

PRESS RELEASE

ATA ITD ensures that soldiers are equipped with life-saving skills

Namibian soldiers who are being trained as medics have received world-class theoretical and practical medical training through Action Training Academy's International Training Division.

30 June, 2011: Essential medical training has been provided to members of the Namibian Defence Force (NDF), who recently underwent training courses developed by the International Training Division of leading health and safety expert, Action Training Academy (ATA ITD).

ATA ITD was approached by the German Advisory Group (GAG), which has provided key advice and services to the Namibian Defense Force for the past 20 years, to supply the training courses to ten NDF soldiers based at a military compound in Okahandja, 70 km northwest of Windhoek.

GAG medical advisor, Sergeant Major **Fabian Martens** says: "GAG's current project in Namibia involves the establishment of a UN Level II mobile field hospital, in order to enhance Namibia's capabilities to contribute towards peace and security within the African Union. Although the hospital is based in tents and containers, it has comprehensive medical facilities that include casualty, x-rays, laboratories, dentistry, theatre, and two ICU wards."

Martens points out that a number of soldiers were assessed and evaluated before the final ten were selected for training on the various technical and medical applications related to the hospital. "After the evaluation and selection process, GAG required a comprehensive training course offering that would assist the selected soldiers in reaching their full potential as medics," he continues. "ATA ITD offered the best solutions to meet our needs - not only in terms of course material, but also for practical training and numerous additional services related to the course."

ATA ITD director **Trevor Justus** points out that the soldiers underwent three separate training courses in Namibia during 2011. These included: EMT-B (emergency medical training – basic), BLS (basic life support for healthcare providers) and ITLS (international trauma life support). "All students showed great commitment to the course material, and passed these internationally-certified training programmes with flying colours."

After successfully completing their coursework, Justus notes that the soldiers were brought to South Africa in 2011 to undertake hands-on practical work experience with ER24 emergency services, and at the trauma and medical casualty wards at the Charlotte Maxeke hospital in Johannesburg. "The trauma unit at Charlotte Maxeke is recognised as a world-leading facility, and provided the soldiers with an in-depth understanding into the 'real-life' approach taken in emergency situations."

Among the soldiers undertaking the training were **Hileni Johannes, Laimi Martin** and **Hilde Gebhardt**, who are all agree that the training has provided them with newfound skills that are essential to their future roles in the NDF as medics.

"The training courses provided us with a good theoretical understanding of how medical care should be undertaken; however, the hands-on experience of travelling on the road in ambulances with paramedics to the scene of real-life emergency incidents, and assisting surgeons in the trauma and casualty wards, proved to be both eye-opening and vitally-important in developing our skills," notes Gebhardt.

Martens notes that in addition to the theoretical and practical training, ATA ITD arranged all the logistical aspects of the soldiers' stay in South Africa. "ATA ITD took full responsibility in organising airport transfer, accommodation, meals and all other cost-of-living expenses related to the soldiers' stay. This unique value-added service ensured that GAG was afforded more time and resources to focus on the mobile field hospital."

Despite the initial red tape encountered when organising the training courses, Martens points out that the entire training process ran smoothly, with no major setbacks. "The company displayed a highly-professional level of service, combined with world-class training courses, and I am confident that this will project will serve as the basis for a long-term working relationship in the years to come."

Looking to the future, Martens notes that the soldiers will be able to put their newfound skills to good use on the roads in Namibia. "The main road that links Windhoek to Okahandja is long and isolated, and it experiences a high number trauma-related cases linked to car accidents. With the Namibian ambulance service currently under-resourced, our newly-trained medics will play a vital role in providing life-saving medical care to trauma victims," he concludes.

Ends

Notes to the Editor

There are numerous photographs specific to this press release. Please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the Action Training Academy link.

About ATA International Training Division

ATA's International Training Division (ITD) specialises in emergency medicine, occupational medicine, occupational hygiene, technical rescue, industrial fire-fighting, health and safety training courses for professionals operating in remote and isolated environments (e.g. oil and gas, mining, infrastructure and construction).

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