

— Road Ahead

Newsletter of the Road Accident Fund

Work-life
Balance

Walk the Talk

Towards a new RAF

Change is
in the air

Khomanani
on Mandela Day

Comrades Special

WIN!
A GIFT VOUCHER
FOR YOUR
CONTRIBUTION
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The views of the authors that have submitted their articles to this magazine are owned by them alone.

As the implementation of the New Operating Model gains momentum, the Road Accident Fund is going all-out to improve the way in which we serve South Africa's people.



MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING CEO

Thank you all for welcoming the Executive team so warmly during our recent road shows. We undertook these to explain the change process in greater detail, and to listen to input and feedback from you.

Creating a successful organisation run by a fulfilled and motivated staff complement isn't a top-down process; it's a cooperative process. Building the new Road Accident Fund (RAF) is something we need to do together, and the results will be something we can celebrate together in the future.

As you know, the turnaround strategy commenced in 2005 and has progressed from there. We are now at a pivotal point in the development of the RAF. For the years ahead, we need to intensify our efforts, including: pursuing legislative changes which will enable and improve the RAF's underlying business model, while offering equitable cover to our customers; setting the RAF on a more sustainable financial footing; and finally, transforming the organisation through process and system improvements, as well as extending our geographic footprint which will bring us closer to our customers.

I feel both privileged and excited to form part of creating an entirely new organisation that will serve all users of South African roads better.

For now, what is important is that we embrace the four principles I hope will guide the implementation of the New Operating Model (NOM) for all of us, namely: transparency; candour; team work; and sound communications.

I mean this and I mean it sincerely: we need to undertake this process in an honest and open way that will allow us to address whatever issues need to be addressed without fear or favour.

Your honesty, input and cooperation are what will make the NOM a success - it simply cannot succeed unless we all work together as a team to make it happen.

We at the RAF have an exceptionally important mandate: to assist our fellow road users at one of the most traumatic times in their lives; the time when they have been affected in some way or other by a motor vehicle accident. Few mandates could be more important than to serve others in their time of need.

Everything we do on a day-to-day basis affects how we carry out that mandate. In other words, every single function within the organisation is important to the end result. If we truly value our work, our colleagues and our customers, and work hard to implement the very best systems and procedures available, think what a difference we can make in so many lives.

Change can be exciting, but can also be difficult, and we need to acknowledge that. We have an inspiring task ahead of us, but it will be demanding. It is how each and every one of us respond to this process that will determine its outcome.

So I call on all of you to join hands and to work towards creating something extraordinary: making the RAF the best organisation of its kind in South Africa. Together we can - and will - make a difference.

Kind regards

Mandla Mvelase

Welcome to our third edition of Road Ahead and thank you all for your very positive feedback on the past two editions. Thank you too for the many contributions you sent in for this one - we really had to work hard to fit them all in!



CHANGE IS IN THE AIR

With spring in the air, and with so many unexpected events unfolding around the world, our thoughts naturally turn to the issue of change. Since the internet was made available to the public twenty years ago, our lives have changed in ways we could never even have imagined in 1991. In fact, every day seems to bring new advances in technology and in ways of doing things that it sometimes feels as if things are moving too fast for us; as if we simply can't keep up with the changes taking place around us.

Nevertheless, this fast pace of change is part of our lives, and it brings many new and exciting things into them. Remember, for instance, how you felt when you used a cell phone for the first time or when South Africa hosted the FIFA World Cup for the first time on the African continent? Change is often positive, but it can be stressful too, so it's important to learn how to deal with it in order to maintain our health, wellbeing and productivity.

Of course, the big change on everyone's minds at the moment is the roll-out of the New Operating Model (NOM).

This new model of doing business is aimed at making the RAF more efficient and user-friendly. It will involve many modifications right across the organisation and it will affect us all. So what is the best way to deal with this change?

To start with, it's important not to feel overwhelmed. All staff will be fully briefed on each aspect of the change process before it is introduced, and will be encouraged to ask questions about both the overall process and the individual details. No question will be too big or too small to ask. Introducing the NOM is a big change for everyone, and we all need to understand it if it's to be successful.

Then, once specific changes are introduced into your area of work, take time to familiarise yourself with every aspect of that change and, once again, to ask as many questions as you need to ask.

You and your colleagues might even like to arrange a short coffee session every day to chat about the changes in your department, about issues that may be arising as a result, problems that may need to be addressed, and possible solutions to these problems. Ask your

supervisor or a member of the corporate change management team to be present if you feel you need to discuss anything with them, or if you need their assistance.

Successful systems depend on the input of all participants - and that means you! Many is the business that has introduced unexpected innovations or managed to make important savings because of input from staff, who know the everyday challenges of their immediate working environment better than anyone.

Finally, it's important to think of change as a process rather than as an event. Organisational change doesn't happen in an instant. Rather, it's a managed process that works best when taken one step at a time.

As we look forward to the seasonal change that will bring back warm, sunny days, let's also look forward to the change that will make the RAF an even better organisation in the future.

Connie

Editor

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE WINNING LETTER

GRATITUDE IS AN ATTITUDE

Let me begin by saying "thank you, thank you, and thank you again"! I want to say "thank you" to the guys who collect our rubbish bins, to our tea lady and to all of my colleagues for just being - and for being such great people.

This is my way of saying there's something to appreciate in every aspect of life - every single day. No matter what challenges I may have to face in my daily life, there are always people and things I can be grateful for, and I don't ever want to overlook that.

I see gratitude as an attitude - and as a gift. We can choose to give it, and we can choose to receive it - gratefully. And the best thing is that we don't have to wait for a special occasion to give the gift of gratitude - we can give it at any time.

Despite this, many people seem to be ungrateful, unappreciative and sometimes just plain selfish. Why is this?

Perhaps it's because of ego, but I feel it's more likely to be because of fear. It's human to feel fearful of losing; to be scared of losing your job, your money, your home or your partner. But we're not born to be fearful of losing out, and it's when we're afraid of losing something like a job that we fail to appreciate it.

A Chinese philosopher, Cheng Yen, expressed this thought very well. It was he who said: "Happiness does not come from having much, but from being attached to little."

Please don't get me wrong. This doesn't mean we shouldn't strive to achieve certain things. Truth, joy and happiness come from realising our full potential; from being everything we can and hope to be. But the real reward for our efforts is an inner reward; it doesn't come from a diploma, a promotion or a new car. Simply put, we are not defined by things; we are defined by our thoughts, beliefs and actions.

And if you appreciate who you are, as well as all the good things that come to you every day - even if it's something as simple as the sound of the birds outside your bedroom window in the mornings - that will be your real achievement. In the same way, if you see others doing something kind or giving of their best, show appreciation. It's a positive cycle of feedback.

To quote the Persian poet, Rumi:

You were born with potential.

You were born with goodness and trust.

You were born with wings.

You are not meant for crawling, so don't.

You have wings.

Learn to use them and fly.

Paul Mathosa
Menlyn

THE MAGIC OF GAUTRAIN

I was overjoyed when the opportunity arose to use the Gautrain on its first day of operation between Joburg and Pretoria. I had a great trip all the way to Rosebank, where I decided to get off for an hour and wander around before making the return journey. It was a pleasant, relaxing and convenient experience.

On both trips I noticed how many people were chatting on their cell phones, sending SMSs, reading or even finishing off work they hadn't been able to complete in the office.

Habits like talking on cell phones and trying to send SMSs while driving are, of course, the cause of many accidents and even fatalities on the roads. So, apart from the convenience it offers, an improved public transport system which includes such options as the Gautrain will ensure that people get to and from home safely every day. And they can even do all of their social networking and delayed business tasks on the way!

Reducing the traffic flow on highways, especially during peak hours, will dramatically reduce the number of accidents on these roads every year. A quick count of the number of people on the train with me on the return journey revealed that there were 48 fewer vehicles on the road at that time, reducing the potential for road accidents.

So I do believe that if we keep up our focus on improving our public transport system, there will be fewer accidents on the roads. That's just one thing which is magical about Gautrain!

Karabo Mdhuli
Menlyn



SUGGESTIONS FOR 'ROAD AHEAD'

We've just received a copy of Road Ahead at the Durban branch and it's a very interesting read. It's just what we need at the RAF, and I'd like to make some suggestions about how we can add to it.

I'd like to suggest that:

- Each region allocate a representative to write articles, collate material from others, offer suggestions and present queries. These representatives could then be involved in planning each issue, as every region has its own issues and someone with local knowledge is likely to represent these best;
- You consider including a lifestyle section, which could offer interesting reading while we wait for the next issue. This could include features such as jokes, riddles, recipes, beauty tips, a guys' section, gardening tips etc.;
- You also consider a section on general health and wellness, such as tips on how to handle winter flu, spring hay fever and the danger of sunburn in summer; and
- A grievance section or "Agony Aunt" column, which could be a great success, and which could possibly be an outlet for many of our work and personal issues.

Looking forward to the next issue.

Hajra Mohamed
Durban

RE-THINKING EXIT INTERVIEWS

The value of exit interviews can't be underestimated, and the way in which the RAF conducts exit interviews needs urgent attention and review.

When an employee gives notice, the employer should conduct an interview to determine why the employee has resigned, and to find out whether there is a possibility of him or her staying on with the organisation. This is particularly important if that employee

is talented, well trained and experienced, as it is costly and time consuming to replace skilled staff. And that's without considering the burden of extra work which falls to colleagues while a replacement is being recruited, inducted and suitably trained.

Retaining good employees should be regarded as a sound business strategy. If nothing else, the cost of losing key talent and then replacing it should be a motivation to retain the organisation's most valuable employees.

It is therefore important that the RAF consider exit interviews not merely as a formality, but as a tool for potentially retaining members of staff. This inspiring quote from Aqha Hasan Abedi, sums up that objective: "The conventional definition of management is getting work done through people, but real management is developing people through work". Inspiring words and a lesson to us all.

Masakhane Gebuza
Durban

SOCIAL GRANTS: SOME CREATIVE THINKING NEEDED

As much as it is important for our government to alleviate poverty by providing social grants, it is also important for us to ask questions about this policy. We need to question, for instance, whether the social grant system is just a system of hand-outs or whether it is a system that aims to offer people in need a hand up.

At present, most social grants are intended to be a short-term poverty-alleviation measure, and are not intended to be part of an effort to integrate recipients into the mainstream economy. Others, of course, such as old-age, disability and war veterans' grants, are intended to offer long-term support.

Either way, there's a danger that our government is creating a society which is not self-reliant, and in which many people depend on social grants to survive.

Historically, people living in rural areas would cultivate crops that they could use

to sustain their families, often producing more than enough to enable them to sell surpluses for cash. Today, however, this is no longer the case, especially as more and more people are migrating from the rural areas to the cities in order to gain access to the social grants scheme.

Amongst other things, this trend is having a negative impact on social values, with children as young as twelve engaging in risky sexual intercourse solely to become pregnant and to access a social grant either for their babies or for themselves should they become HIV positive.

In a situation like this, I would suggest that government re-direct some of the budget it is spending on grants to overhaul our education system and to offer free education up to matric level. Grant funds could also be used to train or re-skill adults, enabling them to enter the workforce as productive participants. And, of course, government needs to encourage parents, families and communities to take charge of instilling good moral values in their children.

Government obviously can't be expected to alleviate poverty completely, but it needs to think creatively about how state funds are being spent. The social grants system isn't sustainable, so we can only hope it isn't being used to manipulate vulnerable, destitute and indigent people for political objectives.

T M Xuza
East London

OUT IN THE COLD FOR COMRADES

I ran my sixth Comrades Ultra Marathon this year and, as on the previous five occasions, finished successfully. My best finishing time so far is 09:41:39, which is pretty good for such a gruelling course!

The RAF has been one of the main sponsors of this event for the past few years, and when one arrives at Durban airport, there's an RAF kiosk to greet participants and supporters. The RAF is also there to welcome runners when they register, and we see many RAF banners and flags at the halfway mark. There must be great promotional value to this



sponsorship, especially with all of the TV coverage the event receives.

As an RAF employee, however, I find myself out in the cold as far as sponsorship is concerned. I've submitted several requests over the years for sponsorship of some kind to cover my participation in the event. Sadly, I've never received assistance of any kind. I don't get days off for travelling to and from Durban, and I receive no gear and no financial sponsorship. In short, I receive no nothing.

All this while participants in other sports such as netball, volleyball and soccer receive days off to travel to events, free air and bus tickets, free meals and drinks, free accommodation and free gear!

So I have to wonder, do I work for the same RAF that is one of the main corporate sponsors of the Comrades Marathon?

Marius van Schalkwyk
Cape Town

NO ASSISTANCE FOR COMRADES RUNNERS

I ran my first Comrades Marathon this year, and unfortunately I have to agree with Marius. In the run-up to the event I called and e-mailed several people about sponsorship, but no-one was of any assistance.

It would really be great if there was some kind of unified effort to support Comrades runners.

Rayaan Jarley
Cape Town

ENTITLEMENT NEEDS TO BE EARNED

What is it that gives us a sense of entitlement, whether it's justified or not?

There are, of course, some things that we are justly entitled to, such as being entitled to express our own opinions. But the sense of entitlement many of us have in South Africa is different, and I often ask myself where this comes from. Is it a cultural norm, is it because of our different backgrounds, is it due to sheer laziness, is it caused by ignorance, or maybe it's just because we live in a democracy. I don't know.

So when is one really entitled to something?

I'll tell you what I believe since, as I've already mentioned, I'm entitled to my own opinion. I believe one should feel entitled to something only if one has worked hard for it. That's why I often feel annoyed by people who obviously feel they're simply entitled to things without putting in the necessary effort to achieve the results.

Be honest now, do you feel entitled to a promotion that perhaps you don't deserve? Do you feel entitled to a bonus at the end of the year no matter what? Do you feel entitled to your salary even though you may not really have worked hard enough to earn it? Do you feel entitled to the respect of others regardless of how you treat them?

I have absolutely nothing against entitlement - if it's justified. But the next time you feel entitled to something, stop and ask yourself: "Did I work hard for

this?", "Did I earn this?" or "Do I honestly deserve this?"

We so often say we're entitled to something. Why? Entitlement, even our entitlement as citizens, is something that needs to be earned.

Ntombikayise Mayekiso
East London

YOU'RE A UNIQUE GIFT

'I am nature's greatest miracle. Since the beginning of time never has there been another with my mind, my heart, my eyes, my ears, my hands, my hair, my mouth. None that came before, none that live today, and none that come tomorrow can walk and talk and move and think exactly like me.' (Og Mandino - American Author, 1923 - 1996)

These inspiring words remind us that each one of us is unique, and that we all bring our own special gifts into the world. Not even identical twins are exactly alike in every way.

Once we understand and acknowledge this fact, we come to the realisation that each of us is a unique offering to the world. Each of us has a purpose that no-one else can fulfil in exactly the same way that we can.

I was reminded of this recently when I read the biography of one of the world's greatest musicians and composers, Ludwig van Beethoven. Beethoven was born into a poor family and his father,

who was a musician himself, was a brutal taskmaster. Many was the night when he returned home from the local tavern drunk, only to wake up the young Ludwig in order to 'beat' the study of music into him. Despite this and the many hardships his father put the family through, the boy developed a deep love for music and gave his first public performance at the age of eight.

By the age of 17, he was such a good pianist that he was given the opportunity of studying with Mozart, who said of him at the time: "Watch this lad; some day he will force the world to talk about him".

Mozart's words, of course, proved to be true, and Beethoven became one of the most revered composers in history. But tragedy struck when, as an adult, he found himself going deaf, and he couldn't hear the very music he loved so much. Nevertheless, he persevered with his work and, even after he had gone completely deaf, composed some of his greatest work.

Beethoven was born with no special privileges and his father was a drunkard. But he had a gift for music and he threw himself into nurturing and developing that gift. Ultimately, he became not only a wealthy and respected man because of that effort, but he was accepted at every level of society.

The lesson for us in Beethoven's story is that, no matter what obstacles we may have to face in our lives, if we persevere and use the talents we have been given, we can achieve even the most difficult of goals.

Busisiwe Hlatswayo
Menlyn

WORKING TOGETHER FOR SAFER ROADS

There are so many circumstances that contribute to accidents on our roads. As the staff of the RAF, it's important that we take preventative measures when driving, and that we set a good example for other drivers.

Some safety tips may seem obvious, but they're always worth repeating:

1. Always make sure your vehicle is roadworthy and safe.
2. Always carry your drivers' licence with you, and never let an unlicensed driver get behind the wheel of a car.
3. When it's raining and the roads are wet, drive slowly and encourage others to do the same.

4. Never drink and drive, and remember that friends never allow friends to drive drunk.
5. Report potholes and damaged signage - and follow up to make sure that the relevant authority addresses the problem.

Simple precautions such as these go a long way to reducing accidents on our roads. As drivers, we need to work together with other drivers, the traffic authorities and the government to make sure our roads stay safe.

Sinovuyo Ndlangalavu
East London

MORE TIPS TO REDUCE ROAD ACCIDENTS

As employees of the Road Accident Fund, we are reminded every day of the havoc motor vehicle accidents cause in the lives of so many South Africans. The sad fact is that many accidents occur because of driver error, or because of reckless and dangerous driving. They are also more common during bad weather, when drivers should be especially alert.

So before getting behind the wheel, it's always good to remember the most



important rules of safe driving:

Don't drink and drive. This is the cardinal rule of safe driving. Not only should you never drink and drive, but you should also never allow someone else who's been drinking to take to the road.

If possible, travel during the daytime. The body's natural circadian rhythm means we're more alert during daylight hours, which is why it's safer to drive during the day than at night.

Watch out for road signs. Be alert for road signs, especially if you're travelling in an unfamiliar area. Signs will alert you to road conditions ahead and will advise you when to expect hazardous conditions.

Maintain your vehicle. If you maintain your vehicle regularly, there is less chance of you breaking down on the road or of being involved in an accident.

Obey the rules of the road. This is the best and most basic way of preventing road accidents. And being a defensive driver also means you can avoid problems before they happen.

Never talk on your cell phone while driving. Not only is this illegal, but a split second of distraction can mean the difference between life and death.

Good driver behaviour is one of the most important ways of preventing motor vehicle accidents. And being a good driver is important in every way, because it ensures your own safety, the safety of your loved ones and the safety of other road users.

Tshikhudo Livhuwani

Eco Glades

EDUCATING ROAD USERS

Educating both pedestrians and drivers about safe road usage is one of the best preventative measures that authorities and communities can take to prevent road accidents.

Just a few simple precautions can make all the difference:

- Motorists should always take road signs and robots seriously, and should be attentive when driving;
- Pedestrians should be vigilant at all times, especially when crossing roads;
- Pedestrians travelling at night or in dimly-lit areas should always wear bright or reflective clothing so that they are visible to motorists;

- Wherever possible, pedestrians should use sidewalks rather than walking along the side of the road;
- Motorists travelling long distances should take a break every two hours to ensure that they don't lose concentration on the road;
- Motorists on long journeys should also plan stopovers when necessary rather than driving when they're tired;
- Children should be taught good road safety habits from a young age;
- Children should be taught not to play in the street, where there is a danger of them being run over; and
- Motorists travelling at night or in dimly-lit or misty conditions should always use their headlights.

Road and traffic authorities can assist by:

- Regularly checking that all vehicles are roadworthy;
- Checking that drivers' licences and vehicle registrations are valid;
- Ensuring that suspected drunk drivers take breathalyser tests immediately after having been pulled over;
- Regulating the flow of traffic when traffic lights are out of order or when there are road works in progress;
- Regulating pedestrians, especially on roads where pedestrian usage isn't permitted; and
- Installing and repairing road signs and appropriate traffic calming measures.

Drivers, pedestrians and road and traffic authorities can and should work together to make South Africa's roads safer for all road users.

Thomas Tomi Tiba

Menlyn



RAF NEWS

MEET OUR NEW EXECUTIVE



Nozipho Jafta has been appointed as the new Executive: Marketing and Communications.

Prior to joining the RAF, she was the Head of the 2010 FIFA World Cup for McDonald's SA.

Nozipho has held a number of senior marketing, communications and sponsorship positions and has worked on well-known brands such as Koo and All Gold, Shell, Vodacom, Telkom, National Ports Authority and South African Airways.

She holds a Bachelor Degree in Communication, Honours degree in Psychology, Management Advancement Programme from Wits Business School and an Advanced Diploma in Marketing Management. She also completed a programme in Effective Management from Wharton University in the United States of America.

Nozipho is a keen golfer and a Kaizer Chiefs and Lions supporter.

RAF SPINAL CORD SEMINAR

RAF employees of the Nelspruit Customer Service Network are proud to have hosted a Spinal Cord Seminar at the Muelmed Medi-Clinic in Pretoria on 10 and 11 June.

As part of the spinal team working at the Rob Ferreira Hospital, we invited road accident victim, Tracy Todd, to be the motivational speaker at the event. Tracy, who is a fully-rehabilitated quadriplegic, gave a moving and inspiring talk about the long road back to recovery after a life-altering accident.

The spinal team holds bi-monthly meetings and conducts weekly ward rounds at the hospital to check up on the progress of spinal patients, and is closely involved in developing and monitoring treatment plans.

We are, as always, deeply grateful to be part of the team at Rob Ferreira Hospital, as this benefits not only us as RAF employees, but also our spinal patients, whose needs are being approached in an holistic way.

Dimakatso Maboke and Catherine Tshivhasa
Nelspruit

SIYABANGENA

The RAF's Cape Town office recently received an invitation from the Provincial Department of Transport to participate in a road block held on the 24 June in the Laingsburg area.

A high number of road accidents in the Western Cape occur in this area, and the event gave RAF staff an opportunity to learn about road safety law enforcement, and also to make motorists aware of the services offered by the RAF.

Yolani Mankayi
Cape Town

A SPORTY YOUTH DAY

June 16 is a day on which we not only remember the sacrifices made by young people in our past, but is also a time to celebrate being young. So the East London sport committee decided to make this year's Youth Day one to remember.

We hit on the idea of hosting a sports tournament, and invited RAF departments and other local organisations to attend.

Participants from Mercedes Benz of South Africa, the Buffalo City Municipality, the Amatole District Municipality and the local fire department - amongst others - were all there to participate in the fun. Representatives from Old Mutual were also there, not only to join in, but also to support the RAF.

Many sports were represented, including action cricket, athletics, soccer, volleyball and netball, and everyone involved threw themselves into the spirit of friendly competition.

The marketing department and staff members from other departments worked hard to prepare for the day. We even managed to get the Regional Manager to put down his cell phone for a while to help us brand the sports field and prepare the relay line-up!

Everyone who attended gave the RAF a thumbs-up for organising such a great event. We're hoping this means we've proved that we're more than ready to host a major event like the National Games.

Bongwiwe Tyopo
East London

CORPORATE SOCIAL INVESTMENT

A NEW KITCHEN FOR EBONYENI SCHOOL

Ebonyeni School, a primary school situated on a farm in the rural community of Van Reenen, will soon boast a modern kitchen courtesy of funding granted to the Khanyisile Foundation by the RAF and the N3 Toll Concession's corporate social investment programmes. The kitchen, which is already under construction, will be used to provide wholesome meals for pupils, most of whom come from poor homes.

Ebonyeni benefits from a government-subsidised food programme, but the school does not have a formal kitchen in which to prepare meals. This means they have to be cooked over an open fire, where there is little shelter from the extreme weather conditions often experienced in Van Reenen. If the fire can't be kept alight in rain, wind or snow, the school's children have to go without a meal on that day.

"Suitable nutrition is essential if children are to be able to focus on their work and

to benefit from a good education," says Con Roux, commercial manager of N3TC. "We're therefore delighted to be able to partner with the RAF on this project, which will ensure that each child gets at least one nourishing meal a day."

Ansie Jooste, the Khanyisile Foundation's project manager, will be overseeing the construction of the kitchen along with local contractor, CMR Services.

Millicent Mojapelo
Eco Glades



SOCIAL AND CULTURAL NEWS

HAVING A BALL ON JUNE 16

The Joburg Soccer Club was determined to have a ball on Youth Day this year, led by new captain, Kgomotso Mpele and supported by new coach, Gary Motloaetsi. The club prepared for the day's game by participating in regular Friday matches and tournaments, where Mdu Mbonxa, in particular, really shone.

On Youth Day itself, we had a great game, and the spirit of the team was fantastic.

We're very grateful for the re-election of our respected chairperson, Mr Ofentse Kuapane, and his committee, who work so hard to make sure that the Jozi team is always at its best. United we stand; divided we fall!

Lic Steven Mokgatle
Joburg Athletes Chairperson

A MOTHERLY FATHERS' DAY

For some reason, one hardly ever hears of Fathers' Day being celebrated with the same hype as Mothers' Day, and yet fathers are among the most important people in our lives as individuals, families and societies. So the ladies in the East London office decided to make Fathers' Day a really special one this year by treating their dads, uncles, brothers and partners to a surprise breakfast.

Against all odds, we managed to keep the event a secret, even though we were organising it right under the noses of the men! Everyone took on their various tasks in high spirits, and happily engaged in hours of cooking and baking.

When the men were invited to the boardroom, literally everyone showed

up! They were the centre of attention, with the ladies serving treats such as sandwiches, muffins, tea, coffee and juice - and everyone left with a chocolate to sweeten their day even more!

It's not every day that dads and other men get recognised for the role they play in family life, and it was great to be able to do this for them. Their smiles were worth all the effort we put into organising the breakfast, and to show them that dads rock!

Bongwiwe Tyopo
East London



KHOMANANI ON MANDELA DAY AND BEYOND

International Mandela Day is celebrated on 'Tata's' birthday, 18 July, every year. On that day, people all around the world are asked to give 67 minutes of their time to make a difference in the lives of others, in commemoration of the fact that Mr Mandela devoted 67 years of his life to public service.

This year, ID 2, under the leadership of our manager, Mr Maripane, joined together to do something out of the ordinary for those in need.

As a department, we decided to club together to buy groceries for the Itumeleng Shelter in Sunnyside. This is a shelter for homeless boys aged between 7 and 18, and its aim is to reduce the number of homeless children living on the

streets, as well as to help them develop their potential as individuals.

The shelter, which opened in 1993, is a residential care facility run by a childcare worker who fulfils the role of a house father. He is assisted by a housekeeper, who is a mother figure for the boys, as well as by a social worker and a relief childcare worker who helps out over weekends. Together they are responsible for the physical, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual development of the boys.

We were so moved by the work they're doing, and by the way in which the boys in their care are faring that we decided to 'adopt' Itumeleng on an on-going basis, and to assist both children and caregivers throughout the year.

We have dubbed this effort Project Khomanani, because the word 'khomanani' means togetherness. Together we want to reach out and help those in need because together we can achieve anything.

Ishmael Chauke
Menlyn

WALK THE TALK WITH DISCOVERY AND 702

A big fat thank you to everyone who was involved in the organising of the Discovery/702 Walk the Talk event on 24 July! It was a huge success. I was one of the participants who walked 15km and, boy, did I enjoy myself.

The day really was the experience of a lifetime - walking in the event, taking pictures, chatting to other walkers, and enjoying the camaraderie in the marquee afterwards.

I would really like to encourage other co-workers to take part in events like these - they're such a blast and they benefit so many worth causes. Oh, and a big fat thank you to members of the Board and Executives, who were there too.

Here's to more 'walking the laugh' in the future!

Zandi Mhizana Ngwadla
Menlyn



EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

THAT ALL-IMPORTANT WORK-LIFE BALANCE

We all hope for it and strive for it - that vital balance between work and the rest of our lives. It isn't easy to achieve, and we seldom get it 100% right, but by consciously aiming to lead a balanced life, it becomes a whole lot easier to make it happen.

Unsurprisingly, the top causes of stress complaints in the workplace aren't just deadlines, work-related issues and fatigue, but also family and marital problems, financial pressures and a sense that life seems unsatisfactory; a case of 'is this all there is?'. Needless to say, these are all interrelated and the bottom line is that we often feel we have neither the time nor the energy to 'fix' everything. Short of cloning ourselves, something always ends up being overlooked or neglected - and that something is usually our personal and family lives.

The good news is that it's possible to change this state of affairs without having to do anything radical. Standing back, looking at the bigger picture, and then making a few small but important changes to your way of life is often all that's needed.

Why do we need this balance?

We need a balance between the different parts of ourselves because we are many things rolled into one. We all have physical, mental, psychological, spiritual and social parts to ourselves and they come into play whether we're in the workplace, at home or in a social situation. In order to remain happy and healthy, all of these aspects of ourselves need to be balanced. Working long hours and neglecting our physical health and our families don't do us, the organisation we work for or those close to us any good.

Stress, of course, can cause us to become unbalanced in many ways and can lead to a wide variety of physical ailments, from recurrent headaches to heart attacks. It can also cause psychological symptoms like depression and anxiety and, in severe cases, lead to thoughts of suicide. Stress taps our energy and drains our life force, and is the greatest cause of lack of balance in our lives, so it's important that we manage it consciously.

This can mean doing something as simple as committing to taking a long, relaxing walk every day or to spending at least one day every weekend on family activities. It can also mean working towards a healthier diet; taking time out for church,

sporting or social activities; or simply planning your working day better.

If the source of your stress is more serious, such as there being a big difference between your personal values and what you need to do at work, it's time to give your situation a lot of thought. The only way to find meaning in your place of work is to enjoy what you're doing and to be employed in an environment that reflects your own beliefs and values and which, in general, accommodates your personal needs.

Experience being alive

Joseph Campbell, a famous American author, once said: "People say that what we're seeking is the meaning of life. I don't think that's what we're really seeking. I think that what we're seeking is an experience of being alive, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive". Very true words indeed.

Human beings have an in-born urge for self-expression, personal satisfaction and recognition. If those needs aren't fulfilled by leading a balanced life and by valuing every aspect of who we are, the result can only be inner tension and outward distress.

Joseph Campbell also said: "I say, follow your bliss and don't be afraid. Doors will open where you didn't know they were going to be. If you follow your bliss, doors will open for you that wouldn't open for anyone else."

Aim to value everything you are, to keep every part of your life in balance and to follow your bliss in everything you do. Who knows where that could lead?

Linda Peter

Employee Wellness Services



FEEDBACK ON EMPLOYEE OPINION SURVEYS

The Employee Wellness Service (EWS) recently undertook two employee opinion surveys, one on diversity and

one on absenteeism. This feature gives preliminary feedback on the two surveys, as well as an indication of what to expect next.

The Diversity Survey

This survey was done during the last quarter of 2010, and the objective was to identify the understanding of diversity in the organisation. The RAF is a diverse organisation in many ways, and how this diversity is managed has a direct impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation, as well as on the wellbeing of its staff.

Respondents

A total of 339 respondents participated in the survey, representing 20.6% of the RAF's staff. This number was statistically large enough number to generalise the results for the entire staff complement.

Criteria

The survey focused on four criteria, namely leadership, people management practices, the RAF climate and communication.

In the first case, the aim was to measure management support for diversity, as well as the typical behaviour of managers in the organisation's diverse environment. The investigation of people management

practices, on the other hand, set out to examine human resources and other business practices that impact on employees and their wellbeing.

Examining the RAF climate was about the more subtle aspects of how diversity is handled in the organisation, and addressed both tangible and intangible cues. The objective was to examine the level of tolerance for diversity amongst ordinary employees.

Finally, both verbal and non-verbal communication relating to diversity was examined. This included an examination of conversations, dialogue and interpersonal communication between employees.

Feedback and action plans

Feedback on this survey will first be given to the RAF Executive Committee (EXCO) and then to management, after which the EE committee and the JSE committee will be briefed.

Once this process has been completed, the results of the survey will be communicated in Road Ahead, together with action plans for the future based on the survey's findings.

Thanks to staff

EWS would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff who participated in the

survey, especially the following individuals who designed and carried it out:

- Preeya and Talia (Surnames), our industrial psychology interns who designed and populated the electronic questionnaire;
- Diane van der Bank, who coordinated and managed communication about the survey and who collated the raw data;
- Jacob Bahula, the IT specialist responsible for all technical aspects of the project; and
- The EWS team for advocating and encouraging participation.

Diversity management is a priority at the RAF, and we look forward to using the results of this survey to extend and improve our approach to diversity in the future.

The Absenteeism Survey

Absenteeism occurs when employees can't come to work due to some kind of illness. Presenteeism, on the other hand, is a new term that refers to a situation in which employees come to work, but perform below expected standards due to illness, psycho-social issues or boredom.



The cost of sick leave in South Africa

Absenteeism costs the country approximately R12 billion every year, with approximately 4.5% of the workforce being absent from work every day.

At the RAF, the average absenteeism rate is at around 7.5%, and the objective of this survey was therefore to identify the causes of this so that, as an organisation, we can come up with appropriate solutions to manage the issue.

Respondents and methodology

An electronic questionnaire was used to conduct the survey, and this contained both multiple-choice options and the option of providing open-ended answers. A total of 374 respondents participated, a statistically large enough number to generalise the results for the entire staff complement. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to

analyse the data.

Absenteeism in the preceding 30 days

No days off: 55%
One day off: 15%
Two days off: 14%
Three days off: 9%
Four or more days off: 8%

Causes of absenteeism

The following main cause of absenteeism were identified:

- Poor managerial skills;
- Poor environmental hygiene;
- Ill health; and
- Communication.

Feedback and action plan

Feedback on this survey has been given to the Human Resources management team,

and other feedback meetings will be held with all stakeholders. The EWS, ER and HRA will draw up an action plan according to recommendations and implement accordingly. The results of the survey and the action plan will be communicated in the next issue of Road Ahead.

Thanks to staff

This audit was the initiative of Dr Mbali Mhlongo of the Durban branch. Special thanks are due to Mbali, for his hard work and dedication in designing the questionnaire, interpreting the raw data and writing the report.

We'd also like to extend our gratitude to the people who contributed to and participated in this very important initiative. Heartfelt thanks are once again also due Diane Van der Bank and Jacob Bahula for fulfilling the same functions that they did on the first survey. It's all part of our collective effort to improve every aspect of operations at the RAF.

YOU AND YOUR MEDICAL AID: THE MEDICAL SAVINGS ACCOUNT

When choosing medical aid cover, it is important that potential members understand the benefits that their chosen package offers and whether or not these are sufficient to meet their needs. It is particularly important that they understand their medical savings account or MSA.

Discovery Health offers an MSA on most of its medical aid options, including on all Saver, Priority, Comprehensive and Executive plans.

How the MSA works

The MSA is used to pay for out-of-hospital expenses such as GP and specialist consultations, dentistry, optometry, day-to-day medication, x-rays, blood tests, physiotherapy etc.

The full annual amount offered on your specific plan is credited to your MSA at the beginning of each year. A portion of each of your monthly payments is used to cover the amount deposited into your savings account, and another portion is used to cover claims related to hospitalisation and chronic medication.

All out-of-hospital claims are deducted from your annual MSA total and, if this is exceeded during the period of the calendar year, you enter a self-payment gap. This means you will have to cover any further day-to-day expenses that year out of your own pocket or until your above-threshold benefit, if you have one, kicks in. The above-threshold benefit is an additional insurance benefit that comes into effect once you have covered day-to-day expenses that exceed your MSA up to a certain pre-set amount.

Note that all out-of-pocket expenses not covered by your medical aid are tax deductible and can be claimed as uncovered medical expenses at the end of each tax year.

How is the MSA cover calculated?

Your annual MSA cover is determined by two things: your plan type and the number of dependants you have.

The Classic plans provide for 25% of your monthly contributions to be paid into your MSA. So, for example, if your total medical aid contribution is R1,000.00 a month,

R250.00 a month will go towards your MSA, giving you an annual savings benefit of R3,000.00. The Coastal Saver plan provides for a similar level of coverage, while the Essential plans provide for only 15% of your monthly contributions to go into your savings account.

So if you have, for instance, chosen a Classic Saver plan, you will have a higher annual MSA limit than if you've chosen an Essential Saver plan. By way of comparison, a single member on Classic Saver will get an MSA of R4,548.00, while a single member on Essential Saver will get an MSA of R2,160.00.

What happens when your MSA runs out?

If you are on a Saver plan and you have reached your annual MSA limit, you will have run out of day-to-day benefits for the year. Any further day-to-day claims will have to be paid out of your pocket with the following exceptions:

1. Discovery Health will pay for three further GP consultations if you are a single member on a Classic

or Coastal Saver plan, and six GP consultations if you are a family on a Classic or Coastal Saver plan. These consultations are only covered if the doctor you see belongs to the Discovery GP Network.

2. If you are on the Essential Saver plan, Discovery will pay for two further GP consultations for a single member and four GP consultations for a family through the Discovery GP Network.

If you are on a Priority plan and you have reached your annual MSA limit, you will have access to a safety net benefit or ATB (Above Threshold Benefit) once you have paid for day-to-day claims up to a certain Rand amount. This safety net benefit is limited to a Rand amount based on the number of dependants on your medical aid.

On the Priority plans, Discovery Health will pay for GP consultations and certain blood tests once your MSA funds have run out and before you have reached your safety net. The number of consultations is unlimited if the Discovery GP Network is used.

If you are on a Comprehensive plan and you have reached your annual MSA limit, you will have access to a safety net benefit or ATB (Above Threshold Benefit) once you have paid for day-to-day claims up to a certain Rand amount. This safety net benefit is unlimited.

Note that Discovery Health will pay for GP consultations and certain blood tests once your MSA funds have run out and before you have reached your safety net benefit if you are on one of the Comprehensive plans. The number of consultations allowed is unlimited if the Discovery GP Network is used.

Important advice

Choosing the correct medical aid option to suit your needs is important. Members may only UPGRADE their medical aid option once a year on 1 January and a month's notice is required. Downgrades are allowed throughout the year.

If you are confident that you have little need for day-to-day benefits and can

manage these expenses yourself, a Saver plan would be your best choice. Saver plans are cost effective, but they generally offer lower day-to-day benefits than the other plans do.

If you feel that you may need slightly more day-to-day cover than what is available on the Saver plans, then a Priority plan would be recommended. These plans offer you unlimited GP consultations at a network GP once your MSA has been exhausted, as well as a limited safety net benefit once you have paid for day-to-day claims to a certain Rand value.

Finally, if your day-to-day costs are fairly high, if you have little control over them and you don't want to be left without benefits during the year, the Comprehensive plans would best cater to your needs. On these plans, once your MSA has been exhausted, you will have access to unlimited GP consultations at a network GP and also to a safety net benefit which is largely unlimited once you have paid for day-to-day claims to a certain Rand value.

Unused MSA funds

If you get to the end of the year and you still have a balance available in your MSA, these funds will simply be carried over to the new benefit year and will be added to the following year's MSA, increasing your total MSA balance.

Should you leave the medical aid or downgrade to an option on which there is no MSA (the Core and KeyCare plans), the amount left in your MSA will be paid out to you after four months.

Further advice

If you need any advice on your Discovery Health plan option, please contact the PSGK Corporate Member Support Unit and they will gladly assist you with any queries you may have.

The contact details are: 0860 100 296 or msu@psgkcorporate.co.za.

Gregg Anderson

PSG Konsult, Corporate

CREATING HARMONY IN OPEN-PLAN OFFICES

Open-plan offices have many benefits, but they do have a downside. Working in such close proximity to co-workers can make little things that wouldn't normally bother you seem unbearable. Here are some pointers on how to create and maintain harmony in an open-plan office:

Reduce noise by:

- Always walking to the desk of the person you want to talk to and by not calling out to them;
- Keeping unnecessary noise to a minimum;
- Taking in-depth conversations outside; and
- Avoiding the use of the speaker phone in an open-plan setting as it's very distracting for other members of staff.

Respect personal boundaries by:

- Treating your colleagues' desks as if they were offices, and always respecting their private space; and
- Asking to use office equipment from a colleague's desk rather than just taking it - and always returning it.

Be empathetic by:

- Understanding that others may be feeling stressed in the same way that you are, either at the same time or at different times; and
- Avoiding gossip or long discussions with co-workers about your private life.

Working together in an open-plan environment means that we need to be sensitive to those we share the space with, and treat them with concern and respect.

Not only is this good neighbourliness, it enhances everyone's feelings of wellbeing and the entire office's productivity.

Kgomotso Guala

Employee Wellness Department

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

////// By Sello Mosotho

CREATING A LEARNING ORGANISATION

The RAF's Learning and Development Department is on the road to great things under the leadership of Acting Senior Manager, Tshidi Mahlangu. Tshidi is working hard to ensure that RAFers have all the information and tools they need to improve their work performance and their levels of service to both internal and external stakeholders. She also aims to provide each employee with the means to develop personal mastery in their own lives.

Together with her management team, Tshidi has set about rolling out programmes that will, for instance, provide fast and easy access to handy e-books, online knowledge applications and other knowledge resources such as:

1. The Operations Toolkit (OPS), which provides a "one-stop-shop" for organisational and operational training. This is an online knowledge management tool made up of 15 different sections, each providing access to a wide range of learning aids. The aim of OPS is to supplement other learning and development tools such as formal workshops and training courses.

Mickey Aronson, who established this resource, also maintains it, and a link to the OPS Toolkit is on the bottom left-hand corner of the intranet home page.

2. The RAF Library, which is intended to be a 'distinct information hub'. Kgomotso Mmekwa, who has recently joined the RAF family, has brought a breath of fresh air to the library. He sees it as promoting "lifelong learning by equipping individuals with the information and knowledge necessary to enable them to find their place in the workforce and to enrich their lives."

Kgomotso indicates that the library's staff are currently busy with a feasibility study aimed at increasing its reach into the organisation,

especially be adding e-books and e-journals to its collection.

Other services offered by the library include legal case study searches through the Juta, Sabinet Online and Lexis Nexis databases; case law searches using the RAF's extensive collection of law reports dating from 1947 through to the present day; legislation enquiries through Lexis Nexis and Juta Statutes of South Africa; inter-library loans; access to a range of both daily and weekly newspapers; topic-based searches; the distribution of contents tables to the entire RAF staff; and library circulation services.

3. The AMA Guide, which is a train-the-trainer tool. Due to recent legislative amendments, the RAF has introduced one of two available methods for Serious Injury Assessment, the American Medical Association (AMA) Guide. This is used to assess if an MVA victim qualifies for the payment of damages.

During July, the Learning and Development Department undertook an intensive train-the-trainer workshop to prepare for the national roll-out of AMA.

4. The Skills Development Programme, which features an interns and learners sub-programme. This year, interns and learners are based in the following departments: Marketing, Internal Audit, IT, the Contact Centre and Medical at both Eco Glades and Menlyn branches. Thato Theledi has asked that we all embrace and assist them in their learning and development.
5. Community Road Safety Council Training, which supports the Minister of Transport's national drive to reduce road carnage in South Africa. Training for Community Road Safety Councils (CRCs) aims to equip councillors with

knowledge and information about the services rendered by the RAF so that they, in turn, can educate their communities about these.

The Learning and Development and Stakeholder Relations departments also recently conducted a three-day roadshow in Limpopo, assisted by Marketing and the Limpopo HBOs.

Watch this space

The Learning and Development Department has many other exciting initiatives, both in the planning and development stages. These include:

1. Benchmarking various learning management systems aimed at improving how the process of learning is managed within the organisation. The new systems will offer e-learning, webinars, audio-visual tutorials and many more functionalities. They will have a Facebook look and feel, and each employee will be able to have his or her own profile;
2. Developing a Medical Toolkit, which will update staff on forthcoming seminars, medical directives and hyperlinks to topics such as medical tariffs, lists of medical practitioners, practice numbers and so on. This is a project being spearheaded by Medical Trainer, Zanele Adams;
3. Working to obtain accreditation for our MVA technical training courses;
4. Rolling out internship and learnership programmes nationally; and
5. Hosting a book exhibition in the library later this year, as well as inviting bookshops to exhibit their products at Eco Glades and Menlyn branch. This will offer staff members the opportunity of selecting books for the library's collection.

RAF IN COLOUR

SANTACO 10TH ANNIVERSARY



CELEBRATING WOMEN'S DAY



LET'S TALK ROAD SHOW



702/DISCOVERY WALK THE TALK



ROAD SAFETY CONFERENCE



CELEBRATING YOUTH DAY



BHF CONFERENCE



ACTIVATIONS WORKSHOP



TRANSPORT BUDGET VOTE SPEECH



COMRADES MARATHON SPECIAL



STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS



ACCESS CONTROL UPDATE

Staff are asked to inform themselves of the following safety regulations that apply at all Road Accident Fund (RAF) offices. Access to RAF premises are regulated by the Control of Access to Public Premises and Vehicles Act 53 of 1985, as amended.

Searching

Searching is conducted by security personnel in line with the Act. This is done using physical and electronic scanning devices such as metal detectors and x-ray machines at designated security checkpoints. The x-ray machines used by RAF are regulated in terms of Hazardous Substances Act, 1973 (Act 15 of 1973).

All private items and weapons like firearms, laptops, suitcases, handbags and containers must be declared at the security checkpoint.

Visitors

Visitors cleared by security need to sign in at the reception area. They will be issued with temporary ID cards for identification purposes while on RAF premises. These cards have to be conspicuously displayed at all times.

Signage

The following security and indemnity signage appears on all RAF premises, and staff are asked to take note of the details at each specific location:

- Parking Indemnity
- Reserve Parking
- Access Control Indemnity
- CCTV Indemnity
- No Firearms Signage

Evacuation

In the event of an emergency or an evacuation, all response activity will be coordinated by the Emergency Control Centre (ECC) situated in the Security Control Room. Emergency procedures will be coordinated by the designated

emergency manager for that site.

Emergencies will be announced by the sounding of a ten-second alert signal, followed by an announcement on the public address system.

At this point, all employees, visitors and contractors must stop what they are doing immediately and stand by for further instructions from the emergency manager.

If an evacuation is ordered, all employees must evacuate their work stations and proceed to their designated emergency assembly points through the nearest emergency exits. Emergency team members will be wearing reflectors and hard hats as they escort people towards the assembly points, where roll calls will be used to verify that everyone is present and accounted for.

It is important for staff to familiarise themselves with the following signage and equipment in their relevant buildings:



Emergency Exit



First Aid



Fire Equipment



Assembly Point



No Smoking Signs



Parking for Disabled Persons

PLEASE ALSO NOTE:

1. All emergency exit doors are equipped with emergency break domes. Break the cap using your hand, turn the knob clockwise and push the door to open.
2. In the event of an emergency, use the stairs and not the lifts. Do not run, panic or cause panic!
3. People with impaired mobility will

be evacuated by a well-trained team of health and safety marshals using evacuation chairs which are installed and conspicuously displayed in each zone.

Tebogo Masango

Eco Glades

INTRODUCING THE T.A.S.K. JOB EVALUATION SYSTEM

As we all know, the RAF is about to begin rolling out a New Operating Model (NOM), which aims to make the organisation more customer-centric. Our objective is to improve efficiency, service delivery and customer experience, and also to make the RAF a great place to work.

As part of the process, we will be working hard to create a best-practice working environment, to improve employee working conditions, and to deliver excellent service - every time. Among other, this will involve adopting the very latest human resources solutions, which will include re-aligning the job evaluation system used in the organisation. For this reason, we will be replacing the current Paterson job evaluation system with the T.A.S.K. job evaluation system.

The migration from one system to the other will be a gradual process, commencing in the support units and ending with the corporate departments. In consultation with HR, ICT and SATAWU, each business unit will be notified in advance of the changeover schedule.

We ask you please to be patient as we undertake this process and as we roll out the new evaluation system to all business units. It is part of our journey to create a culture of excellence at the RAF, and a customer-centric organisation we can all be proud of. Your cooperation is valued and appreciated.

Joe Hlabangane

Executive: Human Capital

≡ Road Ahead



www.raf.co.za

Call Centre Number: 0860 235 523