younger age cohorts.

**FIGURE 34: WILLINGNESS TO SERVE IN THE MILITARY IN 2020, BY AGE COHORT (MEAN SCORES 0-100)**

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

### 3.5.4. MORAL ALIGNMENT WITH THE SANDF

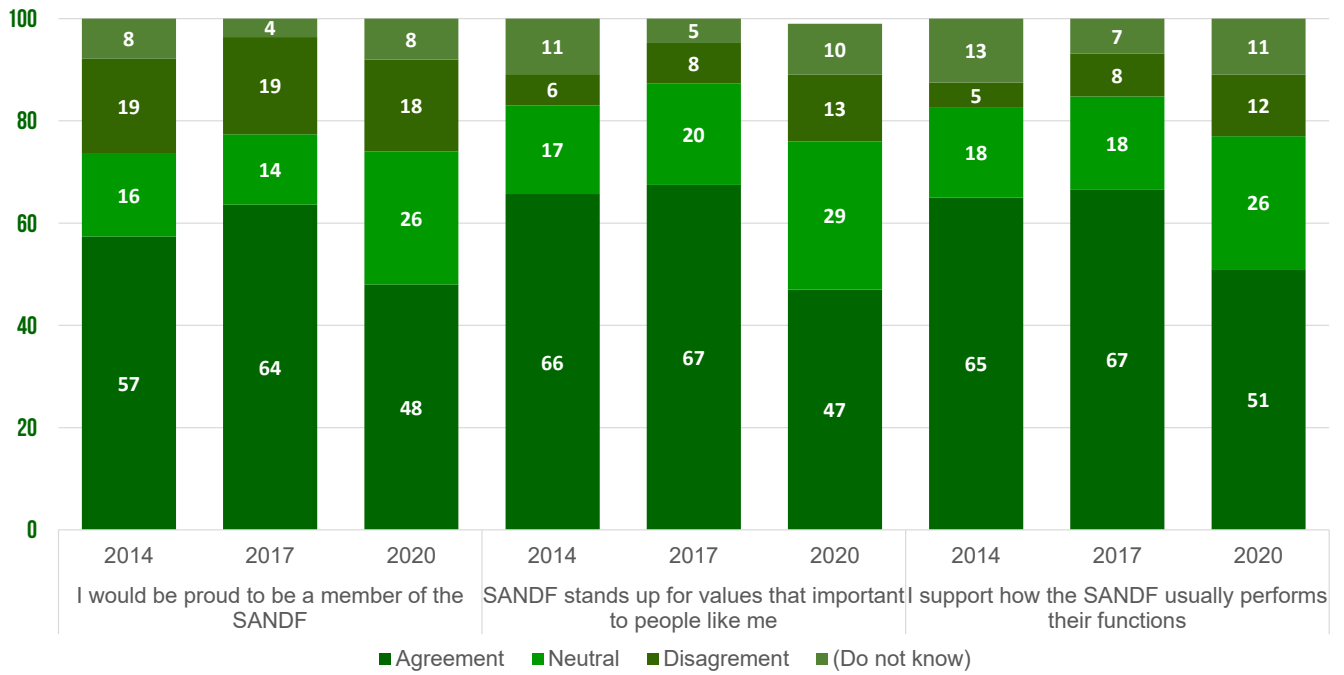
Moral alignment is a critical component in procedural justice theory and is considered a factor informing the perceived legitimacy of a public authority, such as the Defence Force (Tyler, 2006; Zelditch 2001; Levi et al. 2009; Tyler & Blader 2013). Moral alignment engages with the idea that people justify the existence of public authorities when they deem that they have a moral right to exist – in other words, these institutions are seen to share, reinforce and defend the morals that are valued by individuals and the communities in which they reside. In the SANDF Defence Attitudes Module, three items were included to capture moral alignment between citizens and the SANDF. Specifically, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with the three following statements: (i) I would be proud to be a member of the Defence Force; (ii) The SANDF stands up for values that are important to people like me, and (iii) I support how the SANDF usually performs its functions. Responses to three questions were captured using a standard five-point agreement scale. These questions were included in both the 2014, 2017 and 2020 SASAS survey rounds, allowing us to determine the relative depth and stability of the moral authority that the public confers on the Defence Force.

In Figure 35, the national frequency distributions for each of the three measures are presented for 2014, 2017 and

2020. For interpretive ease, the ‘strongly agree’ and ‘somewhat agree’ categories have been combined, as have the two disagreement categories. It is immediately apparent that the dominant, normative response to these questions in both 2014 and 2017 was a generally favourable one. In 2017, 64% of adults indicated that they would be proud to be a member of the Defence Force, 67% believed the SANDF stands up for morals that are highly regarded by them, while a similar share voiced support for the conduct and performance of the SANDF. Opposition to these statements was highest for the item on ‘proud to be a member’ (19%) and considerably lower on the other two items (8%).

Changes between 2014 and 2017 were not as pronounced as those between 2017 and 2020. The proportion being morally aligned in 2020 was much lower than in 2014 and 2017. The general change between 2017 and 2020 can be ascribed to a decrease in agreement with these statements and an increase in neutral responses. ‘I would be a proud member of the SANDF’ fell with 16% from 2017. The share mentioning that the ‘SANDF stands up for values that are important for people like me’ also showed a radical downward tendency (from 67% to 47%) and support for how the SANDF typically performs its functions fell by 16% between the 2017 and 2020 round.

**FIGURE 35: MORAL ALIGNMENT WITH THE SANDF, 2014, 2017 AND 2020 COMPARED (COLUMN %)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF module on Attitudes towards the Defence Force

In order to better understand the degree of uniformity in perspective on moral alignment with the Defence Force, an index based on three measures was created. Reliability testing showed that the three items are combined together to produce an index of acceptable reliability (Cronbach  $\alpha = 0.79$ ). The index was constructed by omitting ‘don’t know’ values, reversing the scales on the three items, such that higher values represent greater agreement (and thus moral alignment), and then

combining the indicators together by means of a simple, averaging approach. This index was then transformed into a 0-100 scale. In Table 21, the mean index scores for 2017 and 2020 are presented for various socio-demographic attributes for the survey respondents. Statistically significant differences in mean scores are presented, based on ANOVA One-Way testing with post hoc Scheffe tests.



**TABLE 21: MORAL ALIGNMENT WITH THE SANDF IN 2017 AND 2020 (MEAN MORAL ALIGNMENT INDEX SCORES, 0-100 SCALE)**

	2017			2020		
	Mean (0-100)	Sig.	ANOVA post hoc Scheffe	Mean (0-100)	Sig.	ANOVA post hoc Scheffe
South Africa	69.0					
Male	71.7	***	Male > Female	62.7	***	Male > Female
Female	66.5			58.4		
Black African	71.0	***	Black African > rest	60.6	Ns.	
Coloured	60.7			61.9		
Indian/Asian	60.6			59.2		
White	62.3			59.3		
16-24	72.7	***	16-24 > 35-49, 50-64, 65+	61.6	***	25-35>50-64, 65+
25-34	71.2			63.9		
35-49	68.6			58.7		
50-64	63.2			58.1		
65+	62.0			57.4		
Primary and lower	65.4	**	Incomplete secondary, matric > primary or lower	58.9	***	Primary< incomplete secondary
Incomplete secondary	69.3			62.3		
Matric	70.4			60.6		
Tertiary	67.4			70.0		
Western Cape	58.6	***	WC, FS < NC, NW, GT < KZN, EC MP, < LP	64.7	***	KZN, EC, LP, NW < GT, WC < NC, FS, MP
Eastern Cape	69.9			57.3		
Northern Cape	63.2			69.5		
Free State	57.5			71.3		
KwaZulu-Natal	68.9			55.3		
North West	65.0			57.4		
Gauteng	65.9			61.0		
Mpumalanga	69.7			68.7		
Limpopo	77.6			55.7		
Urban area	65.6	***	Rural farms>urban areas	62.2	***	Urban >traditional auth areas and farms
Tribal area	69.1			56.6		
Farms/rural	74.4			56.0		
Very knowledgeable	78.0	***	Very > somewhat > not very > not at all	72.3	***	Very > somewhat > not very > not at all
Somewhat knowledgeable	73.7			62.6		
Not very knowledgeable	68.8			58.6		
Not at all knowledgeable	61.4			49.7		
No personal experience	68.8	*	Experienced > no experience	61.2	Ns.	
Personal experience	72.3			60.5		
No indirect experience	68.9	n.s.		60.3	**	Indirect experience> no indirect experience
Indirect experience	69.7			64.3		

Source: HSRC SASAS, 2017, 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

The results suggest that there are statistically significant levels of moral alignment with the Defence Force along demographic, class and exposure lines. From both survey rounds, it is apparent that there is a greater sense of moral alignment among men relative to women. Interestingly, in 2020 black African adults displayed similar moral alignment than other population groups. There is also evidence of an inverse age effect, with moral alignment higher among youth than older citizens. In terms of signs of class differences, there is a positive pattern of moral alignment by educational attainment, which increases from primary level schooling to tertiary education. Moral alignment in 2020 emerged as somewhat higher in urban areas than in rural areas.

Moral alignment among KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Eastern Cape and North West residents were the lowest, while it was highest in the Free State, Northern Cape and Mpumalanga. Knowledge of and exposure to the SANDF mattered significantly. Those with more knowledge of the Defence Force, demonstrated a higher level of moral alignment. Those with personal experience of serving in the Defence Force were not more likely to share a sense of moral alignment than those who have not. Indirect exposure to the SANDF via family or friends that have served resulted in significantly higher moral alignment scores in 2020. These findings suggest that there are distinct variations in levels of moral alignment with the Defence Force within the country.

## 3.6. TRANSFORMATION AND DIVERSITY IN THE DEFENCE FORCE

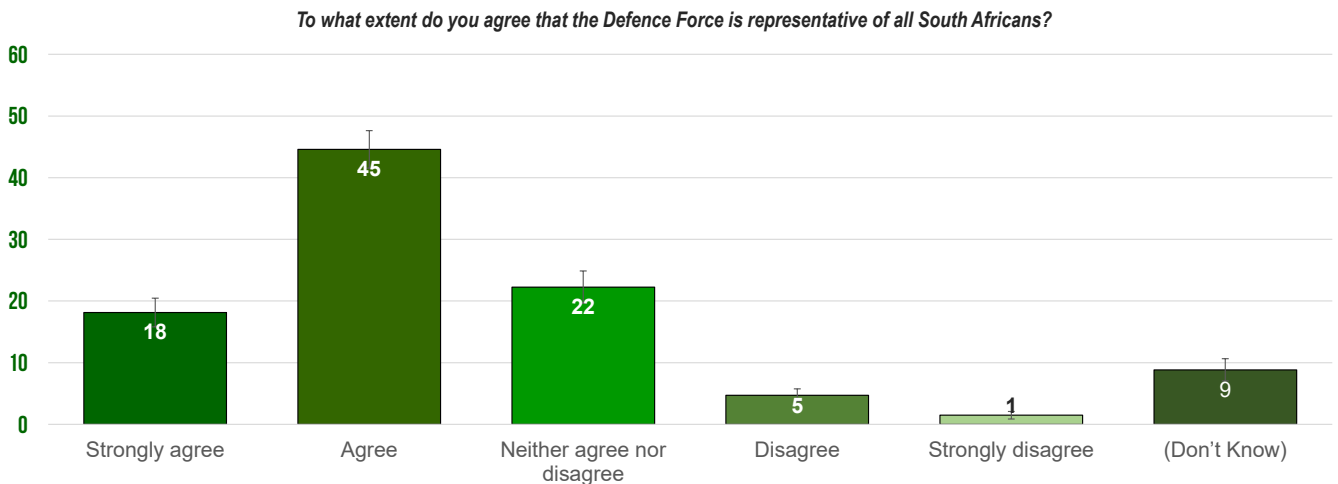
Many years of enforced discriminatory policies resulted in a lack of racial and gender representation within the ranks of the former SADF. In 1994, transformation of the South African military was linked to the national democratic revolution, and emphasis was placed on racial and gender representivity. The transformation agenda of the Department of Defence (DOD) was based on the principles and perspectives of the White Paper of the Public Service 1995, the White Paper on National Defence 1996, and the Defence Review 1998. All of these documents were used as guidelines to attempt to ensure that the SANDF fulfils its responsibilities within the frameworks of organisational transformation and the achievement of representivity and equity. The premise of this transformation was to create and foster a non-racial, non-sexist and non-discriminatory institutional culture in line with constitutional imperatives. According to Wessels (2010: 19), the SANDF has largely been able to shed its apartheid past and has 'won the support of most South Africans of all races'. In this section, we interrogate what the people of South Africa feel about transformation and diversity within the SANDF and determine if South Africans view the SANDF as transformed and representative of all South Africans.

### 3.6.1. REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE DEFENCE FORCE

In order to probe transformation and diversity within the SANDF, South Africans were asked to what extent they agreed that the SANDF is inclusive of all groups in the country. SASAS respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: 'The Defence Force is representative of all South Africans?' Results revealed that just under a fifth (18%) of adults in SASAS 2020 strongly agreed that the SANDF represents all people in the post-apartheid nation with a further 45% agreeing with this statement (Figure 36). Therefore,

added together, a sizeable majority (73%) of South Africans agreed that the SANDF is representative of all major groups in the country. Conversely, six percent disagreed with this statement, implying that they felt the SANDF was not inclusive. The rest of South Africans were either unsure of how to answer (9%) or ambivalent about this issue (22%). Although there is some slight variation between the different categories, for the most part the results from 2020 are commensurate with those of past survey rounds.

**FIGURE 36: PUBLIC EVALUATIONS OF WHETHER THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE IS REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL SOUTH AFRICANS, 2020**



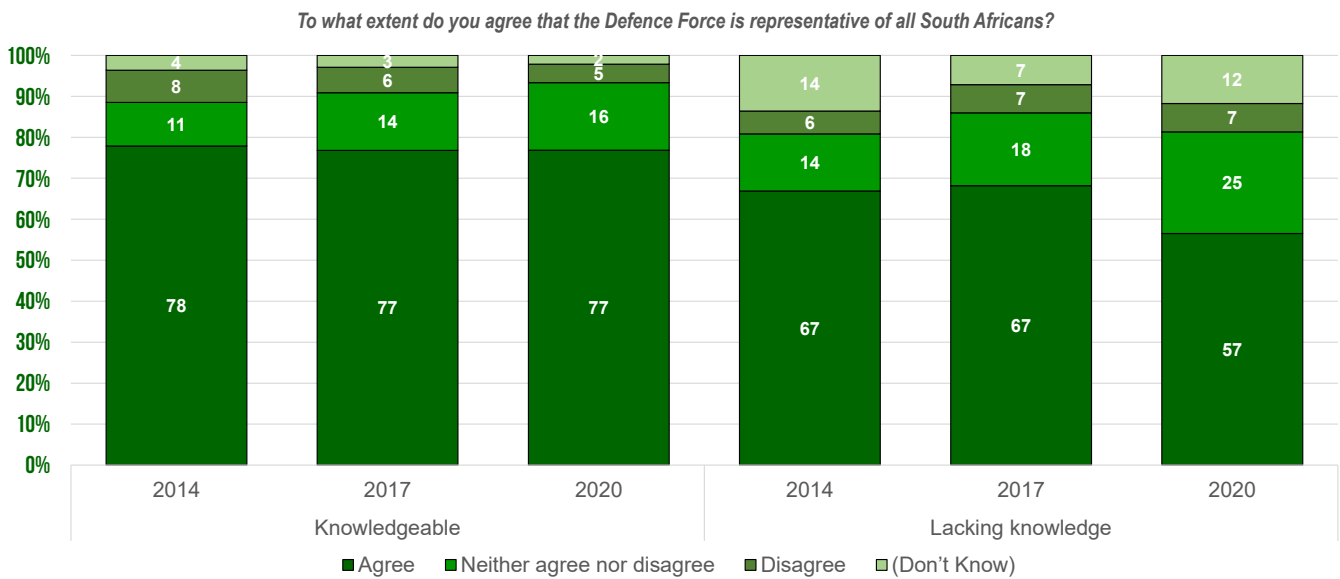
*Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF*

We hypothesised that knowledge of the SANDF was correlated with a positive assessment of the inclusivity of the armed forces in South Africa. Figure 37 presents responses to the representation question by the objective knowledge group for the period 2014-2020. Those adults who were classified as knowledgeable were found to be much more likely to agree that the SANDF was representative than those who were categorised as unknowledgeable. Among this latter group, we logged a moderate reduction in the share giving the SANDF a positive assessment on this issue over the 2017-

2020 period. Among the unknowledgeable group, the proportion who agreed with the statement plunged by ten percentage points between the two periods. We did not find a comparable deterioration among those who were familiar with the country's armed forces. Less than three-fifths (57%) of the unknowledgeable group in SASAS 2020 stated that they agreed with the statement. This can be compared to more than three-quarters (77%) of the objectively knowledgeable group in that survey round.



**FIGURE 37: PUBLIC EVALUATIONS OF WHETHER THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE IS REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL SOUTH AFRICANS BY SANDF KNOWLEDGE (OBJECTIVE), 2014-2020**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014-2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

A dichotomous (0-1) variable was created to represent the quotient who believed that the South African armed forces was representative of all who lived in the country. A high value indicated a high level of agreement with the statement; mean scores for a range of different socio-demographic subgroups are presented in Table 22. There were prominent discrepancies in agreement levels by age group in SASAS 2014. The youth were more susceptible to think that the armed forces were inclusive of all South Africans when contrasted with their older counterparts in that survey round. An equivalent age effect was, however, not found in SASAS 2020. The cause for this disparity was a substantial corrosion in the perceived representativity of the armed forces among young people. Between 2014 and 2020, the portion of the 16-24 age cohort who agreed with the statement shrunk from 76% (SD=0.430) to 61% (SD=0.488). We were also able to identify a significant change in how rural residents saw the SANDF during the last six years. The proportion of this group who agreed with the statement came down from 80% (SD=0.407) in SASAS 2014 to 59% (SD=0.493) in SASAS 2020. The scale of this change was such that urbanisation went from having a negative effect in the table to a positive effect.

There was a significant population group differential in SASAS 2014, with the black African majority more predisposed to think that the military was representative of the post-apartheid nation than other groups. By comparison with this survey round, the population group differential was much less noticeable in SASAS 2020. Between these two periods, members of the black African majority became more negative towards the SANDF on this issue. The portion of this group who agreed with the statement dwindled from 76% (SD=0.430) in SASAS 2014 to 61% (SD=0.488) in SASAS 2020. Adult members of the white and Indian/Asian communities, by contrast, became more likely to

agree that the SANDF was representative of the national populace during this period. A robust class effect was not detected in SASAS 2020. This suggests that wealth does not have a strong influence on attitude formation here. Perhaps unexpectedly, a military training effect was detected in SASAS 2020. Direct contact with the armed forces diminished the probability that an individual would have a positive evaluation of the National Defence Force on this subject. A two-way ANOVA test ( $F(1, 2677)=17.97; p=0.000$ ) confirmed that observed military training differences in that survey round were statistically significant at the 0.01% level.



**TABLE 22: PUBLIC AGREEMENT THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE IS REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL SOUTH AFRICANS BY SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS, 2014 & 2020**

	2014				2020			
	Mean	(Standard deviation)	Scheffe comparison		Mean	(Standard deviation)	Scheffe comparison	
<b>All</b>	0.693	(0.461)			0.627	(0.484)		
<b>Gender</b>								
Male	0.707	(0.455)		ref.	0.645	(0.479)		ref.
Female	0.679	(0.467)	-0.028		0.610	(0.488)	-0.035	
<b>Geotype</b>								
Urban	0.657	(0.475)		ref.	0.645	(0.479)		ref.
Rural	0.791	(0.407)	0.135	***	0.587	(0.493)	-0.057	**
<b>Age group</b>								
16-24	0.755	(0.430)		ref.	0.611	(0.488)		ref.
25-34	0.694	(0.461)	-0.061		0.647	(0.478)	0.036	
35-49	0.668	(0.471)	-0.087	*	0.610	(0.488)	-0.001	
50-64	0.672	(0.470)	-0.083		0.634	(0.482)	0.023	
65+	0.609	(0.489)	-0.147	***	0.653	(0.477)	0.042	
<b>Population group</b>								
Black African	0.738	(0.440)		ref.	0.644	(0.479)		ref.
Coloured	0.601	(0.490)	-0.137	***	0.526	(0.500)	-0.118	***
Indian / Asian	0.514	(0.501)	-0.224	***	0.635	(0.482)	-0.009	
White	0.473	(0.500)	-0.266	***	0.583	(0.494)	-0.061	
<b>Education level</b>								
No secondary	0.693	(0.462)		ref.	0.607	(0.489)		ref.
Incomplete secondary	0.695	(0.460)	0.002		0.620	(0.486)	0.013	
Matric or equivalent	0.714	(0.452)	0.021		0.646	(0.478)	0.038	
Post-matric	0.602	(0.490)	-0.091	*	0.617	(0.487)	0.009	
<b>Employment status</b>								
Outside paid work	0.710	(0.454)		ref.	0.616	(0.486)		ref.
Paid work	0.649	(0.478)	-0.061	**	0.653	(0.476)	0.037	
<b>Military service</b>								
No training	0.725	(0.447)		ref.	0.668	(0.471)		ref.
Military training	0.718	(0.451)	-0.007		0.555	(0.498)	-0.113	***
<b>Subjective poverty</b>								
Non-poor	0.693	(0.462)		ref.	0.585	(0.493)		ref.
Just getting by	0.686	(0.464)	-0.006		0.679	(0.467)	0.094	***
Poor	0.699	(0.459)	0.006		0.611	(0.488)	0.026	
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>								
Incorrect	0.669	(0.471)		ref.	0.565	(0.496)		ref.
Correct	0.779	(0.415)	0.110	***	0.769	(0.422)	0.204	***
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>								
Low	0.439	(0.497)		ref.	0.436	(0.496)		ref.
Medium	0.797	(0.402)	0.358	***	0.640	(0.480)	0.204	***
High	0.911	(0.285)	0.472	***	0.838	(0.368)	0.402	***

Source: HSRC SASAS 2014; 2020. Attitudes towards the SANDF

Notes: 1. Standard deviations in parenthesis; and 2. The signs \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that mean scores differences are significantly different (based on ANOVA testing, Scheffe comparisons) at the 5%, 1% and 0.5% levels, respectively.

Outputs from Table 22 seem to corroborate our expectation that knowledge of the SANDF was linked with a positive assessment of military inclusivity in South Africa. We were able to detect an attitudinal gradient on subjective knowledge that mirrored the objective knowledge differential that was discerned in Figure 37. Those with high levels of self-reported knowledge were

more prone to think that the military was representative of all South Africans than other self-reported knowledge groups. The observed familiarity differential was more robust in SASAS 2014 than SASAS 2020. A series of ANOVA tests confirmed that group variations were more robust at the start of the period ( $F(2,3076)=281.99$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) than at the end ( $F(2,2840)=100.82$ ,  $p=0.000$ ).

The reason for this difference is the decline in positive assessments of the SANDF among certain knowledge groups between 2014 and 2020. It seems that the medium group experienced the most pronounced decrease in terms of agreement with the statement. The

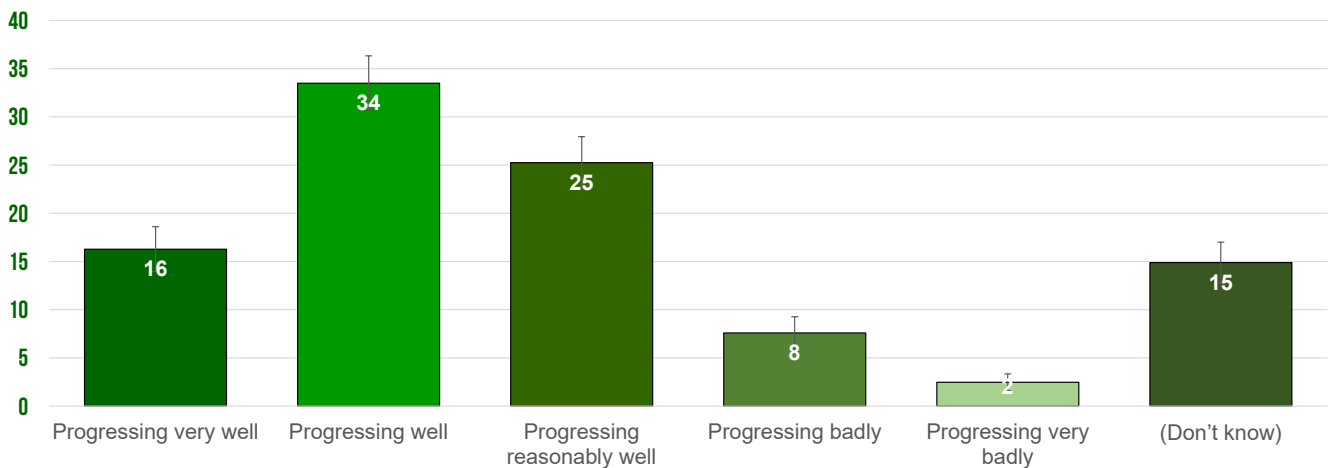
percentage of this group who gave the armed forces a positive evaluation on this issue declined from 80% (SD=0.402) in SASAS 2014 to 64% (SD=0.480) in SASAS 2020.

### 3.6.2. PROGRESS WITH TRANSFORMATION IN THE SANDF

In order to interrogate the issue of transformation and representivity further, a question was posed about how well transformation in the SANDF is progressing. This same question was also asked in the HSRC’s Evaluation of Public Opinion Poll (EPOP) in 2001. In that survey round, about a third of all adult South Africans felt that transformation within the Defence Force was progressing well (6% very well; 26% well). About a fifth (17%) felt it was progressing reasonably well and a small minority (17%) stated it was progressing badly. Only four percent

of the respondents felt it was progressing very badly. A substantial proportion (34%) still felt uncertain about this issue in EPOP 2001. This result clearly showed that two decades ago most South Africans were convinced that change within the SANDF is at the very least improving fairly satisfactory. The EPOP data can be compared to what was observed in SASAS 2020 when the same question on transformation in the Defence Force was asked.

**FIGURE 38: PUBLIC EVALUATION OF PROGRESS WITH TRANSFORMATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY, 2020**

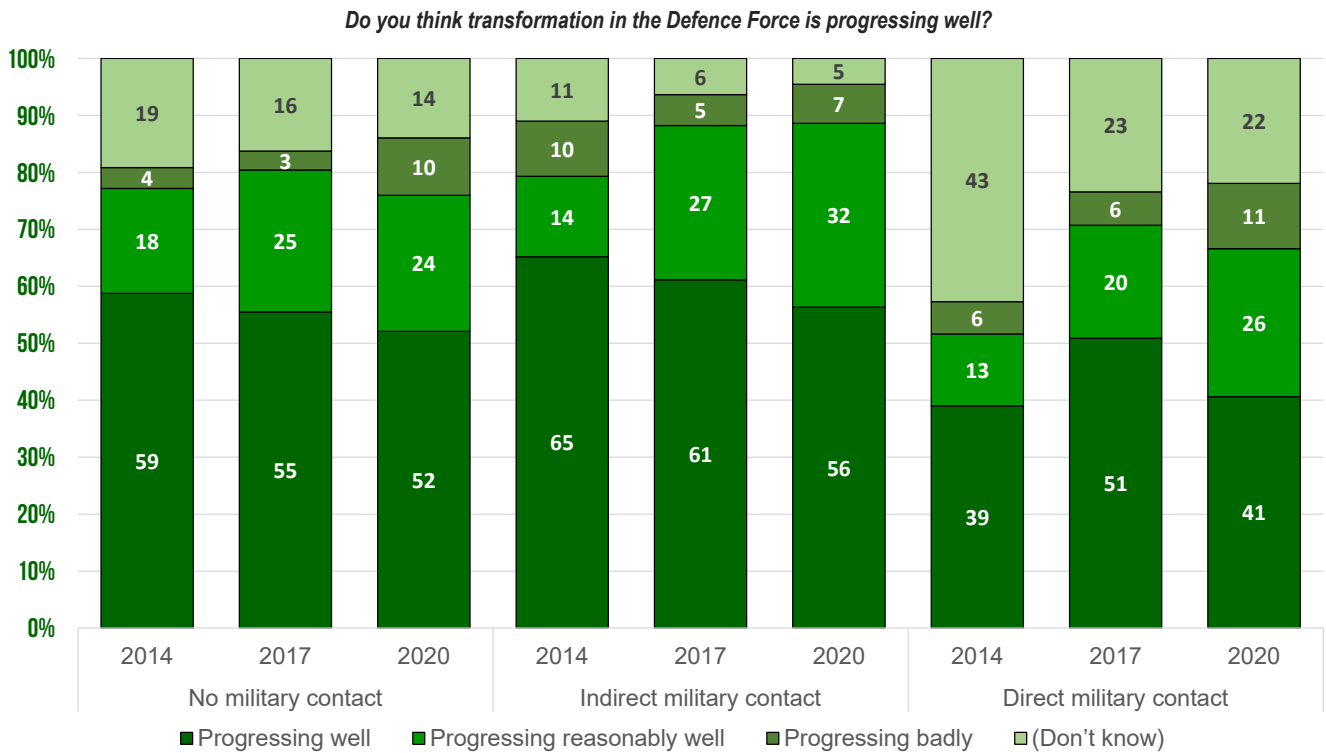


Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

When compared to EPOP 2001, a much larger percentage (16% very well; 34% well) said that transformation was proceeding excellently in the armed forces in the SASAS 2020 round. A quarter of the adult populace believed that it was continuing quite adequately. A much smaller proportion (8% badly; 2% very badly) of the general population thought that transformation was proceeding poorly. It is reassuring to observe that, when compared to EPOP 2001, significantly fewer adults opted for the 'don't know' option in SASAS 2020. Although a sizable

percentage said that transformation was progressing well in the SASAS 2020 survey round, a more positive assessment was observed in SASAS 2017. In particular, the share who believed that change was improving splendidly declined from 56% in SASAS 2017 to 50% in SASAS 2020. In Figure 39 we investigated responses to this question by military training to show how contact with the military informed individual attitudes on the subject of transformation.

**FIGURE 39: PUBLIC EVALUATION OF PROGRESS WITH TRANSFORMATION IN THE DEFENCE FORCE 2014-2020, BY CONTACT WITH THE SANDF (COLUMN PERCENTAGE)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014-2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

Military training was correlated with individual perceptions of the level of progress made on transformation in the armed forces in SASAS 2020. Those with indirect military contact were more liable than other contact groups to think that transformation was progressing well. Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 tests confirmed that military training had a weaker effect on attitudes in 2020 ( $\chi^2(10) = 91$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) than in 2017 ( $\chi^2(10) = 230$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) and 2014 ( $\chi^2(10) = 223$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). This suggests that the general populace has become more negative on this metric over the recent period. This may be an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic and popular experiences of the armed forces during the various lockdown orders. Indeed, people perceived less progress on transformation in the military if they were interviewed before 30/03/2020. Adults interviewed before this date (20% very well; 39% well) were more liable to think that transformation was continuing at a satisfactory pace than those interviewed afterwards (15% very well; 31% well). A subgroup analysis was completed to discover which socio-demographic groups were most prone to believe that transformation was developing appropriately in the

military (Table 23).

A notable population group effect was observed in Table 23. In that survey round, white minority individuals were much less likely than other groups to think that transformation was progressing very well. This minority group was also more liable than others to think that change was advancing fairly well. One of the reasons for this population group differential was the high level of uncertainty on this issue observed for the black African and coloured groups. There was a notable shift in attitudes on this issue among different population groups between SASAS 2017 and SASAS 2020. The proportion of the black African adult populace, who thought transformation was developing deficiently, increased from 3% in SASAS 2017 to 11% in SASAS 2020. A Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 test ( $\chi^2(10) = 252$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) verified that these observed period disparities were statistically significant at the 0.01% level. An analogous increase was not observed among racial minorities between SASAS 2017 and SASAS 2020.

**TABLE 23: PUBLIC EVALUATION OF PROGRESS WITH TRANSFORMATION IN THE DEFENCE FORCE 2020, BY SELECT SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES (ROW PERCENTAGE)**

	Spend much more	Spend more	Spend the same as now	Spend less	Uncertain	Chi-2 (p-value)	
All	16	34	25	10	15		
<b>Gender</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 40	0.006
Male	19	35	25	10	11		
Female	14	32	25	11	18		
<b>Age group</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 61	0.063
16-24	18	34	21	13	14		
25-34	17	36	25	6	17		
35-49	12	34	31	10	13		
50-64	21	30	22	13	14		
65+	14	31	27	10	19		
<b>Population group</b>					6	chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 65	0.000
Black African	17	34	23	10	15		
Coloured	14	32	26	7	20		
Indian / Asian	14	32	34	13	7		
White	11	29	42	9	8		
<b>Education level</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 81	0.000
Post-matric	16	30	34	9	10		
Matric	17	38	23	10	13		
Incomplete secondary	15	32	27	10	15		
No secondary	19	33	19	6	22		
<b>Employment status</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 114	0.000
Full time	14	39	31	8	8		
Part-time	10	36	28	11	14		
Previously worked	25	34	18	5	18		
Unemployed (never worked)	13	34	25	10	18		
Labour inactive	18	30	24	14	14		
<b>Geotype</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 74	0.000
Urban	23	40	24	9	5		
Rural	23	26	28	9	15		
<b>Subjective poverty</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (8) = 106	0.000
Non-poor	13	33	33	10	10		
Just getting by	17	37	21	11	14		
Poor	19	30	20	8	23		
<b>Social media</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 106	0.000
Not active on social media	16	32	24	9	18		
Infrequently active	13	37	29	9	12		
Frequently active	21	33	23	12	11		
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 289	0.000
Incorrect	16	34	23	7	21		
Correct	26	38	22	6	8		
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (8) = 2058	0.000
Low	9	23	21	9	39		
Medium	17	42	26	6	10		
High	50	31	13	4	2		

Note: Pearson (uncorrected) Ch<sup>2</sup> test results displayed.

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

Significant attitudinal variances in Table 23 were observed for the following groups: (i) educational attainment; (ii) employment status; (iii) geotype; and (iv) subjective poverty. Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 tests on these four items confirmed that labour market status ( $\chi^2(16) = 114; p=0.000$ ) had the most robust effect on attitude formation here. Those who were outside full-time employment were more negative on this issue than those inside. The most negative group was the labour inactive, 14% of this group thought that transformation in the armed forces was progressing badly. It would appear, on the whole, that poorer people were moderately more likely to think that institutional change in the military was progressing badly. One of the reasons for these disparities was the high percentage of ‘don’t know’ responses recorded among the poor. Consider, for example, ‘don’t know’ variances by subjective poverty group. About a quarter (23%) of the self-described poor said that they could not answer this question, this can be compared to 14% of those just getting by and 10% of the non-poor.

We discovered that public understandings of the SANDF

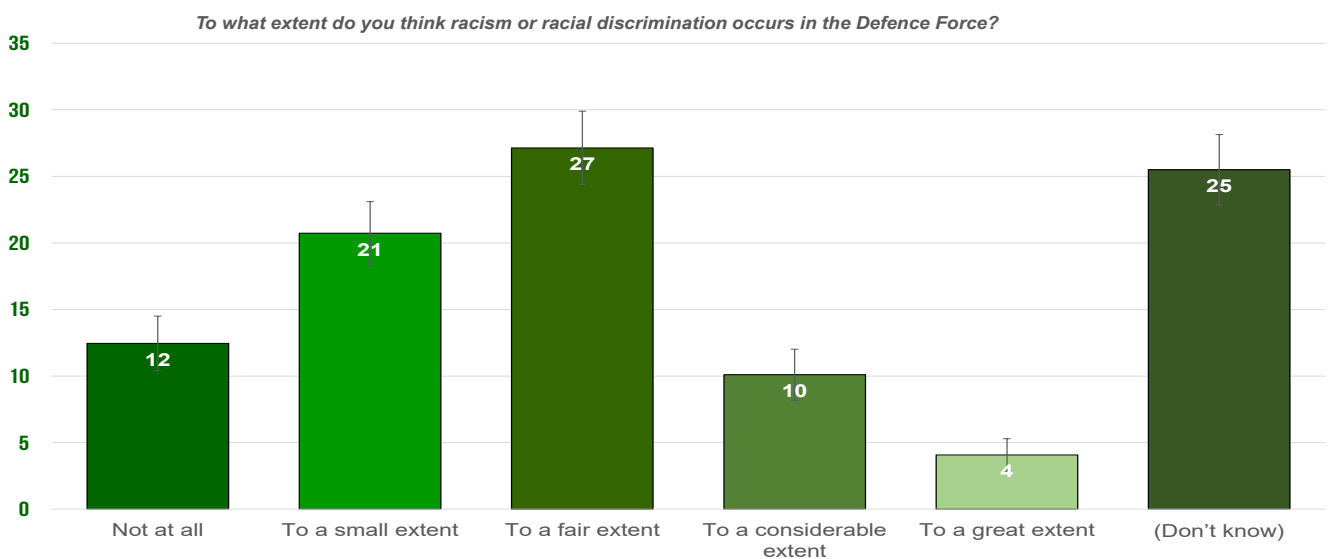
had a considerable effect on how an individual thought about transformation in South Africa. This was especially apparent when we investigated attitude variances by subjective knowledge. Those with high levels of self-reported knowledge were more prone to think that transformation was progressing well than other self-reported knowledge groups. The percentage of the high group who thought change was proceeding satisfactorily (50% very well; 31% well) was much higher than what was recorded for the medium (17% very well; 42% well) and low (9% very well; 23% well) groups. A major reason for this observed differential was that those with low knowledge were less liable to know how to answer to the transformation question. About two-fifths (39%) of this group responded ‘don’t know’ when asked this question. A Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 test ( $\chi^2(8) = 2058; p=0.000$ ) confirmed that these observed subjective poverty differences were statistically significant at the 0.01% level. In addition, we found a noteworthy social media differential in Table 23. However, given what was observed elsewhere in the report, this detected differential was smaller than expected.

### 3.6.3. RACISM OR RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE DEFENCE FORCE

Having asked about representation and transformation in the SANDF, a direct question on racism and racial discrimination in the SANDF was posed to respondents. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt racism or racial intolerance still took place in the Defence Force. A similar question was also posed in the 2001 HSRC’s Evaluation of Public Opinion Poll (EPOP) and this offered a unique opportunity to determine how the public’s view on discriminatory practices in this state

institution had changed over the past twenty years. Only a small minority (6%) of the adult public in 2001 said that racial bigotry did not occur in the armed forces. About a third (29%) thought it was a problem to either a great or considerable extent. Around a third (32%) also believed it occurred to a fair or small extent. A sizable proportion (34%) of the general population did not feel that they had enough information to answer this question.

**FIGURE 40: PUBLIC EVALUATIONS OF THE DEGREE OF RACISM AND/OR RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE, 2020**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

The EPOP 2001 data can be compared to what was observed in the SASAS 2020 dataset when the same question on racism and racial intolerance in the Defence Force was asked. In that survey round a much larger minority (12%) said that racial discrimination did not

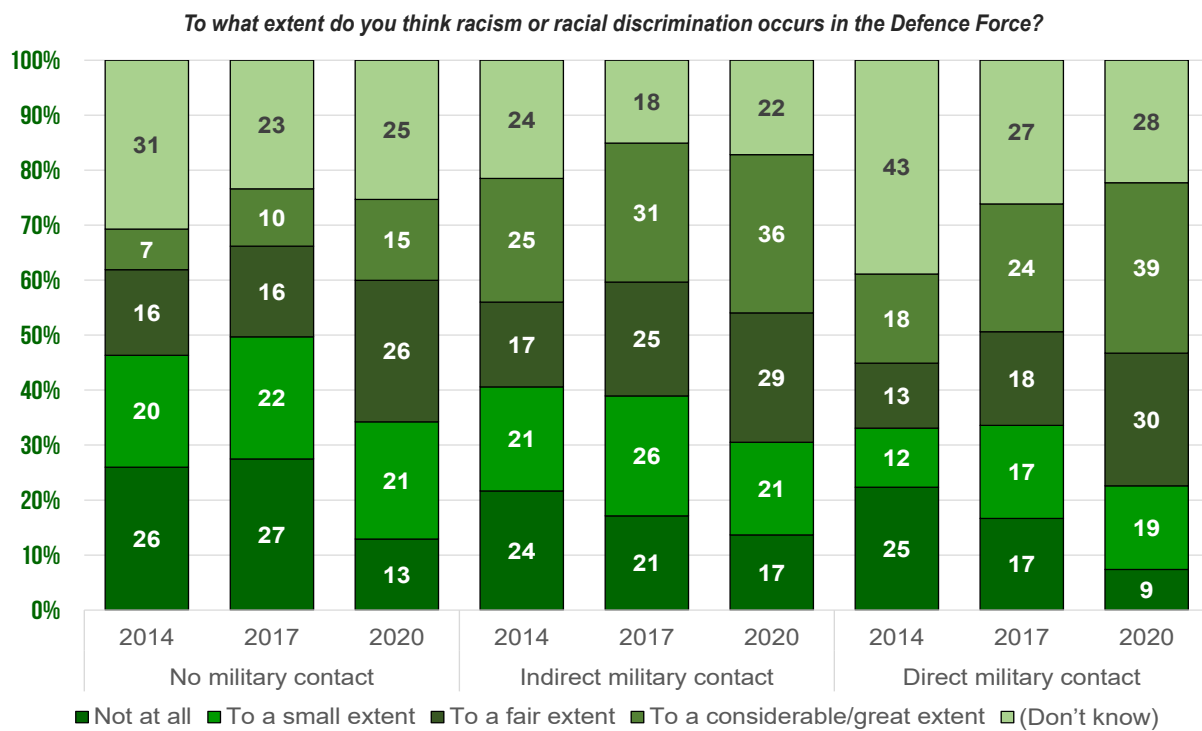
arise in the armed forces. By contrast, a much smaller proportion (14%) believed that discrimination occurred to either a great or considerable extent. The share of the general population who thought that racism was an issue to a fair or small extent had grown since 2001,

reaching 48% in SASAS 2020. It is encouraging to note that, when compared to EPOP 2001, significantly fewer adults opted for the 'don't know' option in SASAS 2020. In Figure 41 we explored responses to this question by military training to show how contact with the armed forces shaped individual attitudes on the subject of racial inequity.

Military training was a determinant of whether an individual perceived discrimination in the armed forces in SASAS 2017. A comparable effect was not observed for SASAS 2020 and the reason for this change was a general increase in perceived discrimination among all contact groups. Between 2017 and 2020, the proportion who thought that racism did not occur in the armed

forces dropped by 13 percentage points. The largest level of decline on perceived non-discrimination was among those with no military training. The fraction who felt bigotry occurred to a considerable or great extent, by contrast, grew by seven percentage points. The largest level of growth on perceived considerable/great discrimination was observed for those with military training. This suggests that the general populace has become more negative on this metric over the recent period. The observed downturn may be an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic and popular experiences of the armed forces during the various lockdown orders. Indeed, people perceived less discrimination in the military if they were interviewed before 30/03/2020.

**FIGURE 41: PUBLIC EVALUATIONS OF THE DEGREE OF RACISM AND/OR RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE BY SANDF CONTACT, 2014-2020**



SOURCE: FORUM SASAS 2014-2020, ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE SANDF

A subgroup analysis was undertaken in Table 24 to identify which socio-demographic groups were most likely to think that racial intolerance occurred in the military. Significant attitudinal variances were not observed for the following groups: (i) age groups; (ii) geotype; (iii) educational attainment; and (iv) population group. The latter finding is perhaps the most surprising. In previous survey rounds, we observed a substantial population group differential on whether an individual felt that there was discrimination in the military. In SASAS 2017 the black African majority was much less likely than members of the minority groups to think that racism still occurs in the SANDF. However, the black African population became significantly more negative on this issue in the recent period. The percentage of this group who thought discrimination did not occur in the military shrunk from 28% in SASAS 2017 to 12% in SASAS 2020. Racial minorities became, by contrast, more positive on this metric over the period. The percentage of the white population who stated that discrimination did not take place in the military decreased from 17% in

SASAS 2017 to 6% in SASAS 2020.

Knowledge of the armed forces had a significant effect on whether an individual thought prejudice transpired in the military. This was especially apparent if we look at self-reported knowledge. Those with high levels of subjective knowledge were more predisposed to think that discrimination did not occur than other knowledge groups. A major reason for this observed differential was that those with low knowledge were less likely to provide an answer to the question. About two-fifths (43%) of this group said that they did not know whether discrimination was taking place. A Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2 test ( $\chi^2(10) = 252; p=0.000$ ) confirmed that these observed educational attainment differences were statistically significant at the 0.01% level. In addition, we found a substantial social media effect differential in Table 6. This may be due to the fact that active social media users were, on the whole, more well-informed about the military and its branches than non-users.

**TABLE 24: PUBLIC EVALUATION OF THE RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE DEFENCE FORCE 2020, BY SELECT SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES (ROW PERCENTAGE)**

	Not at all	To a small extent	To a fair extent	To a considerable/	Uncertain	Chi-2 (p-value)	
All	12	21	27	14	26		
<b>Gender</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 28	0.031
Male	15	23	27	14	22		
Female	10	19	27	14	29		
<b>Age group</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 70	0.025
16-24	11	18	30	16	25		
25-34	11	24	25	11	30		
35-49	12	18	32	17	20		
50-64	17	23	23	11	26		
65+	15	21	19	16	29		
<b>Population group</b>					6	chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 71	0.055
Black African	12	21	27	13	27		
Coloured	20	24	25	11	20		
Indian / Asian	18	27	23	15	18		
White	6	15	29	27	23		
<b>Education level</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 45	0.211
Post-matric	10	19	30	18	24		
Matric	12	22	27	15	23		
Incomplete secondary	12	20	28	14	26		
No secondary	18	23	18	8	33		
<b>Employment status</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 92	0.003
Full time	13	22	31	15	18		
Part-time	10	29	21	24	15		
Previously worked	14	12	29	12	33		
Unemployed (never worked)	10	22	29	11	29		
Labour inactive	14	22	24	15	25		
<b>Geotype</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (5) = 20	0.137
Urban	13	20	28	15	24		
Rural	11	23	24	12	29		
<b>Subjective poverty</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (8) = 117	0.000
Non-poor	11	23	32	17	18		
Just getting by	14	22	24	14	26		
Poor	13	15	24	10	38		
<b>Social media</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 81	0.001
Not active on social media	12	23	25	11	29		
Infrequently active	11	22	29	16	22		
Frequently active	16	17	27	17	23		
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (5) = 39	0.015
Incorrect	11	19	28	14	28		
Correct	16	25	25	13	20		
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (10) = 252	0.000
Low	7	12	20	17	43		
Medium	11	22	31	13	22		
High	23	28	20	15	14		

Note: Pearson (uncorrected) Ch<sup>2</sup> test results displayed.

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF



We noted a modest subjective poverty effect in Table 24 with the less affluent exhibiting a greater propensity to identify discrimination in the military. A major reason for this observed differential was that those who described themselves as poor, were less liable to provide an answer to the question. About two-fifths (38%) of this group told fieldworkers that they did not know whether racism was a problem in the SANDF. A Pearson (uncorrected) Chi2

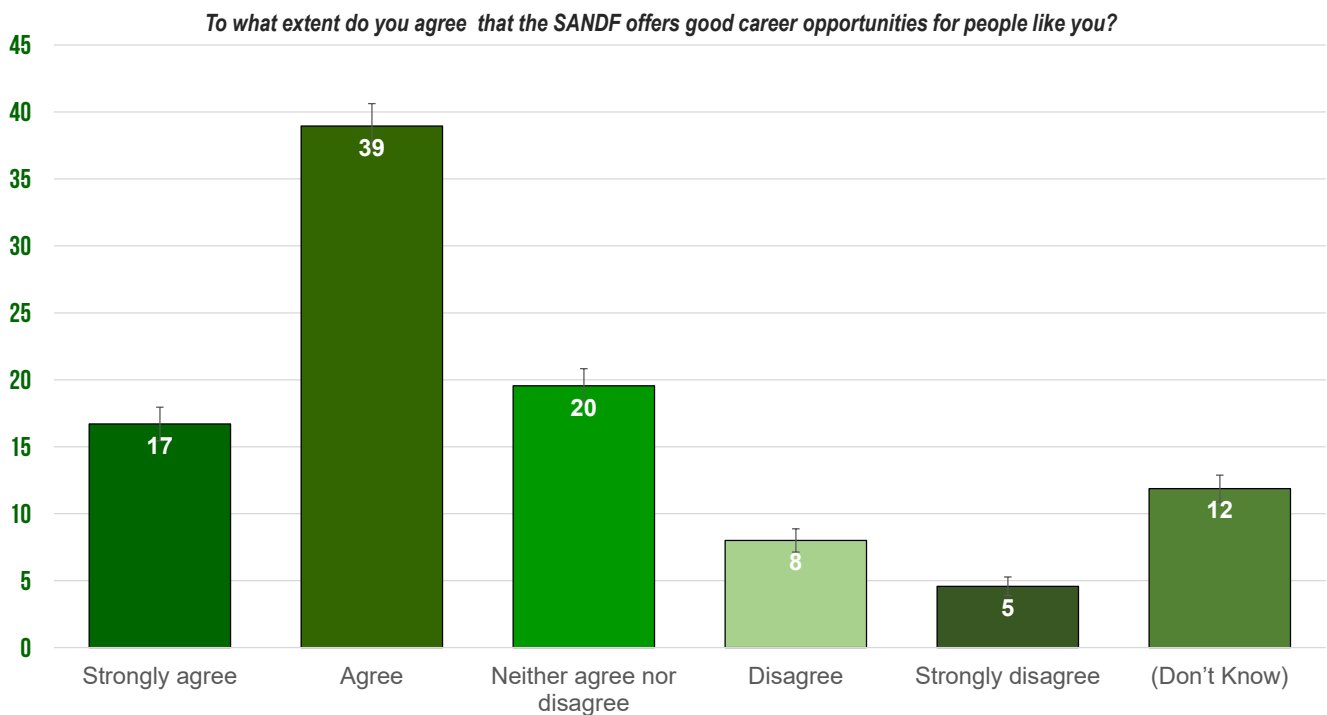
test ( $\chi^2(8) = 117; p=0.000$ ) reinforced that these group differences were statistically significant at the 0.01% level. Interestingly, we were able to detect a much different subjective poverty effect in SASAS 2014. In that survey round, the less affluent had a lower propensity to identify discrimination in the military. Between 2014 and 2020, the poor have become much more pessimistic in their appraisal of the SANDF on this issue.

### 3.6.4. CAREER OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE DEFENCE FORCE

The military is looking to encourage people in South Africa to see the armed forces as a viable, rewarding and valuable career path. In this section we consider attitudes towards serving in the military, gauging which subgroups would be most liable to think that joining the armed forces would be a decent career for people like them. To examine perceptions about career opportunities in the SANDF, SASAS respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following statement: 'The SANDF

offers good career opportunities for people like you'. On average, about a fifth (17%) of the adult populace agreed that the SANDF offers good career opportunities for people like themselves with about two-fifths (39%) who simply agreed (Figure 42). Conversely, only 13% of the adult population disagreed with the statement. The remainder either said that they were neutral (20%) on this issue or did not know (12%) how to answer.

**FIGURE 42: PUBLIC APPRAISALS OF WHETHER THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE OFFERS GOOD CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE LIKE THE RESPONDENT, 2020**

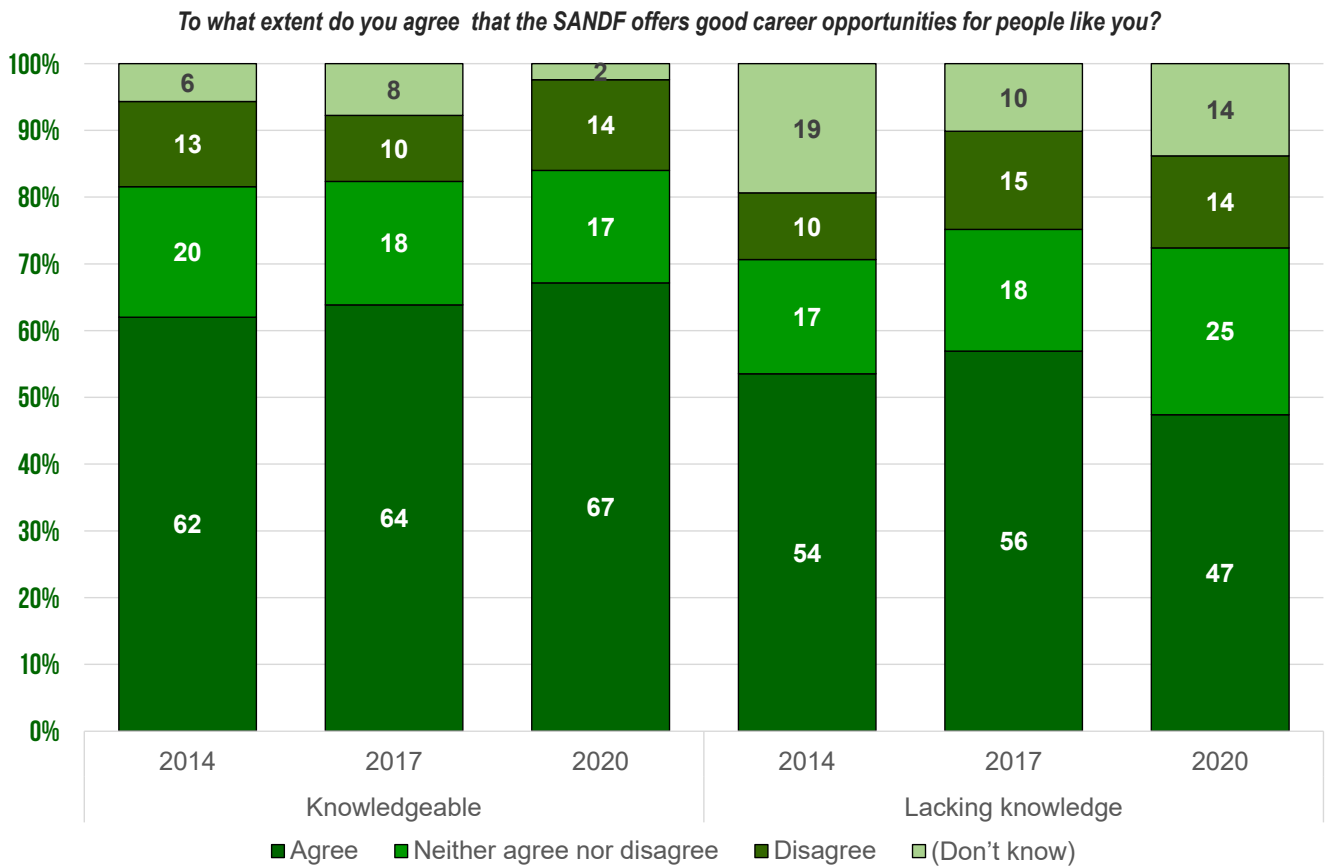


Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

There was a distinct objective knowledge effect on whether the adult populace thought that the military offered rewarding career prospects. This can be observed quite clearly in Figure 43. Individuals who answered the objective knowledge question correctly were found to be much more likely to think that the SANDF provided beneficial job opportunities than those who answered incorrectly. Consider, for instance, that two-thirds (67%) of the objectively knowledgeable group in SASAS 2020 told fieldworkers that joining the armed forces was a good prospect for people like them. This

can be compared, unfavourably, to 47% of the objectively unknowledgeable group. We noted a moderate decline in positive assessments of the armed forces over the 2017-2020 period among the unknowledgeable group. The proportion of those who answered incorrectly and agreed with the statement fell by nine percentage points between the two periods. A similar deterioration was not apparent for those who were knowledgeable about the SANDF. During the period under review this group remained, by comparison, quite positive about the military on this issue.

**FIGURE 43: PUBLIC APPRAISALS OF WHETHER THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE OFFERS GOOD CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE LIKE THE RESPONDENT BY KNOWLEDGE (OBJECTIVE), 2014-2020**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014-2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

We created a dichotomous variable that measured whether an individual agreed that the South African National Defence Force offers rewarding employment opportunities. A high score on the variable indicates agreement with the statement and mean scores on this binary variable are depicted by selected socio-demographic subgroups in Table 25. There was a minor (but statistically significant) gender differential noted in the table with men more likely to think that joining the military presented favourable career prospects for people like them than women. The size of the gender differential was somewhat larger in SASAS 2020 than in SASAS 2014. This was due to a small decline in the percentage of the female population who thought that

the military offered advantageous job possibilities. The share of women who agreed with the statement fell from 51% (SD=0.500) in SASAS 2014 to 49% (SD=0.480) in SASAS 2020. There were noteworthy differences in how people responded to the question by age group in SASAS 2014. Younger cohorts, in that survey round, were more liable to think that a military career was valuable when compared to their older counterparts. A similar age effect was not observed in SASAS 2020. The reason for this change was a significant decline in how young people saw the Defence Force. The proportion of the 16-24 age cohort who agreed with the statement fell from 66% (SD=0.474) in SASAS 2014 to 57% (SD=0.496) in SASAS 2020.

**TABLE 25: PUBLIC AGREEMENT THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE OFFERS GOOD CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE LIKE THE RESPONDENT BY SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS, 2014-2020**

	2014				2020			
	Mean	(SD)	Scheffe comparison		Mean	(SD)	Scheffe comparison	
<b>All</b>	0.554	(0.497)			0.534	(0.499)		
<b>Gender</b>								
Male	0.598	(0.491)		ref.	0.584	(0.493)		ref.
Female	0.512	(0.500)	-0.086	***	0.488	(0.500)	-0.097	***
<b>Geotype</b>								
Urban	0.513	(0.500)		ref.	0.566	(0.496)		ref.
Rural	0.666	(0.472)	0.153	***	0.461	(0.499)	-0.106	***
<b>Age group</b>								
16-24	0.661	(0.474)		ref.	0.569	(0.496)		ref.
25-34	0.539	(0.499)	-0.123	**	0.579	(0.494)	0.010	
35-49	0.544	(0.498)	-0.118	**	0.539	(0.499)	-0.030	
50-64	0.508	(0.500)	-0.154	***	0.475	(0.500)	-0.093	
65+	0.390	(0.488)	-0.271	***	0.400	(0.491)	-0.169	***
<b>Population group</b>								
Black African	0.587	(0.492)		ref.	0.538	(0.499)		ref.
Coloured	0.472	(0.500)	-0.115	***	0.573	(0.495)	0.034	
Indian / Asian	0.432	(0.496)	-0.156	***	0.417	(0.494)	-0.121	***
White	0.400	(0.490)	-0.188	***	0.500	(0.501)	-0.038	
<b>Education level</b>								
No secondary	0.530	(0.500)		ref.	0.399	(0.490)		ref.
Incomplete secondary	0.547	(0.498)	0.016		0.542	(0.498)	0.143	***
Matric or equivalent	0.598	(0.491)	0.068		0.586	(0.493)	0.187	***
Post-matric	0.469	(0.500)	-0.061		0.514	(0.500)	0.115	*
<b>Employment status</b>								
Outside paid work	0.556	(0.497)		ref.	0.526	(0.499)		ref.
Paid work	0.546	(0.498)	-0.010		0.554	(0.497)	0.028	
<b>Military service</b>								
No training	0.575	(0.494)		ref.	0.545	(0.498)		ref.
Military training	0.627	(0.485)	0.051		0.607	(0.489)	0.062	*
<b>Subjective poverty</b>								
Non-poor	0.587	(0.493)		ref.	0.566	(0.496)		ref.
Just getting by	0.546	(0.498)	-0.041		0.520	(0.500)	-0.046	
Poor	0.506	(0.500)	-0.081	**	0.496	(0.500)	-0.070	*
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>								
Incorrect	0.535	(0.499)		ref.	0.474	(0.499)		ref.
Correct	0.620	(0.486)	0.085	***	0.672	(0.470)	0.198	***
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>								
Low	0.321	(0.467)		ref.	0.300	(0.459)		ref.
Medium	0.623	(0.485)	0.302	***	0.558	(0.497)	0.258	***
High	0.872	(0.334)	0.551	***	0.765	(0.425)	0.465	***

Source: HSRC SASAS 2014; 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

Notes: 1. Standard deviations in parenthesis; and 2. The signs \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that mean scores differences are significantly different (based on ANOVA testing, Scheffe comparisons) at the 5%, 1% and 0.5% levels, respectively.

A significant educational attainment effect was noted in SASAS 2020 with better educated persons found to be much more liable to agree that the military was an appropriate career path for people like them. A similarly robust effect was not seen in SASAS 2014, although a two-way ANOVA test ( $F(3, 3034)=6.16$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) found that observed education group differences were

statistically significant. The reason for this change was the dramatic decline in agreement among those without a secondary education. The proportion of this group who agreed with the statement fell from 53% ( $SD=0.500$ ) in SASAS 2014 to 40% ( $SD=0.490$ ) in SASAS 2020. There was a distinct population group effect, with the black African majority more prone to view the military as

a source of good career opportunities than other groups. This population group effect was much more muted in SASAS 2020. Between 2014 and 2020, white and Coloured adults became more likely to believe that the military represented a decent vocation. Interestingly, a large military training differential was not observed in the table and direct contact with the armed forces had little effect on how people saw job prospects in this institution.

There appears to be evidence for a knowledge-based effect in Table 25 and a clear attitudinal gradient was found on subjective knowledge. This mirrors the objective knowledge differential observed in Figure 14. Those with high levels of self-reported knowledge were far more liable to think that the military presented

a decent vocational path than those who had either medium or low levels of self-reported knowledge. There was a distinct decline in positive assessments of the SANDF between 2014 and 2020 among all knowledge groups. Reviewing how these groups answered the question during this period, it would appear that it was the high group who suffered the largest decline in agreement with the statement. The proportion of this group who concurred with the statement about career opportunities dropped from 87% (SD=0.334) in SASAS 2014 to 77% (SD=0.425) in SASAS 2020. An ANOVA test ( $F(3,2839)=113.08, p=0.000$ ) confirmed that these group variations were statistically significant at the 0.01% level.

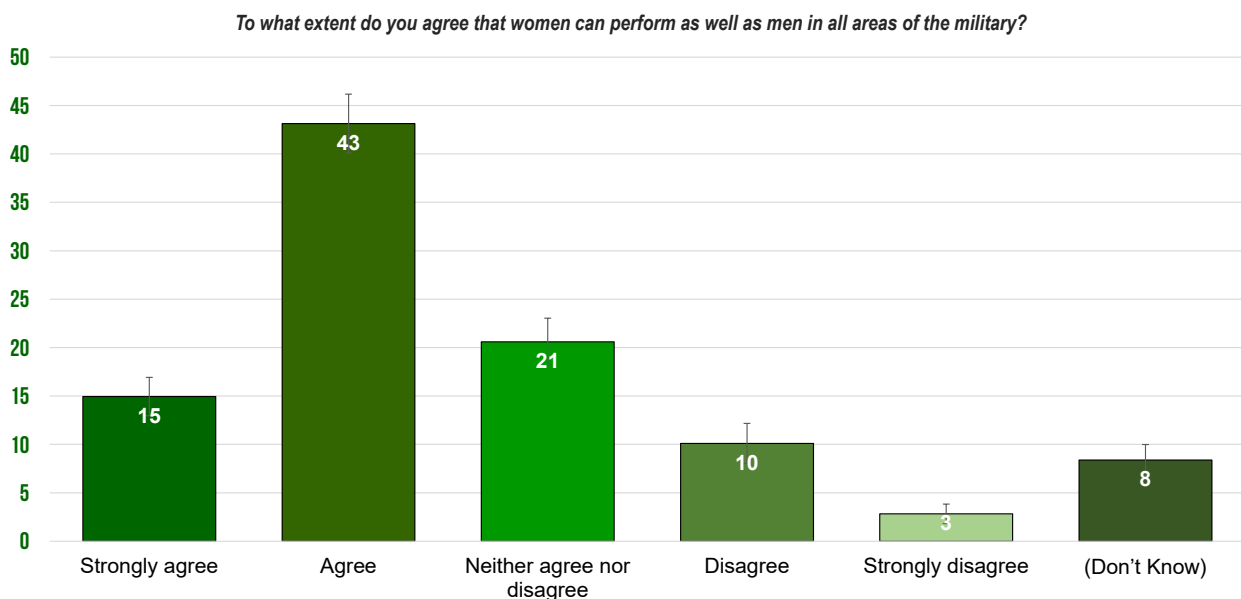
### 3.6.5. GENDER INTEGRATION AND EQUITY IN THE DEFENCE FORCE

Gender integration and gender equity within the SANDF are receiving increasing attention. According to Monethi (2013) this is based on the current social value system which is increasingly acknowledging the important role played by women in society. Indeed, a gender-responsive defence reform process is critical for the following reasons: (i) it strengthens relations between the armed forces and the civil society; (ii) it responds to the different security needs of women and men; and (iii) it creates capacity to address gender issues, including gender-based violence in operations. In line with the constitution, the SANDF policy stipulates that there should be broad representation of women at all levels of the command and staff hierarchy within the military. It is implied that the SANDF should, therefore, be proactive on gender issues and should constantly be monitoring progress in terms of gender equality (also see Molekane, 1996). A policy on gender equality was introduced in 1996 in the SANDF and had at its core the gradual breakdown of male-dominated structures and trends in the SANDF. The intention is the advancement of women at all levels through the provision of equal

opportunities, training, development and utilisation. In addition, in this policy, it was also stipulated that gender education was to be introduced in order to ensure that the SANDF progresses to a more gender sensitive body.

In order to interrogate the issue of gender in the SANDF, SASAS respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the statement: 'Women can perform as well as men in all areas of the military?' Public responses to this question are depicted in Figure 44. It is encouraging to find that a distinct majority (56%) of the adult public agreed (15% strongly) that women can perform as well as men in all areas of the military. Conversely, just more than a tenth (12%) disagreed with this statement, implying that women would not be able to perform as well as men. The rest of the respondents were ambivalent as regards this issue (21%) or could not decide on how to answer this question (8%). Although these results are encouraging, it is also apparent that, when compared to what was observed in previous SASAS rounds, they represent a decline in support for gender equality.

**FIGURE 44: PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY, 2020**

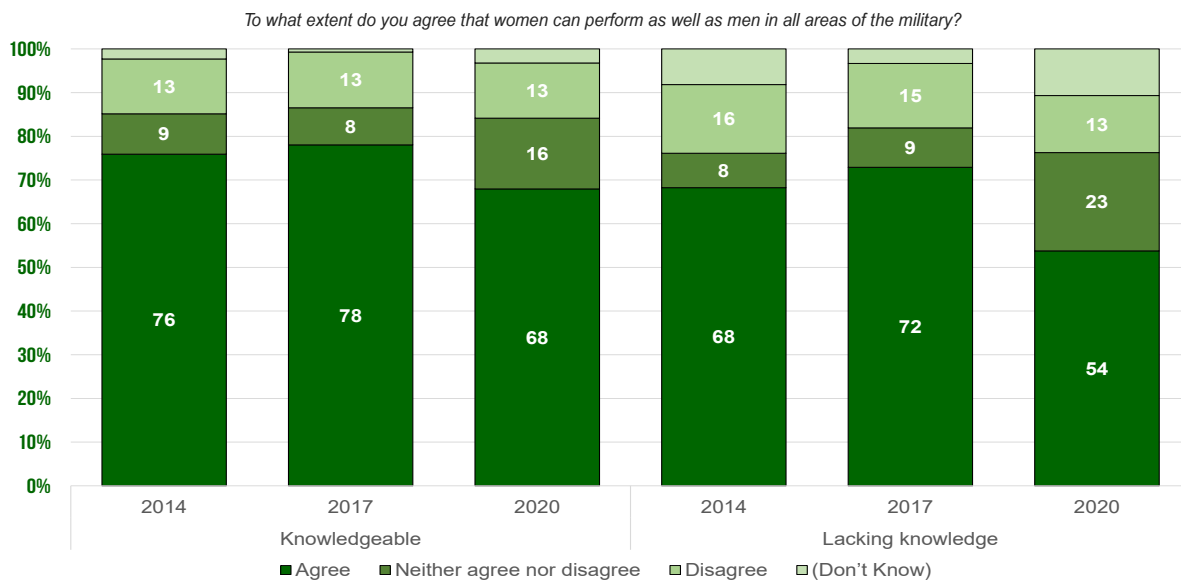


Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

Objective knowledge had a noticeable influence on how the adult populace answered the question on gender equality in the armed forces. This can be seen fairly unambiguously in Figure 45. Those adults who correctly solved the objective knowledge quiz question were much more apt to believe in gender equality than those who could not solve the quiz question. The objective knowledge differential is most apparent if we inspect the SASAS 2020 data. In that survey round, more than two-thirds (68%) of the objectively knowledgeable group stated that they agreed with the statement. This can be compared, unflatteringly, to just 54% of the objectively unknowledgeable group. Among those who were uninformed about the military, we recorded a substantial decrease in the share supporting gender equality over the 2017-2020 period. Between these two periods, the quotient of the knowledgeable group who agreed with the statement plunged by 18 percentage points. We did find a more modest (but comparable) deterioration among those who were well-informed about the country's armed forces. During the period under review, the proportion of this group who agreed with the statement decreased by 10 percentage points.

The mean percentage of those who agreed that women can perform as well as men in the military are depicted across a variety of socio-demographic subgroups in Table 26. Interestingly, we did not detect a substantial age, employment, or educational attainment effect in the table. There was also no gender differential noted in SASAS 2020 and this stands in contrast to what was observed in SASAS 2014. In that survey round, women were more liable to agree with the statement (M=0.731; SD=0.444) than men (M=0.664; SD=0.472). The cause for this disparity was a substantial corrosion in the perceived ability of women among the female population. Agreement levels declined by 14 percentage points among this group during the period. We were also able to identify a significant change in how rural residents thought about gender equality during the last six years. The proportion of this group who agreed with the statement dropped from 70% (SD=0.460) in SASAS 2014 to 52% (SD=0.500) in SASAS 2020. The scale of this change was such that urbanisation went from having no effect at the start of the period to a positive effect at the end.

**FIGURE 45: PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY BY SANDF KNOWLEDGE (OBJECTIVE), 2014-2020**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014-2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

A military training effect was, perhaps unexpectedly, not detected in SASAS 2020. Direct contact with the armed forces did not influence whether an individual believed in gender equality. A two-way ANOVA test ( $F(1, 2677)=0.16$ ;  $p=0.686$ ) confirmed that observed military training in that survey round was not statistically significant at the 5% level. There was a notable population group differential in SASAS 2014, with the Black African majority more predisposed to believe in gender equality than other groups. By comparison with this survey round, the population group differential was much less noticeable in SASAS 2020. Between these two periods, members of the Black African majority became more negative towards the military role of women. The portion of this group who agreed with the statement about gender parity dwindled from 72% (SD=0.450) in SASAS 2014 to 57% (SD=0.488) in SASAS 2020. Adult members of the white

and Indian/Asian minorities, by contrast, became more likely to believe in gender impartiality during this period. A robust subjective poverty effect was not detected in SASAS 2020. This suggests that subjective deprivation does not have a strong influence on attitude formation here.

The outputs in Table 26 seem to confirm our expectation that knowledge of the SANDF is correlated with public support for gender equality. We were able to detect an attitudinal gradient on subjective knowledge that mirrored the objective knowledge differential that was discerned in Figure 45. Those with high levels of self-reported knowledge were more prone to support gender egalitarianism than other self-reported knowledge groups. The size of the knowledge differential here was similar in both SASAS 2014 and SASAS 2020. However, we did detect a general decline in support for gender

equality among the different knowledge groups. It seems that the low group experienced the most pronounced decrease in terms of agreement with the statement. The

percentage of this group who endorsed gender equity in the armed forces declined from 60% (SD=0.491) in SASAS 2014 to 43% (SD=0.495) in SASAS 2020.

**TABLE 26: PUBLIC AGREEMENT THAT WOMEN CAN PERFORM AS WELL AS MEN IN ALL AREAS OF THE MILITARY ACROSS SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS, 2014 & 2020**

	2014				2020			
	Mean	(SD)	Scheffe comparison		Mean	(SD)	Scheffe comparison	
All	0.699	(0.459)			0.581	(0.494)		
<b>Gender</b>								
Male	0.664	(0.472)		ref.	0.564	(0.496)		ref.
Female	0.731	(0.444)	0.066	***	0.596	(0.491)	0.032	
<b>Geotype</b>								
Urban	0.699	(0.459)		ref.	0.609	(0.488)		ref.
Rural	0.697	(0.460)	-0.002		0.515	(0.500)	-0.094	***
<b>Age group</b>								
16-24	0.726	(0.447)		ref.	0.530	(0.500)		ref.
25-34	0.692	(0.462)	-0.034		0.584	(0.493)	0.054	
35-49	0.715	(0.452)	-0.011		0.593	(0.491)	0.064	
50-64	0.681	(0.466)	-0.045		0.619	(0.486)	0.089	
65+	0.626	(0.484)	-0.100	*	0.596	(0.491)	0.066	
<b>Population group</b>								
Black African	0.718	(0.450)		ref.	0.565	(0.496)		ref.
Coloured	0.645	(0.479)	-0.074	*	0.597	(0.491)	0.032	
Indian / Asian	0.619	(0.486)	-0.099	**	0.701	(0.458)	0.136	***
White	0.620	(0.486)	-0.098	**	0.660	(0.475)	0.095	
<b>Education level</b>								
No secondary	0.702	(0.458)		ref.	0.548	(0.498)		ref.
Incomplete secondary	0.667	(0.471)	-0.035		0.565	(0.496)	0.017	
Matric or equivalent	0.714	(0.452)	0.013		0.612	(0.488)	0.063	
Post-matric	0.742	(0.438)	0.040		0.581	(0.494)	0.033	
<b>Employment status</b>								
Outside paid work	0.714	(0.452)		ref.	0.579	(0.494)		ref.
Paid work	0.661	(0.474)	-0.052	**	0.585	(0.493)	0.007	
<b>Military service</b>								
No training	0.723	(0.448)		ref.	0.601	(0.490)		ref.
Military training	0.770	(0.422)	0.047		0.612	(0.488)	0.011	
<b>Subjective poverty</b>								
Non-poor	0.695	(0.461)		ref.	0.604	(0.489)		ref.
Just getting by	0.729	(0.445)	0.034		0.568	(0.496)	-0.036	
Poor	0.663	(0.473)	-0.031		0.560	(0.497)	-0.043	
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>								
Incorrect	0.682	(0.466)		ref.	0.538	(0.500)		ref.
Correct	0.759	(0.429)	0.077	***	0.679	(0.467)	0.142	***
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>								
Low	0.595	(0.491)		ref.	0.428	(0.495)		ref.
Medium	0.733	(0.443)	0.138	***	0.602	(0.490)	0.174	***
High	0.830	(0.377)	0.235	***	0.712	(0.453)	0.284	***

Source: HSRC SASAS 2014; 2020. Attitudes towards the SANDF

Notes: 1. Standard deviations in parenthesis; and 2. The signs \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that mean scores differences are significantly different (based on ANOVA testing, Scheffe comparisons) at the 5%, 1% and 0.5% levels, respectively.

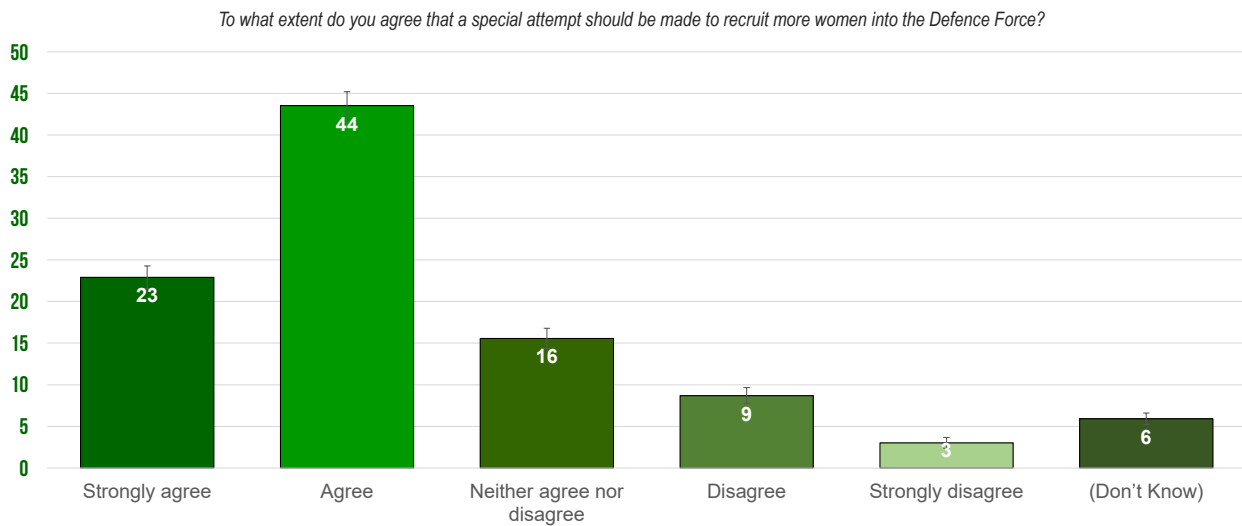
Regarding attitudes towards positive discrimination for women in the armed forces, SASAS 2020 respondents were asked if they thought that a special attempt should

be made to recruit more women into the Defence Force. This question was also asked in an HSRC's Evaluation of Public Opinion Poll (EPOP) in May 1995. Although

the questions in 1995 were posed as Yes/No questions and Agree/Disagree statements in SASAS 2020, it is nevertheless important to compare how views have changed on women in the military in the last two decades. Less than two-fifths (38%) of the respondents were in favour of special attempts to recruit more women into the military in EPOP 1995. About two-thirds (67%) of the adult populace agreed with the statement in SASAS

2020 (Figure 46). Only a small minority (11%) disagreed that the SANDF should make a special effort to recruit women. The remainder either told fieldworkers that they were neutral (16%) on this subject, or were unsure of how to answer the question (6%). It is clear that public opinion on the inclusion of women in the SANDF has improved dramatically over the last twenty-five years.

**FIGURE 46: PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE SPECIAL RECRUITMENT OF WOMEN INTO THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY, 2020**

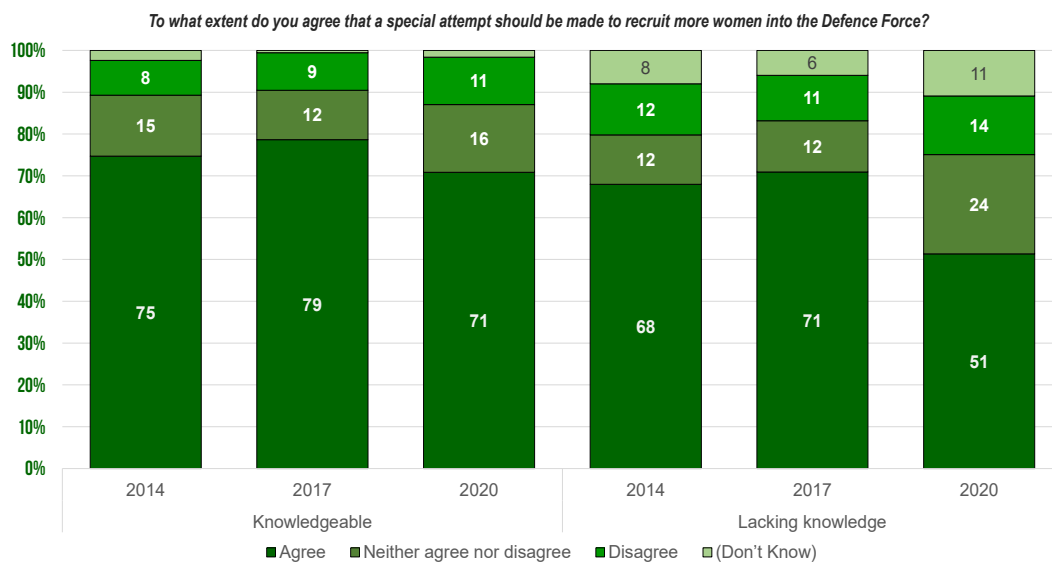


Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

There was a well-defined objective knowledge disparity on whether the adult populace thought that the armed forces should become more active in recruiting women into the different military branches. The observed disparity is quite apparent from Figure 47 and is similar to what was detected in Figure 45. Survey participants who provided the right answer to the objective knowledge question were more predisposed to agree with the statement than participants who offered a specious answer. About three-quarters (71%) of the objectively knowledgeable group stated that they supported special recruitment in SASAS 2020. About half (51%)

of the objectively unknowledgeable group, by contrast, endorsed the same policy. Over the 2017-2020 period, we ascertained an extraordinary reduction in levels of public agreement with the statement. Between the two periods, the proportion of the unknowledgeable group who agreed with the statement, declined by 20 percentage points. A much more muted devaluation was identified among those who were informed about the armed forces. Here the deterioration in agreement levels was only eight percentage points and this group stayed, by comparison, quite supportive of special efforts to recruit women into the SANDF.

**FIGURE 47: PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE SPECIAL RECRUITMENT OF WOMEN INTO THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY BY SANDF KNOWLEDGE (OBJECTIVE), 2014-2020**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014-2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

We constructed a dichotomous variable that measured agreement with the special recruitment of women statement. The variable was coded as '1' for agreement with the statement and '0' for no agreement. Mean scores on the statement are illustrated for a diverse set of socio-demographic subgroups in Table 27 for SASAS 2014 and SASAS 2020. In both survey rounds there was no labour market or education attainment differential. There was a limited gender discrepancy observed in SASAS 2014 with men having lower mean scores ( $M=0.639$ ;  $SD=0.480$ ) than women ( $M=0.745$ ;  $SD=0.436$ ). A similar mean disparity by gender was not observed in SASAS 2020. This shift was due to a considerable reduction in female mean scores between the two periods. The share of the female populace who concurred with the statement plummeted by 18 percentage points over the period. There were significant discrepancies in how adults answered the special recruitment question by urbanisation. Rural dwellers in SASAS 2014 had higher mean scores than their urban counterparts. In the latest round of the survey, urbanisation had a negative effect on public preferences for the recruitment of women. Rural mean scores decreased substantially between 2014 and 2020, falling from 0.738 ( $SD=0.440$ ) in SASAS 2014 to 0.523 ( $SD=0.500$ ) in SASAS 2020. A comparable deterioration in rural mean scores was observed in Table 27, suggesting a general decline in how rural people felt about gender egalitarianism in the military.

There was a remarkable level of population group variance in SASAS 2014, with the Black African majority having higher mean scores than other groups. This population group disparity was, by comparison, much less pronounced in SASAS 2020 and we can observe a significant decline in mean scores for the black African population. The portion of this group who believed that the SANDF should actively recruit women dwindled from 73% ( $SD=0.446$ ) in SASAS 2014 to 58% ( $SD=0.494$ ) in SASAS 2020. Comparable drops in mean scores were not discovered for other population groups in the table. A negative military training differential was observed in SASAS 2020. Receiving military training lowered the probability that an individual would favour a special effort to recruit women into the SANDF. An analogous military training disparity was observed in Table 27. A two-way ANOVA test ( $F(1, 2924)=1.13$ ;  $p=0.287$ ) verified that observed differences between training groups in that survey round were not statistically significant at the 5% level. We did observe a subjective poverty differential in SASAS 2020 with less affluent individuals more likely to endorse special recruitment of women. A comparable deprivation disparity was not found in SASAS 2014. This alteration was due to the significant decline in levels of agreement among those who describe themselves as non-poor or just getting by. Levels of agreement among these groups have fallen by 14 and 16 percentage points, respectively.





**TABLE 27: PUBLIC AGREEMENT THAT THERE SHOULD BE A SPECIAL ATTEMPT TO RECRUIT WOMEN INTO THE MILITARY ACROSS SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS, 2014 & 2020**

	2014				2020			
	Mean		Scheffe comparison		Mean		Scheffe comparison	
All	0.699	(0.459)			0.581	(0.494)		
<b>Gender</b>								
Male	0.639	(0.480)		ref.	0.577	(0.494)		ref.
Female	0.745	(0.436)	0.106	***	0.569	(0.495)	-0.008	
<b>Geotype</b>								
Urban	0.678	(0.467)		ref.	0.594	(0.491)		ref.
Rural	0.738	(0.440)	0.060	**	0.523	(0.500)	-0.072	**
<b>Age group</b>								
16-24	0.736	(0.441)		ref.	0.555	(0.498)		ref.
25-34	0.689	(0.463)	-0.047		0.589	(0.492)	0.035	
35-49	0.700	(0.459)	-0.037		0.539	(0.499)	-0.016	
50-64	0.668	(0.471)	-0.069		0.622	(0.485)	0.067	
65+	0.619	(0.486)	-0.117	**	0.586	(0.493)	0.032	
<b>Population group</b>								
Black African	0.726	(0.446)		ref.	0.577	(0.494)		ref.
Coloured	0.645	(0.479)	-0.081	**	0.528	(0.500)	-0.049	
Indian / Asian	0.618	(0.487)	-0.108	**	0.623	(0.485)	0.046	
White	0.514	(0.500)	-0.212	***	0.565	(0.497)	-0.012	
<b>Education level</b>								
No secondary	0.724	(0.448)		ref.	0.594	(0.492)		ref.
Incomplete secondary	0.679	(0.467)	-0.045		0.577	(0.494)	-0.017	
Matric or equivalent	0.698	(0.459)	-0.025		0.568	(0.496)	-0.026	
Post-matric	0.678	(0.468)	-0.046		0.588	(0.493)	-0.007	
<b>Employment status</b>								
Outside paid work	0.703	(0.457)		ref.	0.574	(0.495)		ref.
Paid work	0.673	(0.469)	-0.030		0.571	(0.495)	-0.003	
<b>Military service</b>								
No training	0.718	(0.450)		ref.	0.619	(0.486)		ref.
Military training	0.750	(0.434)	0.032		0.469	(0.500)	-0.150	***
<b>Subjective poverty</b>								
Non-poor	0.675	(0.469)		ref.	0.535	(0.499)		ref.
Just getting by	0.730	(0.444)	0.055	*	0.569	(0.496)	0.034	
Poor	0.678	(0.468)	0.003		0.628	(0.484)	0.094	**
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>								
Incorrect	0.680	(0.467)		ref.	0.513	(0.500)		ref.
Correct	0.747	(0.435)	0.067	***	0.708	(0.455)	0.195	***
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>								
Low	0.607	(0.489)		ref.	0.448	(0.498)		ref.
Medium	0.715	(0.451)	0.109	***	0.560	(0.496)	0.174	***
High	0.839	(0.368)	0.233	***	0.790	(0.408)	0.284	***

Source: HSRC SASAS 2014; 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

Notes: 1. Standard deviations in parenthesis; and 2. The signs \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that mean scores differences are significantly different (based on ANOVA testing, Scheffe comparisons) at the 5%, 1% and 0.5% level, respectively.

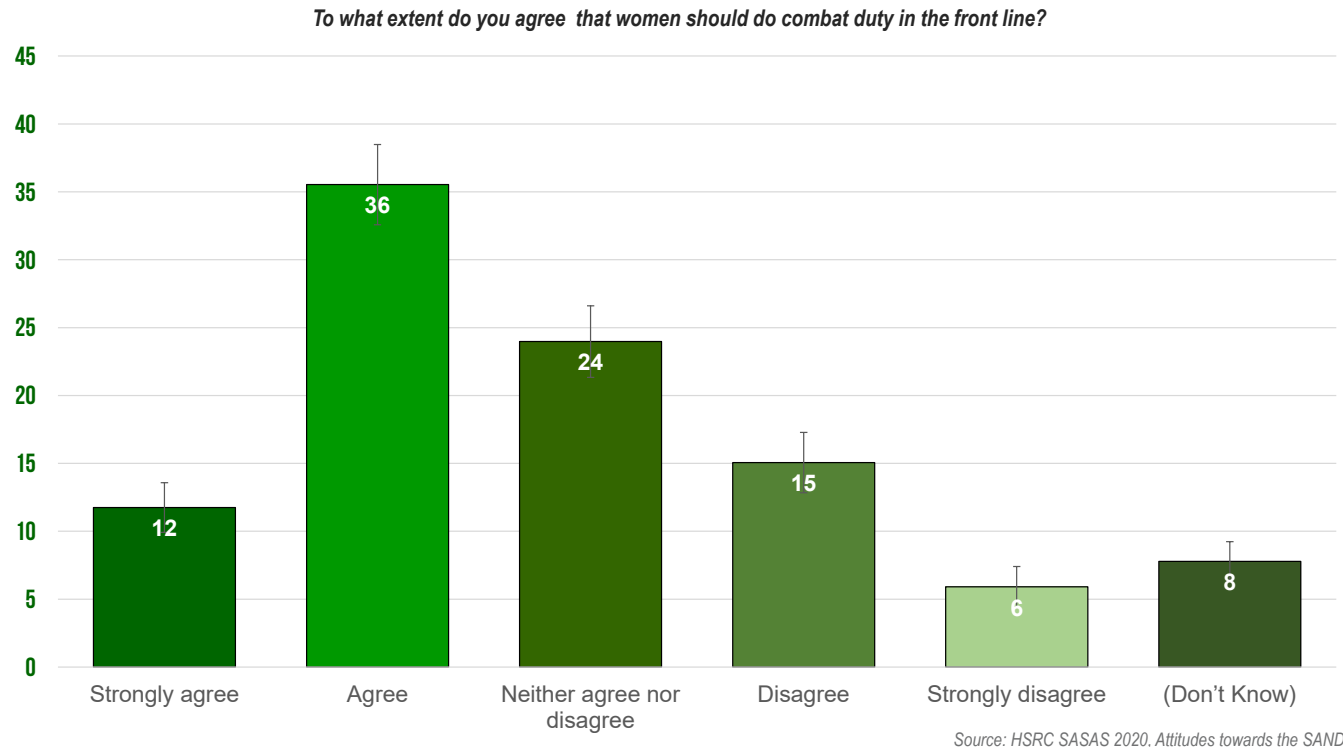
Our hypothesis that knowledge of the South African military is related to public support for female empowerment into the armed forces was confirmed through the results presented in Table 27. We were able to discern an attitudinal gradient on subjective knowledge that paralleled the objective knowledge disparity that was detected in Figure 45. Endorsement

for the special recruitment of women was higher among those who described themselves as very knowledgeable about the SANDF. The extent of the knowledge discrepancy we were able to observe was much weaker in SASAS 2014 than in SASAS 2020. The reason for the attitudinal disparity between periods was a robust deterioration in mean scores among both the low and

medium knowledge group. A decline was observed for the very knowledgeable group, but it was the lowest level of decline among all groups. The percentage of this

group who endorsed special recruitment for women only declined from 84% (SD=0.368) in SASAS 2014 to 79% (SD=0.408) in SASAS 2020.

**FIGURE 48: PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF WHETHER WOMEN SHOULD DO COMBAT DUTY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY, 2020**

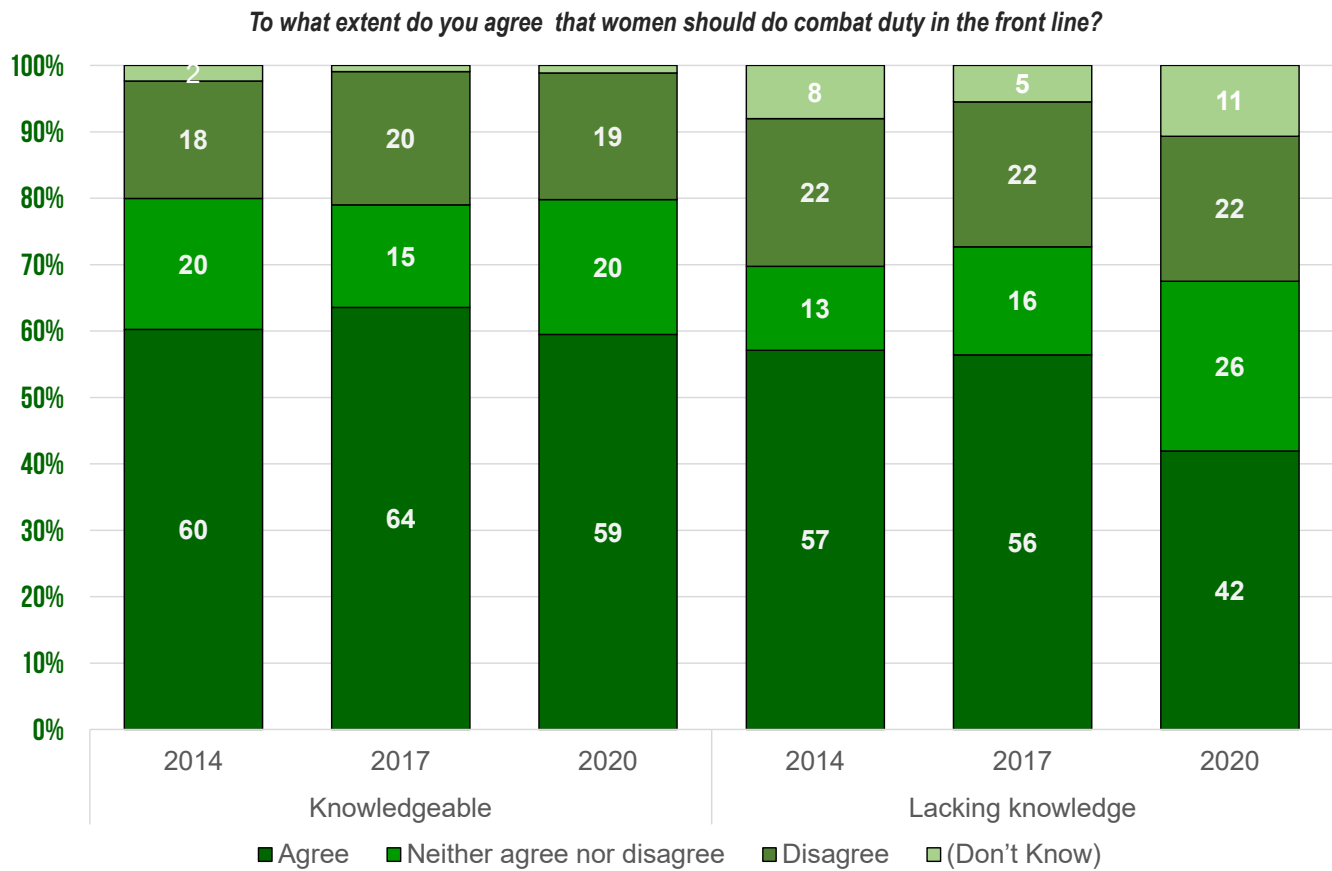


Let us now consider attitudes towards the participation of women in the line of fire. SASAS 2020 respondents were queried on whether they thought that women should do combat duty in the front line. This matter was also included in the EPOP May 1995 questionnaire. Although the EPOP question used a binary response structure while SASAS used a Likert agree-disagree structure, it is nonetheless interesting to assess how attitudes towards this subject have changed over the past two decades. Only about a third (36%) was in favour of putting women in combat duty in EPOP 1995. About three-fifths (59%) of the adult populace disagreed with the statement and the remainder (5%) were unsure of how to answer. Looking at the SASAS data, public opinion on the inclusion of women in combat duty has changed considerably over the past two decades. In SASAS 2020 about half (48%) of the general public thought that women should be included in combat and only a small minority (21%) disagreed with this policy. The remainder either told fieldworkers that they were non-aligned (24%) on this subject or were uncertain of how to answer the question (8%).

Objective knowledge had a perceptible impact on whether the adult public agreed with the statement on

gender equality in combat duty. When compared to those adults who could not solve the branch quiz question, persons who accurately solved the quiz question had, on average, a greater likelihood of agreeing with the statement (Figure 49). About three-fifths (59%) of the objectively knowledgeable group in SASAS 2020 asserted their support for female involvement in combat. Opposition to this policy was higher among those who failed the quiz question; only 42% of this group agreed with the statement. The objective knowledge differential detected in Figure 49 was similar to what was observed in Figure 47, confirming a general knowledge effect on attitudes towards gender equality in the military. Over the 2017-2020 period, we logged a significant reduction in the proportion of the unknowledgeable group who endorsed gender fairness on the battlefield. Between 2014 and 2020, the percentage of the uninformed group, who agreed with the statement, dropped by 14 percentage points. A more moderate (but statistically significant) decline was observed for those who were familiar with the military. The fraction of this group agreeing with the statement decreased by only six percentage points over the six-year period.

**FIGURE 49: PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF WHETHER WOMEN SHOULD DO COMBAT DUTY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY BY SANDF KNOWLEDGE (OBJECTIVE), 2014-2020**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014-2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

We transformed agreement-disagreement responses on the statement about female participation in combat duty into a zero to one ratio. The higher value on this new measurement represented agreement with the statement. Mean scores are rendered by a range of socio-demographic subgroups for both SASAS 2014 and SASAS 2020 in Table 28. Perhaps unexpectedly, given what was noted elsewhere in this section, we did not find a significant age, employment, or educational attainment effect in the table. In addition, there was no gender differential observed in SASAS 2020 and this is surprising given what was found in SASAS 2014. In that survey round, women had a greater probability of agreeing with the statement ( $M=0.629$ ;  $SD=0.487$ )

than men ( $M=0.564$ ;  $SD=0.496$ ). The cause for this disparity was a substantial corrosion in support for this policy among the female population. Agreement levels declined by 16 percentage points among this group during the period. We were also able to identify a significant change in how rural residents thought about gender equality during the last six years. The proportion of this group who agreed with the statement dropped from 62% ( $SD=0.460$ ) in SASAS 2014 to 38% ( $SD=0.500$ ) in SASAS 2020. The scale of this change was similar on other measures of gender impartiality in this section and suggests that rural adults have become more distrusting of gender equity in the armed forces.

**TABLE 28: PUBLIC AGREEMENT THAT WOMEN SHOULD DO COMBAT DUTY IN THE MILITARY BY SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS, 2014 & 2020**

	2014				2020			
	Mean	(Standard Deviation)	Scheffe comparison		Mean	(Standard Deviation)	Scheffe comparison	
All	0.578	(0.494)			0.473	(0.499)		
<b>Gender</b>								
Male	0.523	(0.500)		ref.	0.476	(0.500)		ref.
Female	0.629	(0.483)	0.105	***	0.470	(0.499)	-0.005	
<b>Geotype</b>								
Urban	0.564	(0.496)		ref.	0.512	(0.500)		ref.
Rural	0.615	(0.487)	0.051	*	0.384	(0.487)	-0.127	***
<b>Age group</b>								
16-24	0.599	(0.491)		ref.	0.408	(0.492)		ref.
25-34	0.578	(0.494)	-0.020		0.524	(0.500)	0.116	*
35-49	0.630	(0.483)	0.031		0.450	(0.498)	0.043	
50-64	0.517	(0.500)	-0.082		0.503	(0.500)	0.095	
65+	0.487	(0.500)	-0.112	*	0.506	(0.501)	0.098	
<b>Population group</b>								
Black African	0.624	(0.485)		ref.	0.458	(0.498)		ref.
Coloured	0.377	(0.485)	-0.246	***	0.525	(0.500)	0.068	
Indian / Asian	0.529	(0.500)	-0.094	*	0.539	(0.499)	0.081	*
White	0.419	(0.494)	-0.204	***	0.532	(0.500)	0.074	
<b>Education level</b>								
No secondary	0.604	(0.490)		ref.	0.464	(0.499)		ref.
Incomplete secondary	0.572	(0.495)	-0.032		0.454	(0.498)	-0.010	
Matric or equivalent	0.590	(0.492)	-0.014		0.496	(0.500)	0.032	
Post-matric	0.526	(0.500)	-0.014		0.487	(0.500)	0.024	
<b>Employment status</b>								
Outside paid work	0.584	(0.493)		ref.	0.459	(0.498)		ref.
Paid work	0.562	(0.496)	-0.023		0.505	(0.500)	0.045	*
<b>Military service</b>								
No training	0.597	(0.491)		ref.	0.501	(0.500)		ref.
Military training	0.628	(0.485)	0.031		0.410	(0.493)	-0.091	**
<b>Subjective poverty</b>								
Non-poor	0.552	(0.497)		ref.	0.488	(0.500)		ref.
Just getting by	0.595	(0.491)	0.043		0.472	(0.499)	-0.016	
Poor	0.599	(0.491)	0.047		0.439	(0.497)	-0.049	
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>								
Incorrect	0.571	(0.495)		ref.	0.419	(0.494)		ref.
Correct	0.603	(0.490)	0.031		0.595	(0.491)	0.175	***
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>								
Low	0.508	(0.500)		ref.	0.336	(0.473)		ref.
Medium	0.581	(0.494)	0.073	**	0.468	(0.499)	0.133	***
High	0.756	(0.430)	0.248	***	0.677	(0.468)	0.342	***

Source: HSRC SASAS 2014; 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

Notes: 1. Standard deviations in parenthesis; and 2. The signs \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that mean scores differences are significantly different (based on ANOVA testing, Scheffe comparisons) at the 5%, 1% and 0.5% levels, respectively.

A statistically significant subjective poverty effect was not observed in SASAS 2020. This demonstrates that subjective deprivation was not a good determinant of attitude formation here. On the subject of female participation in combat duty, we were able to observe a robust military training effect in SASAS 2020. Direct contact with the armed forces was found to negatively

influence whether an individual supported gender equality on the battlefield. A two-way ANOVA test ( $F(1, 2677)=10.45; p=0.001$ ) demonstrated that the detected training effect in that survey round was statistically significant at the 1% level. A comparable effect was witnessed in Table 28, suggesting that military training reduced support for gender equality in the armed

forces. There was a robust population group differential in SASAS 2014 with the black African majority more liable than other groups to think that women should participate in combat. When compared to this early survey round, the population group differential was much less substantial in SASAS 2020. Over the past six years, members of the black African majority soured on this type of policy. Adult members of the country's racial communities, by contrast, became more likely to support gender equality during this period. These attitudinal shifts were comparable to what was observed for other gender fairness metrics in this section.

Findings from Table 28 seem to substantiate the thesis that knowledge of the SANDF is associated with public support for gender equality on the battlefield. An attitudinal gradient on subjective knowledge on this metric was

analogous to what was observed in Table 28, confirming that knowledge improved public endorsement of gender equality in the SANDF. An individual had a greater chance of supporting gender equality on this issue if he/she had high levels of self-reported knowledge. When judged against what was seen in SASAS 2014, the magnitude of the knowledge differential was greater in SASAS 2020. A similar degree of attitudinal change was also observed in SASAS 2014. The cause of this change was the marked deterioration in support for this policy among the low knowledge group. The quotient of this group who backed gender parity on the battlefield shrank from 51% (SD=0.500) in SASAS 2014 to 34% (SD=0.473) in SASAS 2020. By comparison, the rate of decline for the medium and large self-reported knowledge groups was much more moderate.

## 3.7. OTHER MILITARY PREFERENCES

### 3.7.1. PREFERENCES FOR GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON MILITARY AND DEFENCE

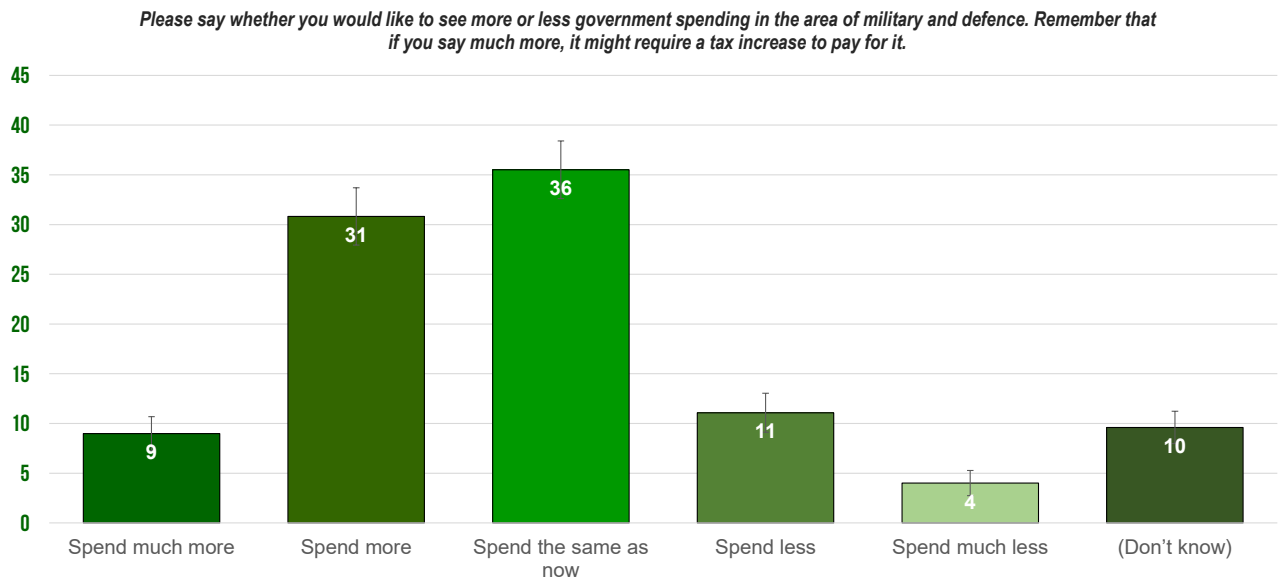
As outlined in the 2015 defence attitudes report, the expanded role envisaged for the SANDF in the Defence Review (2015) is ultimately contingent on fiscal resources and the share of the budget vote received. Without an increased resource commitment, it would be immensely challenging for the SANDF to assume these additional responsibilities and make substantive gains towards realising the vision articulated in the Defence Review. However, over the last few financial years, the annual increase in the annual defence budget allocation has been lower than the consumer price inflation rate, meaning that there has been a decline in government spending on defence in real terms. Concern over these developments and their likely implications for the SANDF was voiced by the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, in the foreword to the Department of Defence's 2018 annual report. Specifically, the Minister observed that 'South Africa is on a path of reduced defence expenditure, placing serious constraints on the effective and efficient execution of the defence mandate and subsequent governance and accountability arrangements.'

Set against the context of this apparent tension between a desire to pursue a more expansive, developmental role for the Defence Force and the realities of the medium-term budgetary and economic outlook, it is important to consider the preferences of the public about military and defence spending. International research has shown that public opinion has the potential to influence policy decisions and changes, in line with democratic theory in relation to responsiveness of institutions to the public

will and agenda (Page & Shapiro, 1983; Wlezien, 1995). This has been shown to be true in the context of public opinion and military spending (Hartley & Russett, 1992; Wlezien, 1996; Knopf, 1998; Eichenberg & Stoll, 2003; Simon & Lovrich, 2010; Williams, 2018). Compared to the North American and European cases, relatively little is known about opinion on defence spending in South Africa. Is there a general tendency towards maintaining the current spending patterns on defence, or alternatively a desire for greater or reduced expenditure in this policy area? Furthermore, how stable or variant are such preferences?

The 2017 SANDF module included a question on defence spending that originally derives from a module on the role of government administered in 2006 by the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). It was also included in the 2014, 2017 and 2020 SANDF defence attitudes modules. The specific question asks respondents the following: 'Please say whether you would like to see more or less government spending in the area of military and defence. Remember that if you say 'much more', it might require a tax increase to pay for it'. Responses were captured using a five-point scale, namely 'spend much more', 'spend more', 'spend the same as now', 'spend less' and 'spend much less'. As can be seen from Figure 50, two-fifths of South Africans felt that more money should actually be allocated to the SANDF. Around a third (36%) stated that the current allocation should remain. The minority were therefore inclined to say that less taxpayers' money should be spent on the SANDF. A tenth were uncertain.

**FIGURE 50: PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR SPENDING MORE OR LESS TAXPAYER MONEY ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN ARMED FORCES, 2020**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

In Table 29, the pattern of responses to the military spending question is presented based on the 2006, 2014, 2017 and 2020 survey results. In addition, the percentage point changes between the survey rounds are highlighted. In 2020 two-fifths (40%) supported increased military and defence expenditure, irrespective of the tax implications. Just over a third (36%) voiced a preference for keeping spending levels unchanged, 15% favoured reduced spending, while 10% of the respondents were uncertain how to respond.

With regard to changes over time, there were signs of rising support for increased spending between 2006 and 2014, with the share advocating for this, climbing 5% from 37% to 42% over the period. The shares saying they would like to see equivalent or lower spending, reduced by six and seven percentage points, respectively. There was also a tendency towards higher uncertainty between these two surveys, rising from 4% to 11% over the period. By comparison, the general pattern of responses to the 2014 and 2017 surveys is broadly similar, with

the total shares favouring increased or lower spending; thus remaining virtually unchanged. However, there are subtle changes that need to be mentioned. There appears to have been a decrease in strong support for defence spending, with a corresponding increase in those advocating for spending to remain at current levels. There has not been any increase in the share of adults that prefer reduced spending. If anything, there has been a modest reduction in the share opting for this. In 2020, we notice a reversal with preferences for less military spending increasing between 2017 and 2020. During this period the percentage stating that there should be more military spending decreased by 3%, supplemented by a further 3% that stated there should be less military spending. Taken together, these results suggest that spending on military defence in the South African case remains on aggregate broadly favoured (80% supported current or higher spending in 2020), but there has been an increase in the proportions that advocate less spending.

**TABLE 29: PREFERENCES FOR SPENDING ON MILITARY AND DEFENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA, 2006, 2014, 2017 AND 2020 COMPARED**

	2006	2014	2017	2020	2006-14	2014-17	2017-20
Spend much more	13.4	12.6	10.0	9.0	-0.8	-2.6	-1
Spend more	23.3	29.7	32.7	30.8	6.4	3.0	-1.9
Spend the same as now	38.8	32.9	38.6	35.5	-5.9	5.7	-3.1
Spend less	15.0	8.8	8.8	11.1	-6.2	0.0	-2.3
Spend much less	5.9	4.6	3.2	4.0	-1.3	-1.4	0.8
(Can't choose)	3.7	11.4	6.8	9.6	7.8	-4.6	2.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	...	...	...
Total % spend more	36.7	42.3	42.6	39.8	5.6	0.3	-2.8
Total % spend less	20.8	13.4	12.0	15.0	-7.4	-1.4	3
Mean score (0-100 scale)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Source: HSRC SASAS 2006 ISSP Role of Government module; HSRC SASAS 2014, 2017 and 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

The preceding results provide a sense of defence spending preferences in South Africa on average over time and it was evident that preference for military spending has diminished since 2017. It is therefore important to examine whether significant social and economic differences underlie this trend. In Table 30 military spending preference scores are presented by select socio-demographic attributes based on 2020 results. In 2020, there was no significant difference in the mean military spending score based on gender, age, population group, education, or employment status. There was variation based on geotype, with urban

residents more likely to want the status quo to remain. Those that rated themselves as poor were also more likely to subscribe to a notion of spending less on defence. Active social media users were more likely than non-active media users to support more military spending. Knowledge (objective and subjective) of the Defence Force was positively associated with a preference for defence spending, with self-rated (subjective) knowledge having a larger effect than objective knowledge of the SANDF branches. Knowledge of the SANDF therefore increases preference for more spending and knowledge drives regarding the SANDF are clearly critical.

**TABLE 30: PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR SPENDING MORE OR LESS TAXPAYER MONEY ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN ARMED FORCES BY SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS**

	Spend much more	Spend more	Spend the same as now	Spend less	(Un-certain)	Chi-2 (p-value)	
All	9	31	36	15	10		
<b>Gender</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 25	0.052
Male	9	33	35	16	7		
Female	9	29	36	14	12		
<b>Age group</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 40	0.374
16-24	6	36	33	15	10		
25-34	10	31	37	12	10		
35-49	8	30	37	17	8		
50-64	12	24	35	18	10		
65+	10	32	32	14	12		
<b>Population group</b>					6	chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 43	0.057
Black African	9	31	36	14	10		
Coloured	13	28	32	14	12		
Indian / Asian	4	18	37	32	9		
White	7	35	36	18	4		
<b>Education level</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 61	0.054
Post-matric	6	33	39	17	6		
Matric	10	32	35	15	8		
Incomplete secondary	9	31	35	16	9		
No secondary	11	25	33	13	17		
<b>Employment status</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (16) = 47	0.25
Full time	7	34	39	16	4		
Part-time	14	31	36	11	8		
Previously worked	9	29	38	14	10		
Unemployed (never worked)	11	29	34	14	13		
Labour inactive	9	31	34	17	9		
<b>Geotype</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 31	0.010
Urban	9	31	36	16	8		
Rural	8	30	33	14	14		
<b>Subjective poverty</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (8) = 46	0.018
Non-poor	7	30	40	16	7		
Just getting by	11	30	34	16	9		
Poor	10	32	31	13	14		
<b>Social media</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (12) = 85	0.001
Not active on social media	10	29	36	13	11		
Infrequently active	9	29	35	19	8		
Frequently active	8	35	36	14	6		

	Spend much more	Spend more	Spend the same as now	Spend less	(Un-certain)	Chi-2 (p-value)	
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (4) = 152	0.000
Incorrect	8	28	33	18	13		
Correct	11	38	41	9	2		
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>						chi <sup>2</sup> (8) = 401	0.000
Low	8	23	24	18	27		
Medium	8	31	40	16	5		
High	16	42	34	7	1		

Note: Pearson (uncorrected) Ch<sup>2</sup> test results displayed.

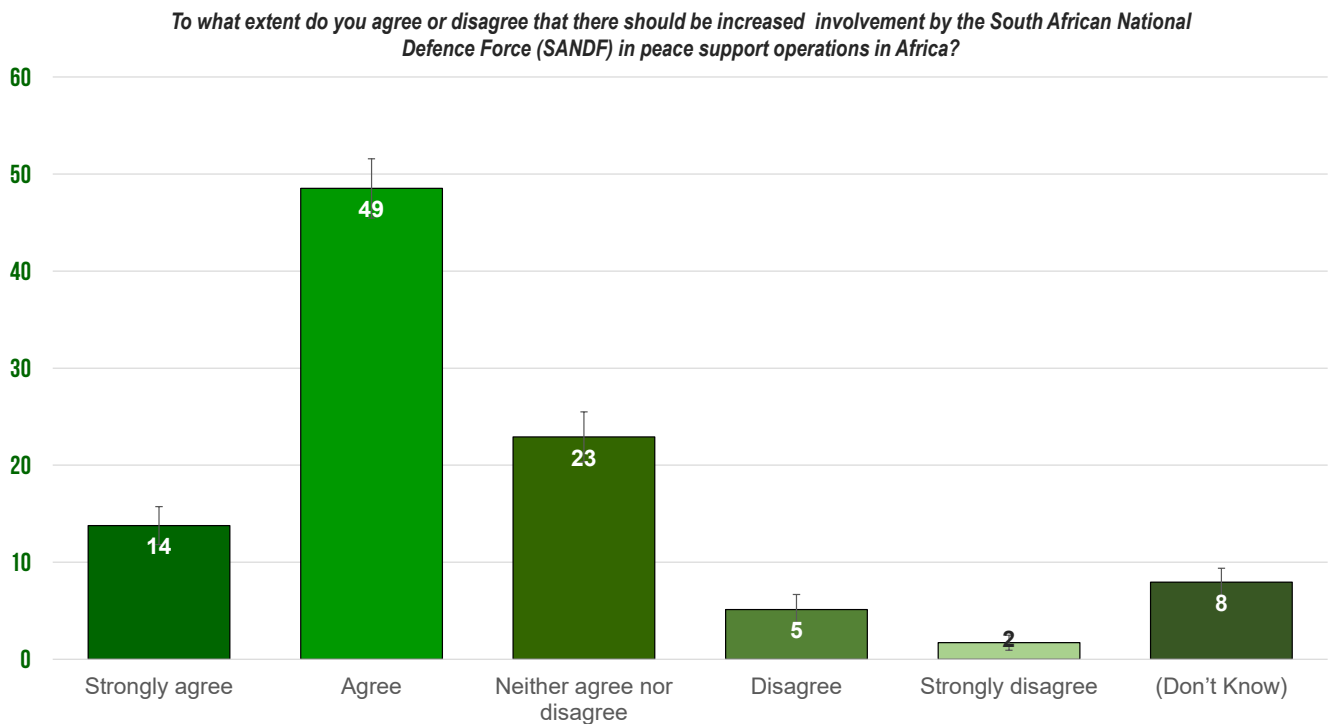
Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

### 3.7.2. THE ROLE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE IN PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS IN AFRICA

Since the advent of democracy in 1994, domestic and international expectations have steadily grown regarding South Africa’s role as a responsible and respected member of the international community. The country has taken this role seriously and has been involved in a number of different African Union and United Nations peacekeeping missions since 1994. Efforts to establish peace and security on the African continent have become a key element of post-apartheid foreign policy. South African troops have served in a range of different countries, although the bulk of the peacekeeping work has been in African Union (AU) member states such as Burundi, the Central African Republic, Sudan and Somalia. In 2007, a survey was undertaken by the Government Communication Services (GCS) on behalf

of the SANDF. In this survey, South Africans were asked to state their perceptions of the SANDF’s involvement in peacekeeping activities. People were asked if the SANDF should be involved in peacekeeping efforts in any country in the world, just in African countries, in neighbouring countries only, or should not offer its services to any country. Just over a quarter (26%) of the population stated that the SANDF should be involved in pacification operations in any country in the world. Support for the SANDF deployment peacekeeping forces in African countries was only at 20%, while 15% stated that peacekeeping activities should be in neighbouring countries only. Just over a tenth (13%) preferred military isolationism and the remainder (26%) were unsure about this issue.

**FIGURE 51: PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR INCREASED INVOLVEMENT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY IN SUPPORT OF PEACE OPERATIONS IN AFRICA, 2020**



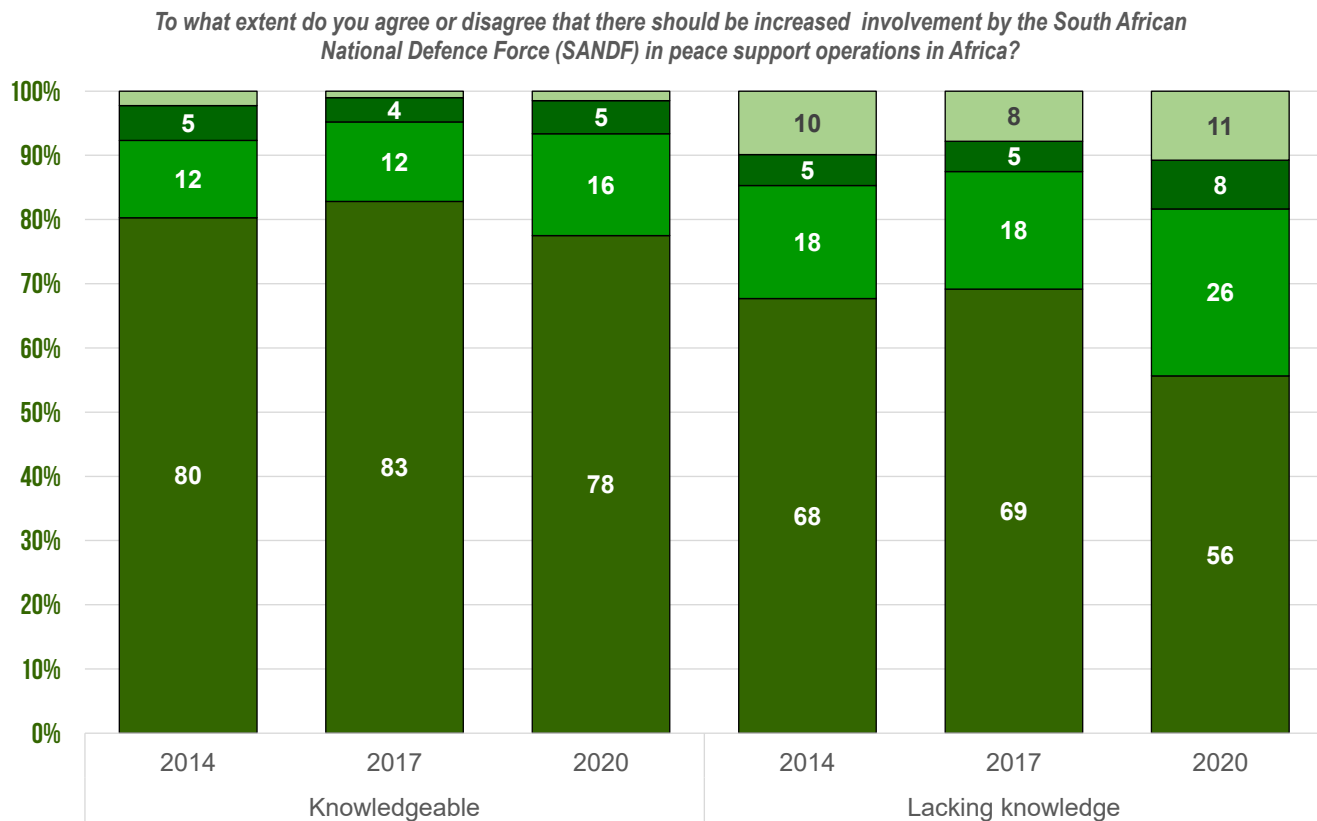
Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF



Let us compare what was found in the GCS survey to the results of SASAS 2020. Respondents in that survey round were asked whether they supported a greater participation by the national armed forces in peacekeeping operations in Africa. The exact phrasing of the question was as follows: 'To what extent do you agree or disagree that there should be increased involvement by the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in peace support operations in Africa?' A sizable majority of the general public supported greater involvement. About two-thirds (63%) of the adult

populace agreed with the statement (Figure 52). Only a small minority (7%) disagreed that the SANDF should increase its involvement in maintaining peace in the AU. The remainder either told fieldworkers that they were neutral (23%) on this subject or were unsure of how to answer the question (8%). These outcomes were not too different from what was observed in 2007. These findings illustrate that South Africans are generally inclined to want the SANDF to assist other African countries with maintaining peace and stability.

**FIGURE 52: PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR INCREASED INVOLVEMENT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY IN SUPPORT OF PEACE OPERATIONS IN AFRICA BY SANDF KNOWLEDGE (OBJECTIVE), 2014-2020**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2014-2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

There was a discrete objective knowledge differential on whether the adult populace thought that the military should become more active in peacekeeping campaigns in other African countries. This differential is quite apparent from Figure 52. Survey participants who gave a correct answer to the objective knowledge question were discovered to be much more liable to agree with the statement than those who gave an incorrect answer. This is evident if we look at the SASAS 2020 data, two-thirds (78%) of the objectively knowledgeable group in that survey round said that they agreed with the statement. By comparison, less than three-fifths (56%)

of the objectively unknowledgeable group gave the same answer. Over the 2017-2020 period, we discovered a modest decrease in levels of public support for expanded peacekeeping operations among the unknowledgeable group. The proportion of this group who agreed with the statement declined by 13 percentage points between the two periods. A much more restrained depreciation was identified during the period under review among those who were knowledgeable about the SANDF. Here the decline was only five percentage points and this group remained, on the whole, largely supportive of expanded military intervention in the AU.

**TABLE 31: PUBLIC AGREEMENT THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY SHOULD INCREASE ITS SUPPORT FOR PEACE OPERATIONS IN AFRICA BY SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS, 2014-2020**

	2014				2020			
	Mean		Row Mean-Col Mean		Mean		Row Mean-Col Mean	
All	0.704	(0.457)			0.623	(0.485)		
<b>Gender</b>								
Male	0.720	(0.449)		ref.	0.650	(0.477)		ref.
Female	0.689	(0.463)	-0.031		0.598	(0.491)	-0.053	**
<b>Urbanisation</b>								
Urban	0.699	(0.459)		ref.	0.645	(0.479)		ref.
Rural	0.719	(0.450)	0.020		0.574	(0.495)	-0.071	**
<b>Age group</b>								
16-24	0.768	(0.422)		ref.	0.621	(0.486)		ref.
25-34	0.711	(0.454)	-0.057		0.680	(0.467)	0.059	
35-49	0.706	(0.456)	-0.063		0.572	(0.495)	-0.049	
50-64	0.638	(0.481)	-0.130	***	0.619	(0.486)	-0.002	
65+	0.615	(0.487)	-0.153	***	0.622	(0.486)	0.001	
<b>Population group</b>								
Black African	0.736	(0.441)		ref.	0.635	(0.482)		ref.
Coloured	0.648	(0.478)	-0.087	**	0.567	(0.496)	-0.068	
Indian / Asian	0.581	(0.494)	-0.155	***	0.660	(0.474)	0.025	
White	0.544	(0.499)	-0.191	***	0.563	(0.497)	-0.072	
<b>Education level</b>								
No secondary	0.644	(0.479)		ref.	0.594	(0.492)		ref.
Incomplete secondary	0.724	(0.447)	0.081	**	0.651	(0.477)	0.057	
Matric or equivalent	0.723	(0.448)	0.079	*	0.612	(0.488)	0.018	
Post-matric	0.659	(0.475)	0.015		0.635	(0.482)	0.041	
<b>Employment status</b>								
Outside paid work	0.712	(0.453)		ref.	0.622	(0.485)		ref.
Paid work	0.683	(0.466)	-0.029		0.626	(0.484)	0.005	
<b>Military service</b>								
No training	0.737	(0.441)		ref.	0.661	(0.473)		ref.
Military training	0.711	(0.454)	-0.025		0.573	(0.495)	-0.088	**
<b>Subjective poverty</b>								
Non-poor	0.725	(0.446)		ref.	0.568	(0.496)		ref.
Just getting by	0.697	(0.460)	-0.028		0.657	(0.475)	0.088	***
Poor	0.676	(0.468)	-0.049		0.652	(0.477)	0.084	**
<b>Objective Knowledge</b>								
Incorrect	0.677	(0.468)		ref.	0.556	(0.497)		ref.
Correct	0.803	(0.398)	0.126	***	0.775	(0.418)	0.219	***
<b>Subjective Knowledge</b>								
Low	0.487	(0.500)		ref.	0.473	(0.500)		ref.
Medium	0.789	(0.408)	0.302	***	0.623	(0.485)	0.149	***
High	0.913	(0.283)	0.426	***	0.829	(0.377)	0.356	***

Source: HSRC SASAS 2014; 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

Notes: 1. Standard deviations in parenthesis; and 2. The signs \*, \*\*, \*\*\* indicate that mean scores differences are significantly different (based on ANOVA testing, Scheffe comparisons) at the 5%, 1% and 0.5% levels, respectively.

We generated a binary (0-1) variable that measured support for an increased role for the post-apartheid military in African peace operations. A high score on this variable denoted a high level of agreement with the expanded peacekeeping statement. Mean scores on this measure are portrayed by a selection of different

socio-demographic subgroups in Table 31. There was a modest gender differential noted in the table with men more likely to support a more interventionist military policy than women. The scope of the gender differential was slightly greater in SASAS 2020 than in SASAS 2014. This was due to a substantial drop in the percentage

of the female population who thought that the military should intervene more in Africa. The share of the female populace who agreed with the statement plunged from 69% (SD=0.463) in SASAS 2014 to 60% (SD=0.491) in SASAS 2020. There were notable variations in how adults answered the question by age group in SASAS 2014. The youth was more prone to support an interventionist military policy when compared to their older counterparts in that survey round. An analogous age effect was, by contrast, not discovered in SASAS 2020. The cause for this variation was a considerable deterioration in how young people thought about the use of the military force in the AU. The segment of the 16-24 age cohort who agreed with the statement decreased from 77% (SD=0.422) in SASAS 2014 to 62% (SD=0.486) in SASAS 2020.

There was a notable population group differential in SASAS 2014 with the black African majority more inclined to believe that the military should adopt a more interventionist stance than other groups. This population group effect was, by comparison, much less pronounced in SASAS 2020. Between 2014 and 2020, black African adults became much less likely to believe that the SANDF should increase its support for peacekeeping operations in Africa. The fraction of this group who agreed with the statement about peace operations shrunk from 74% (SD=0.441) in SASAS 2014 to 64% (SD=0.482) in SASAS 2020. Equivalent drops in agreement levels were not detected for other population groups in the table. We also witnessed a moderate urbanisation effect with rural dwellers less liable to think that the SANDF should become more involved in peace

operations. Perhaps unexpectedly, a military training differential was observed in SASAS 2020. Direct contact with the SANDF reduced the likelihood that an individual would favour increased SANDF involvement in African peace operations. A significant educational attainment effect was noted in SASAS 2014 but not in SASAS 2020. A two-way ANOVA test ( $F(3, 2814)=1.77$ ;  $p=0.151$ ) confirmed that observed educational group differences in that survey round were not statistically significant at the 5% level.

We were able to verify a knowledge-based effect in Table 31 and a positive attitudinal gradient was identified on subjective knowledge. This corresponds with a similar gradient observed for objective knowledge in Figure 52. Individuals with high levels of self-reported knowledge exhibited a greater tendency to agree with the statement than their counterparts who had either medium or low levels of familiarity with the military. The subjective knowledge differential was weaker in SASAS 2020 than in SASAS 2014. This variance was due to a noticeable drop in agreement levels among certain knowledge groups during the period. Examining how the various knowledge groups responded to the question between 2014 and 2020, it would seem evident that it was the medium group who experienced the greatest deterioration in agreement. The proportion of this group who supported increased intervention plummeted from 79% (SD=0.408) in SASAS 2014 to 62% (SD=0.623) in SASAS 2020. An ANOVA test ( $F(2,2840)=75.70$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) verified that these group variations were statistically significant at the 0.01% level.

## 3.8. PREDICTING CONFIDENCE IN THE DEFENCE FORCE

In order to understand what characteristics are associated with public confidence in the SANDF as an institution, a multivariate regression was conducted on overall job appraisal in the armed forces. This regression analysis will allow us to predict the association between public perceptions of the SANDF and individual characteristics and attitudes. An appropriate item had to be constructed that could measure general public appraisals of the military. After careful deliberation, the research team derived a suitable variable from the following question: 'Taking into account all the things that you expect the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) to do, to what extent do you believe they are doing a good job or a bad job?' For the dependent variable, we used a collapsed version of the response scale to the overall confidence measure described above, as follows: (i) 'good job'; (ii) 'neutral'; (iii) 'bad job'; and (iv) 'uncertain'. For modelling purposes, the 'good job' response was used as the reference category.

Given the nature of our categorical dependent variable, we used a multinomial regression approach (in which the log odds of the outcomes are modelled as a linear combination of the predictor variables) to model public evaluations of the job performance of the armed forces. To complete the analysis, a number of independent variables had to be generated. To account for a respondent's socio-demographic characteristics, a number of standard demographic variables were constructed for this study. The standard backgrounds' variables created, captured a range of variables including gender, age, population group, labour market status, military training, social media usage and province of residence. In addition, a variable was generated that measured whether the interview was conducted before the start of the COVID-19 lockdown orders on 30/03/2020. Following the creation of these variables, a number of attitudinal variables were produced. How these independent variables were created is outlined below.

**Subjective knowledge.** In order to facilitate our multivariate analysis, a Self-Rated Knowledge Scale was created. Response options on the self-rated knowledge question were reversed so that larger scores signified the highest level of understanding. Responses were then transformed into a 0-10 scale, with zero representing the lowest level of knowledge and 10 the highest. All 'don't know' responses were coded as zero.

**Moral alignment.** As part of the SASAS 2020 questionnaire, three items were put forward to measure moral

alignment between ordinary people and the SANDF. Responses to three questions were recorded onto a standard five-point agreement scale. In order to better understand public ethical orientation towards the Defence Force, an index, based on three measures, was produced. If a respondent answered 'don't know' to any these questions, then this data was coded as missing. Standard reliability testing found that the three items combined well together (Cronbach  $\alpha = 0.79$ ). The index was transformed into a 0-10 scale with higher values representing greater agreement (and thus moral alignment) on the three items.

**Perceived goal effectiveness.** In SASAS 2020 respondents were asked to evaluate the perceived performance of the Defence Force in relation to five roles that address aspects of the four overarching goals outlined in the 2014 Defence Review. Respondents were required to give their answers on a 11-point end-anchored scale, where zero represents 'extremely unsuccessful' and 10 represents 'extremely successful'. To determine in more detail the extent to which these performance evaluations are consistent across different segments of South African society, an index was constructed by averaging the five items together. The index has a high reliability score, with the Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.97. This index was then transformed into a 0-10 scale.

Results on our multinomial (polytomous) logistic regression analysis are presented in Table 32. The base outcome of our multivariate model is 'good job'. This table shows the log odds of the probability of choosing one outcome category over the probability of choosing the baseline category (i.e., 'good job'). At this stage, it is important to note that the likelihood ratio chi-square of each model indicates that each fits substantially better than an empty model. As can be observed from the table, socio-demographic characteristics did not act as robust predictors of the dependent variable. Controlling for knowledge of and moral alignment with the SANDF, demographic factors (such as gender, population group and educational attainment) were not found to have a significant relationship with perceived confidence in the armed forces. Our COVID-19 lockdown variable had a positive correlation with the dependent in both the first and the second pairings. However, this correlation was only statistically significant in the first pairing.

We discovered that military training increased the log odds of choosing 'bad job' versus the base outcome. Using no contact as the reference group, indirect military contact increased the log odds of selecting 'bad job' by 0.587 (SE=0.256). A somewhat smaller correlation ( $r=0.454$ ; SE=0.202) was observed for direct military contact in this pairing. If the model was adjusted to replace the military contact variable with a modified contact after the 1994 measure, then we observed a very robust (and positive) correlation between contact and the dependent in the second pairing. Looking at this outcome, it would seem that having contact with the military (either direct or indirect) after 1994 markedly improved the probability that an individual would adopt a favourable view of the SANDF. If we replace the contact variable with a modified metric that measured contact (either direct or indirect) before 1994, then a comparable result was not observed. Overall, it would seem (perhaps predictably) that contact with the modern SANDF had the most robust effect on attitude formation here.

A robust correlation between subjective knowledge and performance assessment was observed in all three pairings presented in Table 32. The size of the observed correlation was much larger in the third pairing ( $r = -0.213$ ; SE=0.066) than in the first ( $r = -0.070$ ; SE=0.025) or the second ( $r = -0.113$ ; SE=0.045) pairings. In other words, familiarity with the SANDF improved the chances that people will be able to evaluate the performance of the organisation. To verify this hypothesis, we replaced the subjective knowledge variable in the table with a variable that measured whether an individual answered the quiz question correctly. A similar result was observed in this modified model, indicating that if an individual was knowledgeable about the armed forces, then they were more liable to evaluate that organisation favourably. This suggests that improving public awareness of the SANDF will have a positive effect on how ordinary people valued the armed forces.

We found, perhaps unsurprisingly, a robust correlation between attitudes towards the performance of the SANDF and the perceived effectiveness of the organisation in terms of its own goals. When answering a question on how successful the military was, we found that viewing the institution as effective at pursuing its goal reduced the chances of selecting both 'neutral' and 'bad job'. Compared to the base outcome, the correlation was larger for the former ( $r = -0.169$ ; SE=0.030) than for the latter ( $r = -0.039$ ; SE=0.390). It would seem that if an individual thought that the armed forces was performing efficaciously on the four overarching goals articulated in the 2014 Defence Review, then that individual was more liable to think that the SANDF was doing a good job. This outcome demonstrates that perceived effectiveness is an important predictor of individual assessment of any organisation.

A robust correlation between attitudes towards the functioning of the SANDF and our moral alignment index was observed in all three pairings presented in the table. The size of this correlation was, on the whole, much larger than the observed correlation between the dependent and perceived effectiveness. It would appear that a moral attachment to the identity of the armed forces was a better predictor of confidence in the country's military than an evaluation of the functioning of the SANDF. Perceiving the armed forces as moral decreased the log odds ( $r = -0.454$ ; SE=0.034) of choosing 'bad' over 'good' job. Regarding the institution as fair also reduced the chances of selecting both 'neutral' ( $r = -0.346$ ; SE=0.024) and 'don't know' ( $r = -0.572$ ; SE=0.044). The model outputs imply that perceived fairness was perhaps the most important factor shaping what the adult public in South Africa thought about the SANDF.

**TABLE 32: MULTINOMIAL LOGISTIC REGRESSION ON RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION 'TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ALL THE THINGS THAT YOU EXPECT THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE (SANDF) TO DO, TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU BELIEVE THEY ARE DOING A GOOD JOB OR A BAD JOB?'**

	Neutral			Bad job			(Don't know)		
<b>Age</b>	-0.004	(0.004)		0.002	(0.006)		0.008	(0.010)	
<b>Gender (ref. male)</b>	-0.168	(0.110)		-0.240	(0.171)		-0.250	(0.292)	
<b>Geotype (ref. urban)</b>	0.053	(0.140)		0.028	(0.231)		-0.107	(0.327)	
<b>Population group (ref. Black African)</b>									
Coloured	0.485	(0.187)	*	0.302	(0.281)		-0.335	(0.496)	
Indian / Asian	0.321	(0.262)		-0.062	(0.381)		-1.087	(0.831)	
White	-0.037	(0.241)		-0.253	(0.341)		-0.589	(0.678)	
<b>Years of Schooling</b>	0.018	(0.017)		0.043	(0.026)		-0.010	(0.039)	
<b>Social media (ref. non-user)</b>									
Infrequently active	0.060	(0.137)		0.225	(0.215)		0.446	(0.361)	
Frequently active	-0.114	(0.164)		0.096	(0.245)		-0.175	(0.449)	
(Undeclared)	0.413	(0.269)		0.663	(0.379)		-0.106	(0.605)	
<b>Employment status (ref. employed full-time)</b>									
Unemployed	0.077	(0.135)		-0.274	(0.220)		-0.050	(0.354)	
Outside labour market	0.089	(0.141)		0.112	(0.211)	*	0.353	(0.352)	
<b>Subjective poverty (ref. non-poor)</b>									
Just getting along	-0.208	(0.124)		-0.360	(0.198)		0.077	(0.319)	
Poor	-0.365	(0.157)	*	-0.097	(0.250)		-0.332	(0.377)	
<b>COVID-19 lockdown</b>	0.287	(0.121)	*	0.304	(0.199)		0.048	(0.314)	
<b>SANDF military (ref. none)</b>									
Indirect military contact	-0.070	(0.179)		0.587	(0.256)	*	0.439	(0.533)	
Direct military contact	0.258	(0.134)		0.454	(0.202)	*	1.045	(0.305)	**
<b>Self-Report Knowledge Scale</b>	-0.070	(0.025)	**	-0.113	(0.045)	***	-0.213	(0.066)	***
<b>Moral Alignment</b>	-0.346	(0.024)	***	-0.454	(0.034)	***	-0.572	(0.044)	***
<b>Perceived Goal Effectiveness</b>	-0.039	(0.006)	***	-0.169	(0.030)	***	0.005	(0.006)	

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020, Attitudes towards the SANDF

Notes: (1) Data is weighted to be nationally representative of the adult population (16 years and older) living in South Africa, (2) the base outcome is 'Good Job' and (3) the regression model controlled for an individual's province of residence, religious affiliation and political affiliation.

### 3.9. A COVID-19 EFFECT? LOCKDOWN, DEPLOYMENT AND PUBLIC OPINION

The nature of the disruption to SASAS Round 17 fieldwork activities described in the methodology section above, due to the national lockdown that was instituted in late March 2020, presents an opportunity to examine whether the experiences that the public endured during the COVID-19 pandemic had any influence on knowledge, attitudes and preferences relating to the SANDF. With approximately 40% of interviews administered prior to the lockdown, and the balance eight months later, we can examine attitudes before and after, and ascertain the pattern of variation on the measures included in the survey module commissioned by the Department of Defence.

In Table 33, we provide an overview of the evidence for signs that attitudes and beliefs prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in the country were different to those after the introduction of the hard lockdown. While some sections of the report have examined specific attitudes pre- versus post-COVID-19 lockdown, this section aims to provide a more holistic synthesis of evidence in this regard. It is hoped that this will help understand how the experiences of this exceptional period in contemporary times have shaped public sentiment towards the Defence Force, and in what way.

The results show that experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown had a bearing on many aspects of defence-related attitudes in South Africa. This effect was predominantly negative in character, but the scale of this change varied across different dimensions.

**TABLE 33: SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE ON COVID-19 EFFECT ON DEFENCE ATTITUDES AND PREFERENCES**

Survey measure	Significant differences pre- vs post-lockdown	Significance	Scale of difference
<b>Contact with the Defence Force</b>			
Personal military experience / training	No	-	-
Indirect military experience / training (network)	No	-	-
Attendance at SANDF events and shows	Yes	***	+6
<b>Knowledge and awareness</b>			
Self-rated knowledge (mean, 0-100 scale)	Yes	***	-6
Objective knowledge (mean, 0-100 scale)	Yes	***	-9
Preferred defence-related information sources			
<i>Internet and social media</i>	Weak	*	+4
<i>Family and friends</i>	Weak	*	-4
<b>Views on SANDF shows, events and exhibitions</b>			
Importance (%)	Yes	***	-7
Spend more (%) / Spend same (%)	Yes	***	+11 / -17
Attitudes to shows and events			
<i>It unites South Africans behind the SANDF</i>	Yes	**	-5
<i>It showcases SANDF job opportunities</i>	Yes	**	-6
<i>It helps people gain knowledge of SANDF</i>	Yes	***	-9
<b>Overall confidence in the Defence Force</b>			
Proud of the SANDF	Yes	***	-10
Trust in the Defence Force	Yes	***	-9
Overall performance of the Defence Force	Yes	***	-14
<b>Perceived role of the Defence Force in democracy</b>			
Perceived necessity of the Defence Force	Yes	**	-6
Need for Defence Force during times of peace	Yes	***	-9
Importance of strategic defence goals and tasks			
<i>Helping other government departments in times of disaster or emergency</i>	Yes	***	-3
<i>Defend and protect South Africa</i>	Yes	***	-5
<i>Peacekeeping in other countries</i>	No	-	-
<i>Safeguard and patrol the country's borders</i>	Yes	***	-4
<i>Assist the SAPS uphold law and order</i>	Yes	**	-2

Survey measure	Significant differences pre- vs post-lockdown	Significance	Scale of difference
<i>Provide young South Africans with skills, values, and discipline</i>	Yes	***	-5
<i>Help build or repair infrastructure such as bridges, roads, and clinics in rural areas</i>	Yes	***	-3
<i>Work with the UN and AU to prevent and resolve conflict in Africa</i>	Yes	***	-3
Support for SANDF deployment to fight crime			
<i>General support in principle</i>	Yes	***	-11
<i>Deployment to one's own neighbourhood</i>	Yes	***	-11
<i>Perceived effectiveness in crime reduction</i>	Yes	**	-5
<b>Perceived legitimacy of the Defence Force</b>			
Perceived fairness and success			
<i>Fair</i>	Yes	***	-6
<i>Successful</i>	Yes	***	-7
<i>Professional</i>	Yes	***	-9
<i>Disciplined</i>	Yes	***	-8
Perceived as successful			
<i>Helping other countries with emergencies</i>	Yes	***	-6
<i>Defending and protecting South Africa</i>	Yes	***	-6
<i>Peacekeeping in other countries</i>	Yes	***	-7
<i>Safeguarding and patrolling borders</i>	Yes	***	-5
<i>Providing young South Africans with skills, values, and discipline</i>	Yes	***	-4
Moral alignment with SANDF			
<i>Willingness to serve</i>	Weak	*	+2
<i>Would be proud to be a member of SANDF</i>	No	-	-
<i>SANDF stands up for values important to people like me</i>	Yes	***	-12
<i>Support how SANDF performs functions</i>	Yes	***	-7
<b>Transformation in the Defence Force</b>			
SANDF representative of all South Africans	Yes	***	-7
Transformation in SANDF is progressing well/very well	Yes	***	-13
SANDF offers good career opportunities for people like you	Yes	***	-7
Racism or racial discrimination occurs in the Defence Force... not at all/to a small extent	Yes	***	-10
<b>Gender equality in the Defence Force</b>			
Women can perform as well as men in all areas of the military	Yes	***	-9
Special attempt should be made to recruit more women into SANDF	Yes	***	-6
Women should do combat duty in front line	Yes	***	-7
<b>Other defence attitudes</b>			
Support increased/greater involvement by SANDF in peace support operations in Africa	Yes	***	-7
Would like to see more government spending on military and defence	Weak	*	+4

Source: HSRC SASAS 2020 – SANDF Attitudes towards the Defence Force module

Note: n.s.=not statistically significant, \*=significant at 95% confidence level; \*\*= significant at 99% confidence level; and \*\*\*=significant at 99.9% confidence level

Reported past contact with the Defence Force was largely unchanged, with personal or indirect military experience or training displaying no statistically significant change. There was an increase in reported past attendance at SANDF shows and events. This is mostly due to experiences more than a year prior to interviewing (i.e.,

prior to the COVID-19 lockdown). Both self-reported and objective knowledge of the SANDF exhibited a modest decline. This could be related to limitations on outreach activities during 2020 due to COVID restrictions on shows and events. There was not much evidence of change in preferences for defence-related information

sources. There was a slight increase in reporting usage of the internet and social media (+4 percentage points), and a similar size decline in the mentioning of family and friends. There were not statistically significant changes for any other information sources.

Regarding views on SANDF shows, events and exhibitions, the perceived importance of such outreach activities declined seven percentage points, with a similar decline in the belief that such activities promote awareness of, and moral alignment with the SANDF, and showcase job opportunities in the Defence Force. Despite this, support for spending on such events increased by 11 percentage points, due mainly to a reduced likelihood of respondents preferring outreach expenditure to remain unchanged. This suggests that a clear demand for defence-related community outreach and engagement still exists among the South African public, even if certain outreach beliefs have wavered somewhat during 2020.

Measures of overall confidence in the SANDF displayed a consistently downward tendency, with the percentage point differences among the largest observed in the survey module. Pride in the Defence Force fell 10 percentage points, trust decreased by nine percentage points and the belief that the SANDF was generally doing a good job dropped 14 percentage points. This represents a distinct discontinuity relative to the increasing trend observed between 2014 and 2017.

There was some evidence of waning support for the role(s) of the SANDF in democratic South Africa. The perceived necessity of the Defence Force declined six percentage points and demand for the military in times of peace fell nine percentage points. When asked about the relative importance of specific conventional and expanded defence roles, the scale of change was more modest, ranging between a fall of two and five percentage points. The only role where the importance ratings did not significantly alter was in relation to peacekeeping in other countries. The survey tested views on the SANDF playing a role in community-based crime reduction efforts. Although this was generally positively viewed, there was an 11-percentage-point decrease in support for such deployment generally and in respondents' place of residence between pre- and post-COVID-19 surveying. The perceived effectiveness of the SANDF in undertaking was less affected, falling only five percentage points.

From a legitimacy perspective, the survey contained a set of measures addressing both perceived effectiveness of, and moral alignment with the SANDF. The degree to which the SANDF was evaluated as fair, successful, professional and disciplined fell by between six and nine percentage points. Similarly, evaluations of performance in five specific defence roles all declined by four to seven percentage points. There was more ambiguity evident with respect to views on moral alignment with the Defence Force. Both the willingness to serve in the SANDF and a sense that one would be proud to serve showed either no discernible change or a marginal improvement. Despite this, a belief in shared values ('SANDF stands up for values important to people like

me') displayed a 12-percentage-point reduction, while the share agreeing that they support how the SANDF usually functions, fell seven percentage points. This points to an interesting tension between an enduring willingness to assist in defence-related action, but a growing concern about the values and conduct of the SANDF. The deployment of the SANDF to assist with the enforcement of COVID-19 lockdown regulations, with a strong presence in urban spaces in particular, is likely to be contributed to this changing pattern of responses to the moral alignment questions.

Views on the transformation of the Defence Force, as with other areas of evaluation, have tended to show signs of reversal when comparing pre-COVID lockdown surveying to that conducted afterwards. The largest decline was observable in relation to the share that believes that transformation in the SANDF is progressing well, which dropped 13 percentage points. Similarly, the share of South Africans reporting that racism or racial discrimination was not happening in the SANDF at all, or occurring only rarely, dropped 10 percentage points. The share agreeing the SANDF is representative of all South Africans and offers good career opportunities, declined by seven percentage points.

Views on gender equality in the SANDF fell by seven to nine percentage points in general. Specifically, the view that 'Women can perform as well as men in all areas of the military' declined by nine percentage points, while support for women being involved in combat duty in the front line dropped by seven percentage points. There was additionally a six-percentage-point reduction in the preference for special efforts to recruit more women into the SANDF.

The survey module finally asked general preferences for SANDF involvement in peacekeeping operations in Africa and support for military spending. The results show that support for peacekeeping efforts across the continent fell by seven percentage points after the COVID lockdown was implemented, though three-fifths (60%) continue to favour this role of the SANDF. Support for increased military spending has remained unaffected, and even increased marginally (more than four percentage points).

Taken together, the examination of the pre- and post-COVID-19 lockdown changes in attitudes towards a wide-ranging set of defence-related topics suggests that there has been a dampening effect. Many measures displayed a statistically significant change in a more critical direction. Nonetheless, in most instances, the scale of effect was in the five to ten percent range, with only six items displaying a double-digit percentage-point change. Furthermore, the public's views on the Defence Force remain firmly positive in nature despite these changes. This is, however, not a time for complacency, as the ongoing efforts to promote the expanded roles of the Defence Force in democratic South Africa and during times of peace depend fundamentally on ensuring that the public regards the institution with a sense of trust, legitimacy and pride.



# 4. CONCLUSION

This report represents the third in a series aiming to assess and monitor public attitudes towards the South African National Defence Force. The first report was based on an in-depth survey module that was designed and conducted as part of the 2014 round of the Human Sciences Research Council's nationally representative South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) research infrastructure. It represents an important baseline that coincided with, and was informed by, the South African Defence Review 2015. The Defence Review involved an extensive process of research and subsequent consultation with various stakeholders, extending over a three-year period. It drew attention to what was deemed a 'critical state of decline' in the Defence Force and acknowledged that considerable public support would be needed if this situation is to be effectively redressed. The review subsequently articulated a 20-year defence strategy, aimed at reversing the decline and enhancing the capacity of the Defence Force. Taking into consideration the developmental challenges facing the country as well as the uncertain economic and geopolitical environment, the long-term defence vision not only focused on the SANDF's conventional strategic defence roles and responsibilities, but further stressed the contributory role that could be made to nation-building in the country through the adoption of a more expansive defence mandate. Taking these strategic priorities into account, the initial attitudinal report provided a detailed examination of views on the SANDF and aimed to establish the degree to which citizens share the vision of a broader, developmental role for the institution in coming decades.

Findings from the first (2014) and second (2017) reports confirmed that the SANDF is a valued

organisation and during this period it was also found that pride, trust, moral alignment, support for its role and performance evaluations had positively increased. Findings from the current 2020 report are, however, more negative. The period between 2017 and 2020 was characterised by mounting economic uncertainty and significant political upheaval. This was compounded by global developments that have led to concerns over democratic decline, economic precariousness and downward intergenerational mobility. The period before the national lockdown can therefore be considered as challenging and might be the reason for the decline in evaluations of the SANDF pre-COVID-19.

When the lockdown was announced, the President also announced the deployment of the SANDF across the country with approximately 250 SANDF members being deployed to each province. The province of Gauteng deployed twice the number of members due to the rapid increase in the number of infections which have been detected in the province at that time (Nicolson 2020). During the initial phase of the lockdown, the SANDF also assisted law enforcement institutions in conducting roadblocks, foot patrols and patrolling the country's borders. As the number of COVID-19 infections increased, the SANDF's role shifted to a health-orientated one which included the involvement of the SANDF's military health personnel, who played a critical role in the setting up and maintaining of temporary COVID-19 hospitals across the country. Despite some controversy and allegations of excessive usage of force, the SANDF's nationwide deployment was lauded by the President who acknowledged the Defence Force's role in maintaining law and order during the pandemic and for the

assistance provided by the SANDF during the peak of the virus in the country's health facilities (Mahlathi 2021).

However, despite the accolades received for this deployment and operation, results from this report show that the COVID-19 pandemic and the role that the SANDF played during the pandemic had a generally negative effect on attitudes and perceptions of the SANDF. The public became more critical on almost all of the survey indicators examined, including awareness, pride, trust, performance evaluations and transformation attitudes. The largest impacts were on overall confidence in the SANDF, pride and trust in the institution, as well as perceived transformation of the Defence Force. In most instances, the scale of effect was in the five to ten percentage point range, with six items displaying a double-digit percentage-point change. These represent significant changes in a short space of time. It also needs to be considered that this represents aggregate national changes, with the growth of more critical views more distinct for certain socio-demographic groups in society.

Regression analysis showed that, controlling for a range of factors, moral attachment with the armed forces was a better predictor of confidence in the country's military in 2020 than evaluations of the performance of the SANDF in fulfilling different defence roles. The model outputs imply that a perceived sense of shared values was the most important factor shaping what the adult public in South Africa thought about the SANDF. This is a critical finding for the SANDF and implies that conduct of the SANDF in civil matters and perceptions of fairness of conduct are critical.

**By way of conclusion**, this third round of surveying into public views

towards the Defence Force has provided a sense of enduring public confidence in the institution, despite a decline since 2017 and during the period since the national COVID lockdown was introduced. There remains clear support for expanded defence roles in line with the 2015 Defence Review, and recognition that the progressive transformation agenda, that has been pursued over the last two-and-a-half decades, has been generally successful. Knowledge of and exposure to the Defence Force have shown to be critical factors associated with positive overall evaluations, as well as support for continued military expenditure and core roles such as peacekeeping in Africa. Yet, levels of knowledge and direct exposure to the Defence Force remain circumscribed, and there is scope for improvement in relation to a

number of different dimensions and measures examined. In addition, there are notable differences of opinion among South Africans based on various socio-demographic factors, and the nature and scale of difference need to be tracked in order to ensure that a consensus on defence continues to exist. The 2020 survey shows a decline in ratings of overall legitimacy of the SANDF, especially among black African adults, particularly those with lower levels of schooling. This trend is worrisome and needs to be monitored to determine the factors that contribute to negative evaluations. While the public's views on the Defence Force remain firmly positive in nature despite the changes that occurred during 2020, this is not a time for complacency. Ongoing efforts to promote the expanded roles of the Defence

Force in democratic South Africa and during times of peace depend fundamentally on ensuring that the public regards the institution with a sense of trust, legitimacy and pride. It therefore remains important to regularly monitor public perceptions to discern changes in defence-related attitudes, behaviour and preferences. Such monitoring will allow the attitudinal effects of contextual events involving the SANDF to be determined, as well as enable the SANDF to examine the effect of key communication drives and strategic interventions over time. It would also ensure that evidence on the degree to which the defence vision outlined in the Defence Review is progressively being realised in the eyes of the public, as well as allow for any context-related change to the vision to be backed by public opinion.

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# APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

## SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL ATTITUDES SURVEY 2020 QUESTIONNAIRE 2



### RESPONDENTS AGED 16 YEARS +

Good (morning/afternoon/evening), I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and we are conducting a survey for the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). The HSRC regularly conducts surveys of opinion amongst the South African population. Topics include a wide range of social matters such as communications, politics, education, unemployment, the problems of the aged and inter-group relations. As a follow-up to this earlier work, we would like to ask you questions on a variety of subjects that are of national importance. To obtain reliable, scientific information we request that you answer the questions that follow as honestly as possible. Your opinion is important in this research. The area in which you live and you yourself have been selected randomly for the purpose of this survey. The fact that you have been chosen is thus quite coincidental. The information you give to us will be kept confidential. You and your household members will not be identified by name or address in any of the reports we plan to write.

### PARTICULARS OF VISITS

	DAY MONTH		TIME STARTED		TIME COMPLETED		**RESPONSE
	DAY	MONTH	HR	MIN	HR	MIN	
First visit	/	/	2020	/	/	/	/
Second visit	/	/	2020	/	/	/	/
Third visit	/	/	2020	/	/	/	/

#### \*\*RESPONSE CODES

Completed questionnaire	=	01
Partially completed questionnaire (specify reason)	=	02
<u>Revisit</u>		
Appointment made	=	03
Selected respondent not at home	=	04
No one home	=	05
<u>Do not qualify</u>		
Vacant house/flat/stand/not a house or flat/demolished	=	06
No person qualifies according to the survey specifications	=	07
Respondent cannot communicate with interviewer because of language	=	08
Respondent is physically/mentally not fit to be interviewed	=	09
<u>Refusals</u>		
Contact person refused	=	10
Interview refused by selected respondent	=	11
Interview refused by parent	=	12
Interview refused by other household member	=	13
OFFICE USE	=	14

## STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

NAME OF INTERVIEWER .....

Number of interviewer □ □ □

Checked by □  
□

Signature of supervisor .....

## FIELDWORK CONTROL

CONTROL CONTROL	YES	NO	REMARKS
Personal	1	2	
Telephonic	1	2	
Name	Signature		
.....	Date ..... / ..... / 2020		

## RESPONDENT SELECTION PROCEDURE

Number of households at visiting point □ □

Number of persons 16 years and older at visiting point □ □

*Please list all persons at the visiting point/on the stand who are 16 years and older and were resident 15 out of the past 30 days. Once this is completed, use the Kish grid on the next page to determine which person is to be interviewed.*

Names of Persons Aged 16 and Older	
	01
	02
	03
	04
	05
	06
	07
	08
	09
	10
	11
	12
	13
	14
	15
	16
	17
	18
	19
	20
	21
	22
	23
	24
	25

<b>Name of Respondent:</b>
<b>Address of Respondent:</b>
.....
.....
<b>TEL NO.:</b>

## GRID TO SELECT RESPONDENT

NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRE				NUMBER OF PERSONS FROM WHICH RESPONDENT MUST BE DRAWN																				23	24	25		
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20				21	22
1	26	51	76	1	1	1	3	2	4	1	3	5	8	6	5	12	10	1	6	8	7	19	19	13	21	13	24	25
2	27	52	77	1	2	3	4	3	1	2	2	3	4	8	3	7	2	5	14	4	15	4	8	6	16	14	22	19
3	28	53	78	1	1	2	1	4	2	7	6	9	3	5	11	2	1	3	11	7	10	16	16	10	5	2	2	3
4	29	54	79	1	2	3	2	1	3	5	8	6	2	4	2	4	8	11	10	16	6	9	10	15	11	12	11	18
5	30	55	80	1	1	1	4	5	6	3	5	7	5	9	8	13	3	2	13	5	18	1	4	1	20	11	5	24
6	31	56	81	1	2	2	2	3	5	7	7	8	7	1	4	9	14	8	2	17	17	14	12	14	22	10	3	14
7	32	57	82	1	2	1	1	4	1	4	1	4	6	3	6	5	7	13	9	2	3	13	14	8	2	7	20	4
8	33	58	83	1	1	2	3	2	5	1	4	2	1	7	10	6	5	4	15	10	5	2	13	4	17	5	17	8
9	34	59	84	1	1	3	2	5	6	2	2	1	9	10	1	10	4	6	6	1	9	10	1	5	6	9	1	12
10	35	60	85	1	2	2	4	1	3	3	6	9	10	11	12	3	9	15	7	8	11	6	3	9	4	3	10	1
11	36	61	86	1	1	1	3	1	4	5	3	1	6	2	9	13	11	14	4	11	4	15	15	17	1	1	23	2
12	37	62	87	1	2	3	1	3	2	7	5	6	5	7	7	8	6	10	3	3	1	12	20	7	13	22	12	16
13	38	63	88	1	1	2	1	5	3	6	4	3	4	6	2	11	13	12	1	15	8	7	2	12	15	21	13	7
14	39	64	89	1	2	3	2	4	1	4	7	8	2	5	6	11	12	9	16	13	16	11	18	18	14	16	18	23
15	40	65	90	1	2	1	4	2	4	3	8	7	7	11	1	3	5	7	12	14	13	8	17	20	19	20	19	11
16	41	66	91	1	1	3	3	1	6	5	1	5	9	10	3	2	11	13	8	12	12	5	6	21	8	8	4	15
17	42	67	92	1	1	2	2	3	4	2	6	2	3	2	12	5	2	10	13	5	8	18	9	16	10	17	16	20
18	43	68	93	1	2	1	4	2	6	4	1	4	8	9	10	7	9	3	12	12	9	7	20	19	9	19	21	13
19	44	69	94	1	2	2	1	3	5	2	8	9	10	4	9	8	13	1	1	14	10	19	10	11	18	15	7	6
20	45	70	95	1	1	3	2	5	4	1	3	8	1	3	8	6	6	9	5	7	13	4	15	1	7	22	15	21
21	46	71	96	1	1	1	2	5	1	7	2	3	2	1	11	4	7	5	3	2	1	3	12	18	5	19	14	9
22	47	72	97	1	2	1	3	1	3	2	6	2	1	8	7	1	4	2	11	8	2	17	4	17	21	16	3	5
23	48	73	98	1	2	3	4	2	2	6	7	7	8	3	4	9	3	6	2	11	11	16	2	8	11	23	6	22
24	49	74	99	1	1	2	1	4	6	3	5	5	3	1	5	13	1	14	8	14	6	15	9	14	3	6	9	17
25	50	75	100	1	1	2	3	3	2	4	6	4	7	5	3	12	12	12	4	6	2	17	11	2	12	4	8	10

## SASAS QUESTIONNAIRE 2: 2020

Number of persons in this household

Number of persons 16 years and older in this household


INTERVIEWER: PLEASE CIRCLE APPROPRIATE CODES

Household schedule	Write in from oldest (top) to youngest (bottom)	Person number	Household head	How old is [name]? (in completed years; less than 1 year =00)	Is [name] a male or a female? M=1 F=2	What population group does [name] belong to?	What is [name]'s relationship to the respondent?
		01	01				
		02	02				
		03	03				
		04	04				
		05	05				
		06	06				
		07	07				
		08	08				
		09	09				
		10	10				
		11	11				
		12	12				
		13	13				
		14	14				
		15	15				
		16	16				
		17	17				
		18	18				
		19	19				
		20	20				
		21	21				
		22	22				
		23	23				
		24	24				
		25	25				

*Please list all persons in the household who eat from the same cooking pot and who were resident 15 out of the past 30 days.*

*Note: Circle the number next to the name of the household head.*

Population Group
1 = Black African
2 = Coloured
3 = Indian or Asian
4 = White
5 = Other (specify)

Relationship to respondent codes
1 = Respondent
2 = Wife or husband or partner
3 = Son/daughter/stepchild/adopted child/foster child
4 = Father/mother
5 = Brother/sister
6 = Grandchild/great -grandchild
7 = Grandparent/great-grandparent
8 = Mother- or father-in-law
9 = Son- or daughter-in-law



## SANDF ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE DEFENCE FORCE

I am now going to ask you some questions about the South African National Defence Force (SANDF)

### KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS

1. Overall, would you say you are very knowledgeable, somewhat knowledgeable, not very knowledgeable, or not at all knowledgeable about the South African National Defence Force?

Very knowledgeable	1
Somewhat knowledgeable	2
Not very knowledgeable	3
Not at all knowledgeable	4
(Don't know)	8

< Newly developed for SASAS 2014; Conceptual construct = knowledge of SANDF >

2. Which of the following do you think are branches of the South African National Defence Force?

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED. CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.

a.	Air Force	1
b.	Army	2
c.	Military Health Service	3
d.	Navy	4
e.	(None of the above)	5
f.	(Don't know)	8

< Newly developed for SASAS 2014; conceptual construct: knowledge of SANDF >

3. When you think of the South African National Defence Force, which of the following sources would you say provide you with the best/most information? [Showcard 22]

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED. CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.

a.	Shows and exhibitions	01
b.	Radio	02
c.	TV	03
d.	Newspapers	04
e.	Magazines	05
f.	Internet and other social media (Facebook, Twitter)	06
g.	Personal experience	07
h.	Friends/family	08
i.	Other (specify)....	09
j.	(None of the above)	10
k.	(Don't know)	88

<Based on HSRC Omnibus Sep 1991; Conceptual construct = information about SANDF >

**4. Have you personally ever attended any event that showcases the SANDF (such as Armed Forces Day, SANDF shows, SANDF exhibits, etc.)?**

Have attended in the past year	1
Have attended it in the past five years	2
Have attended it in the more distant past	3
Have not attended it but would want to	4
Have not attended and would not want to	5
(Do not know)	8

<New item; conceptual construct: attendance / exposure to SANDF events>

**5. To what extent do you feel that it is important for the SANDF to showcase its operations through shows, exhibitions and Armed Forces Days?**

Very important	1
Much needed	2
Needed	3
Neither nor	4
Unnecessary	5
Very unnecessary	8
(Don't Know)	

<New item; conceptual construct: support events showcasing the SANDF>

**6. Please say whether you think the SANDF should spend more or less on shows and exhibitions?**

Spend much more	1
Spend more	2
Spend the same as now	3
Spend less	4
Spend much less	5
(Can't choose)	8

<New item; conceptual construct: preferences for spending on events showcasing the SANDF>

**7. In your view, which of the following are the most important reasons why the SANDF should hold shows and exhibitions [Showcard 23]**

**INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED. CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.**

a.	It raises the profile of the SANDF	01
b.	It allows the SANDF an opportunity to interact with communities	02
c.	It helps South Africans to feel proud of the country	03
d.	It unites South Africans behind the SANDF	04
e.	It gives the SANDF an opportunity to showcase its latest military equipment and power	05
f.	It showcases job opportunities within the SANDF	06
g.	It helps ordinary people to gain knowledge of the SANDF	07
h.	It demonstrates military combat readiness	08
i.	It reminds us of the past	09
j.	(None of these)	97
k.	(Don't know)	98
l	(Refused)	99

<New item; conceptual construct: perceived outcomes of events showcasing the SANDF>

## CONTACT WITH THE DEFENCE FORCE

### 8. Have you personally ever had any military experience or training?

Yes, before 1994	1
Yes, after 1994	2
Yes, both before and after 1994	3
No, never	4
(Do not know)	8

<Newly developed for SASAS 2014; Conceptual construct = contact/experience>

### 9. Has a family member or close friend ever had any military experience or training?

Yes, before 1994	1
Yes, after 1994	2
Yes, both before and after 1994	3
No, never	4
(Do not know)	8

<Newly developed for SASAS 2014; Conceptual construct = contact/experience>

## TRUST IN THE SANDF

### 10. How proud are you of the South African National Defence Force?

Very proud	1
Somewhat proud	2
Not very proud	3
Not proud at all	4
(Can't choose)	8

<ISSP / SASAS Citizenship 2003, 2013 (minor phrase change); conceptual construct: pride/identity>

### 11. Indicate the extent to which you trust or distrust the Defence Force in South Africa at present?

Strongly trust	1
Trust	2
Neither trust nor distrust	3
Distrust	4
Strongly distrust	5
(Do not know)	8

<HSRC SASAS 2003-2013 conceptual construct: overall confidence in the SANDF>

### 12. Compared to before 1994 and considering the degree to which the country is now threatened, to what extent does South Africa still need a strong defence force? A strong national defence force is...

Much needed	1
Needed	2
Neither nor	3
Unnecessary	4
Very unnecessary	5
(Don't know)	8

<HSRC Omnibus May 1995; conceptual construct = demand for Defence>

**13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that there is a role for the South African National Defence Force during times of peace? [Showcard 1]**

Strongly agree	1
Agree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Disagree	4
Strongly disagree	5
(Don't know)	8

<Newly developed for SASAS 2014; conceptual construct = demand for Defence>

**14. I'm going to read a list of possible roles that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) might have. For each one please say whether you think it should be a very important role, somewhat important, not very important, or not important role at all? [Showcard 24]**

		Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not important at all	(Don't know)
a.	Helping other government departments in times of disaster or emergency. [G3]	1	2	3	4	8
b.	Defend and protect South Africa. [G1]	1	2	3	4	8
c.	Peacekeeping in other countries. [G3]	1	2	3	4	8
d.	Safeguard and patrol the country's borders. [G2]	1	2	3	4	8
e.	Assist the South African Police Service (SAPS) to uphold law and order in the country. [G2]	1	2	3	4	8
f.	Provide young South Africans with skills, values and discipline. [G4]	1	2	3	4	8
g.	Help build or repair infrastructure such as bridges, roads and clinics in rural areas. [G4]	1	2	3	4	8
h.	Work with the United Nations and African Union to prevent and resolve conflict in Africa. [G3]	1	2	3	4	8

<Questions newly developed for SASAS 2014 based on items in GCIS, Omnibus, etc. Attempts to align with strategic defence goals and tasks as specified in the Defence Review; concept = Defence goals / roles>

**PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SANDF**

**15. Taking into account all the things that you expect the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) to do, to what extent do you believe they are doing a good job or a bad job?**

Very good job	1
Good job	2
Neither good nor bad job	3
Bad job	4
Very bad job	5
(Do not know)	8

<Questions newly developed for SASAS 2014 based on ESS Justice module; conceptual construct: confidence / effectiveness>

16. Think about the job that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) is doing. As far as you are concerned personally on a scale of 1 to 7, do you think that the SANDF is...? [Showcard 25]

a.	Fair						Unfair	(Can't Choose)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88
b.	Successful						Unsuccessful	(Can't Choose)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88
c.	Professional						Unprofessional	(Can't Choose)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88
d.	Disciplined						Undisciplined	(Can't Choose)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88

<HSRC Omnibus, 'fair' and 'successful' items; other two items are new; concept= effectiveness>

17. Based on what you have heard or your own experience, how successful do you think the South African National Defence Force is in performing the following roles? Choose your answer from a scale where 0 is extremely unsuccessful and 10 is extremely successful. [Showcard 26]

		Extremely unsuccessful										Extremely successful		(Can't Choose)
a.	Helping other countries in times of disaster or emergency. [G3]	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
b.	Defend and protect South Africa. [G1]	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
c.	Peacekeeping in other countries. [G3]	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
d.	Safeguard and patrol the country's borders. [G2]	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
e.	Provide young South Africans with skills, values and discipline. [G4]	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	

<Designed to reflect performance and effectiveness in select roles associated with the four strategic defence goals. Phrasing is consistent with earlier set of items on defence roles; concept=performance of SANDF>

## TRUST IN THE SANDF

18. There are different opinions as to what it takes to be a good citizen. As far as you are concerned personally, how important is it to be willing to serve in the military at a time of need? Choose your answer from a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is "not at all important" and 7 is "very important". [Showcard 27]

Not at all important						Very important		(Can't Choose)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88	

<ISSP / SASAS 2004 Citizenship module; conceptual construct: duty to obey / citizenship responsibilities>

**19. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? [Showcard 1]**

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Dis-agree	Strongly disagree	(Do not know)
a.	I would be proud to be a member of the Defence Force (SANDF)	1	2	3	4	5	8
b.	The SANDF stands up for values that are important to people like me	1	2	3	4	5	8
c.	I support how the SANDF usually performs its functions	1	2	3	4	5	8

<Based on ESS Justice module; conceptual construct: moral alignment with SANDF>

**20. To what extent would you support or oppose the SANDF being sent to patrol areas with high levels of crime and gangsterism?**

Strongly support	1
Support	2
Neither support nor oppose	3
Oppose	4
Strongly oppose	5
(Don't know)	8

**21. To what extent would you support or oppose the SANDF being sent to patrol your neighbourhood to help fight crime?**

Strongly support	1
Support	2
Neither support nor oppose	3
Oppose	4
Strongly oppose	5
(Don't know)	8

**22. If the SANDF were sent to fight crime in communities, do you think they would do a good job or a bad job?**

Very good job	1
Good job	2
Neither good nor bad job	3
Bad job	4
Very bad job	5
(I do not support the SANDF being sent to fight crime in communities)	7
(Don't know)	8

< Newly developed for SASAS 2019; conceptual concept: defence goals>

## TRANSFORMATION AND DIVERSITY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE

23. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Defence Force is representative of all South Africans? [Showcard 1]

Strongly agree	1
Agree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Disagree	4
Strongly disagree	5
(Don't know)	8

< Newly developed for SASAS 2014; conceptual concept: transformation and diversity >

24. Transformation in the Defence Force is....READ OUT...?

...Progressing very well	1
Progressing well	2
Progressing reasonably well	3
Progressing badly	4
Progressing very badly	5
(Don't know)	8

< HSRC EPOP July 2001 Questionnaire 2; conceptual concept: transformation and diversity >

25. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the SANDF offers good career opportunities for people like you? [Showcard 1]

Strongly agree	1
Agree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Disagree	4
Strongly disagree	5
(Do not know)	8

< Newly developed for SASAS 2014; conceptual concept: transformation and diversity >

26. To what extent do you think racism or racial discrimination occurs in the Defence Force?

Not at all	1
To a small extent	2
To a fair extent	3
To a considerable extent	4
To a great extent	5
(Don't know)	8

< HSRC EPOP July 2001 Questionnaire 2; conceptual concept: transformation and diversity >

I AM NOW GOING TO ASK A FEW QUESTIONS ON WOMEN IN THE DEFENCE FORCE.

27. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? [Showcard 1]

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Dis-agree	Strongly disagree	(Do not know)
a.	Women can perform as well as men in all areas of the military [gender eq]	1	2	3	4	5	8
b.	A special attempt should be made to recruit more women into the Defence Force [gender eq]	1	2	3	4	5	8
c.	Women should do combat duty in the front line [women and combat]	1	2	3	4	5	8

<Adapted from HSRC OMNIBUS May 1995; different scaling (1995 – yes/no); first item from Hurrell & Lukens (1995) women in the military scale; conceptual concept: transformation and diversity>

OTHER MILITARY PREFERENCES

28. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? I support an increased/greater involvement by the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in peace support operations in Africa. [Showcard 1]

Strongly agree	1
Agree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Disagree	4
Strongly disagree	5
(Do not know)	8

<HSRC SASAS Client Survey, 2003-2004; concept = Defence preferences / peacekeeping>

29. Please say whether you would like to see more or less government spending in the area of military and defence. Remember that if you say “much more”, it might require a tax increase to pay for it.

Spend much more	1
Spend more	2
Spend the same as now	3
Spend less	4
Spend much less	5
(Can't choose)	8

<ISSP 2006, 2016 role of government module: concept = Defence preferences / spending>