



ARMED FORCE DAY

Dignitaries who attended the handover at Ekuphumleni Home for the Aged included (from left) Minister of Defence, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality Executive Mayor, Danny Jordaan, Deputy Minister of Defense & Military Veterans, Kebby Maphatose and Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber Chief Executive, Kevin Hustler.

BUSINESS RAISES R250 000 FOR LEGACY PROJECT

IMPROVING THE LIVES OF THE COMMUNITIES IN OUR REGION

ARMED Forces Day 2016 may have ended on Sunday, 21 February, but the legacy of this day will live on for the residents of Ekuphumleni Home for the Aged.

The Legacy Project of Armed Forces Day entailed the South African National Defence Force's (SANDF) involvement with a number of community activities to the benefit of the citizens of the Bay. One of the projects was the upgrading of infrastructure of the city's Homes for the Aged and the general improvement of the lives of the city's senior citizens in Nelson Mandela Bay.

The Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber raised a whopping R250 000 for the Legacy Project, of which the biggest contributor was Port Elizabeth International Airport.

Port Elizabeth International Airport Acting Airport Manager Greg Small said the Legacy Project offered a good opportunity for business to get involved with Armed Forces Day, considering the massive economic injection into the city, already starting in the weeks leading up to Armed Forces Day.

"Improving the lives of the communities in our region is close to our heart as an airport and that was why we wanted to get involved to elevate the quality of lives of the elderly in the Metro. We also provided school bags for learners who demonstrate potential in Maths and Science. Port Elizabeth International Airport supports initiatives that ensure the development of our youth and attracting young talent in to the aviation sector in general is another social priority for our business," Small said.

Other Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber member companies that contributed to the Legacy Project included Jeffares and Green, AfriCoast Consulting Engineers, Afrisec Strategic Solutions and Srk Consulting.

Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber CEO Kevin Hustler said the knock-on effect of Armed Forces Day on the economy of the city was huge. Rental car agencies and accommodation

establishments reported that they were close to capacity or fully booked over the weekend, with many of the armed forces delegations already descending onto our city's shores from mid-January in anticipation of the event.

"The culmination on Sunday reminded us of a festive Opening of the Season atmosphere in the Bay and our beachfront businesses were buzzing. We are grateful that we could give back in some way as business with the Armed Forces Day Legacy Project," Hustler said.

Ekuphumleni Home for the Aged in Zwide Township was identified as the main beneficiary after a tragic fire in November, which took the lives of three residents.

The money was and will be utilized to buy essentials needed by the senior citizens, including toiletries, as well as items to upgrade the general infrastructure and amenities of the Home.

The SANDF provided most of the labour for the refurbishment of the Home, while the municipality assisted with fire safety training as well as the beautification of the gardens of the Home. The Department of Social Development also made donations to the project.

"This was a fantastic example of public/private collaboration between the Business Chamber, the Municipality and the SANDF to make the lives of the residents of Ekuphumleni a little bit more comfortable," Hustler said.

Ekuphumleni has now set a benchmark for other Homes for the Aged in the Metro, owned by the municipality. Other homes that will also benefit from the funds are Bethelsdorp and Gelvan Park Home for the Aged.

To live up to its name as a "Legacy Project", continuous support to the Homes, with skills training for the staff, on behalf of organised business will take place throughout the year.