

Genderforce

2005 – 2007

The Power of Gender

*A Report on Gender Policy at the
Netherlands Ministry of Defence*

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1. Gender Policy – the Genderforce Project

The Netherlands Defence organisation wishes to achieve a more proportionate representation of women in all positions of the organisation. This would make it a modern, dynamic organisation where women and men get the best out of themselves in the interest of both themselves and the Defence organisation.

The first policy measures were taken in the 70s – 80s period. The policy has developed ever further during the course of time. It initially followed the line that introducing separate female units would be the way to attract more women. Later on, integration and opening the doors of the entire armed forces to women became the approach. This went hand-in-hand with a fast-track procedure specifically aimed at women. The importance of a mixed and internationally active organisation became increasingly accepted after the Defence organisation's mission and tasks changed in the 1990s. The recruitment of more women was seen in a new light, and the term gender policy came into use. The current gender policy aims at both sexes and is significant for the Netherlands armed forces' national and international operations. Labour market problems are a recurring theme in gender policy, and from this point of view, it has become increasingly important for the Defence organisation to interest both men and women in a career in the Netherlands armed forces.

Owing to the fact that too little real progress was made through the years, a decision was made at the beginning of 2003 to intensify the process and adopt a result-oriented approach. The 2004 Gender Action Plan and the elaboration of UN Resolution 1325 were important milestones in this approach. This resolution, which is warmly supported by the Netherlands, calls for the strengthening of women's role in the planning, preparation, decision-making and execution phases of crisis-response operations. In addition, the resolution also requests increased attention for the effects of conflict and peace-building activities on women during these missions. Both women and men are indispensable in carrying out this task.

The Netherlands Ministry of Defence initiated the EU-funded Genderforce Project (2005 - 2007) to accelerate and intensify the gender policy process. Various initiatives as well as new developments and insights were brought together in this project. This booklet will report on the progress of the project.

Gender policy is certainly not only about creating a sound balance and promoting the throughflow of women to higher positions. It is also about recognising the cultural and social meaning of differences in sex, removing barriers and making optimal use of these differences and the associated competences. The armed forces need both men and women for carrying out their tasks in a way that is appreciated among national and international communities alike. The armed forces benefits from mixed teams as they can deliver an improved performance, especially in the light of current international policy.

2. Genderforce Objectives

Despite the fact that the recruitment and integration of women in the Netherlands armed forces has been going on for some time, the organisation remains unbalanced with a small percentage of women and a large percentage of men, leading to the prevailing masculine culture. The Defence organisation wishes to change this situation and become a modern, dynamic and balanced organisation, which invests in the qualities of all of its employees.

The Gender Action Plan, launched in 2004, and the Genderforce Project (which incorporates the action points from the 2004 Action Plan), started in 2005, were the basis for an adequate and active gender policy for the Defence organisation.

The key objectives of this gender policy are roughly speaking:

- A 30% share of women in the inflow to initial training;
- Increasing the share of military women in the organisation to 12% and the share of civilian women to 30% by 2010;
- Increasing the number of high-profile and influential female role models;
- Creating a climate in which both men and women feel at home within the organisation and are able to develop to their maximum capabilities.

The Gender Action Plan comprises sub-plans for all elements of the Defence organisation. The gender ambassadors (being the deputy commanders of the seven main Defence elements) are all responsible for carrying out the sub-action plans for their respective elements.

The Genderforce project (2005 – 2007) is intended as an impulse for bringing together earlier initiatives and achieving a structural and lasting embedding of Defence gender policy. There are 4 sub-projects attempting to achieve the above-mentioned objectives. These four sub-projects are:

- Gender in Training;
- Gender in Crisis-response operations;
- Gender in Balance;
- Gender Mainstreaming

These four sub-projects, which each focus attention on their support base and an improvement in culture, complement each other and are all necessary for ensuring permanent success and achieving gender policy, i.e. Genderforce, objectives.

3. Results of the Previous Three Years

Gender in Training

“Training courses are ideal places for passing on the desired attitudes to military personnel....”

Objectives

The objective of the ‘Gender in Training’ sub-project is to embed gender in all initial and career training courses of the Defence organisation and to make the training environment more ‘gender-sensitive’. This is meant to result in a culture in the training environment where women and men feel at home, and there is room for both being oneself and fully developing oneself. The aim is to make all military personnel more ‘gender-aware’; it must be emphasised that this is in the interest of all Defence employees and that, ultimately, the organisation will be the better for it.

The recommendations of the Staal Commission, which conducted an enquiry in 2006 into undesirable behaviour in the armed forces, also recognise the importance of Defence training courses and advocate good conduct and social leadership.

The number of women in the Defence organisation, especially among military personnel, is still not high. Consequently, only few women attend training and educational courses. Many Defence coaches, trainers and instructors will subconsciously focus on the social majority within the group, in this case men. The learning climate (the prevailing culture during instruction and training) will also be tuned to the same majority. The specific learning requirements that women have are therefore often insufficiently recognised and, in consequence, receive too little attention in the curriculum. As a consequence, women may feel less at home in training environments and during training courses, which may influence their performance and level of ambition. This also means that the Defence organisation is not making optimal use of the qualities and potential of all of its personnel. One of the Genderforce project’s initiatives is to address this issue.

Gender in training aims at all initial training courses and career training courses as well as at a number of job-specific courses. In these courses, which may be attended during the various phases of the military career, gender and associated subjects are addressed in a practical and comprehensible way. As a result, each member of military personnel is introduced to gender and gender issues, can form an opinion and understand how important the subject is in terms of military operations and social interaction. The intention is to bring about a change in conduct and culture. Gender is not an isolated subject within educational and training programmes, but is addressed in combination with the subjects of diversity and integrity.

Results

In 2007, a number of gender modules were developed, tailored to target group and level. Knowledge concerning gender is transferred, but the main focus is on practising role-play on the basis of real-life examples. The reviews held afterwards in every training group are of crucial importance and lead to more insight into the desired conduct as well as the acquisition of a new standard of good gender conduct.

During initial training courses, the attention to gender and the attitude and conduct of the soldier are linked. These training courses focus on working and living together in mixed units. The courses also focus attention on bringing dilemmas which occur in daily practice into the open and learning how to deal with them, thereby improving integrity among military personnel. For senior managers, gender is taught within the existing basic courses and career courses by the transfer of knowledge, but, more importantly, by teaching an attitude which makes it possible to take gender and good conduct into account in the management process and to take a lead as a role model.

In addition to the development of gender modules, in autumn 2007 approximately 400 defence instructors attended a 'Train the Trainer' course for gender issues. The 'Train the Trainer' programme comprises two parts: a two-day training course for core instructors and a one-day course for other instructors. Core instructors are more experienced instructors who will serve as points of contact for the gender theme within the training courses. This two-day training was given to a group of fifty core instructors, originating from various training organisations within the armed forces' Services. The core instructors subsequently gave the one-day course to the other instructors. In future, the core instructors will train new instructors or instructors who have not yet received gender training.

Gender in training is not solely about the content of the lessons, but also about the training environment. An important factor is, for example, the attitude and conduct of the instructors. The instructors recognise this aspect and repeatedly emphasise the importance of treating each other with respect. The gender aspect is an important part of this principle. In practice, this means that instructors must be alert to the behaviour and attitude of the group and must act rapidly if trainees act disrespectfully to one another. The gender modules focus on increasing these competences. Gender has thus been increasingly incorporated into group processes, in exercises and the reviews of exercises.

The development of Gender in Training still has a long way to go

With the development of gender modules and the training of instructors, a start has been made with increasing gender awareness in training. The modules have been developed, a core Group of trainers has been retrained and recommendations have been drawn up for adapting the training environment. First experiences have been gained by starting gender training. But this is only the beginning!

A follow-up is certainly necessary for incorporating the gender modules and the development of the associated competences in all training courses as a standard element. In future, all instructors must be trained. Owing to the extra possibilities afforded by the Genderforce project, Gender in Training was at the forefront of bringing about the necessary changes to the "Competences/Skills Manual". The link between gender training and all other yet to be developed supplemental training requirements in the areas of integrity, diversity and social leadership is an important point for attention. Training pressure is, however, continuously high. Adequate management by the leadership must prevent the attention to gender from being buried and must facilitate the integration of the developed instruments into the existing training courses.

Gender in Crisis-response Operations

Objectives

The objective of the 'Gender in Crisis-response Operations' sub-project is not only to deploy more women to crisis-response operations but also to focus more attention on gender aspects in general and their effects before, during and after the operations. Attention for gender aspects is not only important for approaching and interacting with men and women from the local population, but also for social interaction within the military unit.

Without the deployment of military women to Dutch crisis-response operations, it is often difficult to make contact with the local female population, when it is precisely the female part of the population that is so important in a country's reconstruction activities. This emphasises the importance of involving the gender perspective in crisis-response operations.

Before involving local women in the process of peace-enhancing activities, it is paramount that military personnel know and 'feel' what local tradition and culture mean as to the involvement of women. Operational decisions must take the interests of men but also of women into account. Military personnel must also understand the requirements for offering protection to girls and women against acts of war and sexual violence, and, in addition, they must know how to make various facilities, such as education and healthcare, more accessible to women.

The various skills and competences relevant to these matters must be recognised and, if necessary, further developed. This does not only concern the deployment of women and the optimal use of female competences, such as empathy and 'a feeling for people'. Gender-sensitive men can and must also be an example to women and men in the mission area.

Looking and acting from a gender perspective means constantly keeping an eye on the effects of decisions, actions or operations on women and men.

The gender specialist in deployments

For making improved use of the gender perspective during crisis-response operations, gender specialists can be deployed within units. A gender specialist gives concrete advice on improving the quality and effectiveness of an operation by the integration of gender aspects. Gender experts or gender advisers are often present during international crisis-response operations. The Defence organisation is striving to include gender advisers in the staffs of deployed units.

Results

- In October 2006, the Taskforce 'Women, Security and Conflict', led by Mrs Annemarie Jorritsma, finished its work by holding a conference and presenting a final report. The final report describes *inter alia* the necessary activities to be undertaken by the Defence organisation for enhancing the role of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-war reconstruction. In addition, a crash course document on UN Resolution 1325 – an extremely important and practical document for the Defence organisation – was issued.
- In 2006, a Chief of Defence directive concerning gender was drawn up (CDS A-104), making gender a permanent part of central operational management.
- A gender checklist of stakeholders was introduced to the Directorate of Operations in 2007, making gender a permanent point for attention during the planning, execution and evaluation of operations.
- More insight has been gained into the deployment of women in crisis-response operations and the resulting significant added value for the effect of operations.
- Specific attention for gender aspects during deployments, even if this process is still at an early stage
- Bundling (gender) experiences gained during missions is being worked on; gender aspects are also included in the evaluations (debriefings) of missions.
- The Defence organisation's expertise in the area of gender in crisis-response operations has been considerably increased by the Genderforce project. Increasing use is being made of expertise from other organisations, such as women's organisations and NGOs as well as other experts from, for example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- On an international basis, there is increasing attention for the importance of gender and methods of cooperation, especially in the CIMIC (Civil Military Cooperation) field. In 2007, the CIMIC Centre of Excellence in Budel developed a special gender module, which is attended by all CIMIC trainees.
- A special gender module, which focuses directly on gender in crisis-response operations, has been developed for the School of Peace Missions.
- The Defence organisation has made a contribution to the 1325 national action plan, in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, the other ministries, NGOs and various volunteer organisations that focus on improving the position of women in post-conflict areas.

Chief of Defence (CDS) directive A-104

Have you been informed about Chief of Defence (CDS) directive A-104?

This directive indicates what the importance of gender is for crisis-response operations. The first part of the directive is as follows:

1) During deployments, there is increasing attention for women in situations of war and conflict. Initially, attention was focused on the role of women as victims of conflict. Until the Second World War, men fought at the front, where the victims of war were claimed. Since WW II, more women and children have been victims of conflict (murder; physical and sexual abuse) than military personnel. In addition, women began to play a more active role during conflicts as soldiers or resistance fighters, but also in conflict prevention and peace negotiations, especially close to home in their own communities. This changing role has led to the idea that there should be more attention for the roles of men and women in the area of operations during deployments, but also for the roles of male and female military personnel of units to be deployed.

2) The necessity and added value of paying explicit attention to gender varies per deployment. The deployment's assignment determines the nature and scope of the activities to be carried out. If an assignment is confined to a specific military activity, the possibilities for integrating gender become more restricted than when aspects such as reconstruction, the monitoring of human rights or the re-establishment of public administration are part of the assignment to be carried out. The presence of female military personnel is no guarantee that gender aspects will be emphasised during the deployment. The male and female military personnel present must focus attention on the various gender aspects.

3. This Chief of Defence directive concerns activities requiring attention prior to and during the deployment.

The full text of this Chief of Defence directive is accessible on the Netherlands Defence organisation's intranet.

Gender in Balance

Towards a more balanced ratio of men and women

Objectives

By implementing a combination of various programmes and measures, the Defence organisation is working towards achieving a more balanced quantitative and qualitative ratio between the number of men and women and their qualities.

As the 2004 Gender Action Plan was drawn up, each Defence element presented a sub-plan containing target figures and attainable goals for 2010. These sub-plans involve a considerable number of concrete action points for the inflow, retention and

throughflow of women. One of the aims is to achieve increased female participation in training courses and career path training. In the case of vacancies, jobs will be given to women in preference to men, if otherwise equally qualified applicants apply for the job. More women will take their places in influential and leading positions and act as positive role models. The possibilities for part-time work and the combination of work and care will be improved in order to retain women (and men) for the Defence organisation. In the case of progressively positive results, it is recommended to make successful measures an integral component of personnel policy, the legal position and staff regulations.

The senior leadership of the Defence organisation has strongly committed itself to those objectives. The results in respect of the target figures as well as the actions taken have been monitored from the very beginning through semi-annual reports. This will be continued in order to be able to achieve the target ratios by 2010.

Table: target figures regarding inflow and actual staffing levels of women in the Defence organisation, as part of gender policy.

		December 2006	June 2007	Target figures (in 2010)
Inflow	female military personnel	13%	12%	RNLAF: 14% RNLN: 15% RNLA: 18% RNLM: 30%
	female civilian personnel	35%	38%	30%
Actual staffing level	female military personnel	10% 5% from the rank of lieutenant commander/major 2% from the rank of colonel	9% 5% from the rank of lieutenant commander/major 2% from the rank of colonel	12% 6% from the rank of lieutenant commander/major 3% from the rank of colonel
	female civilian personnel	23% 16% from scale 10 6% from scale 14	24% 16% from scale 10 7% from scale 14	30% 20% from scale 10 6% from scale 14

Gender in Balance:

Inflow:

Despite the successful results, the numbers of female personnel are in most cases still far below the set target figures for 2010. That is not surprising considering the initial level of female staff when gender policy was first launched and the time involved in the pursuit of a successful career in the Defence organisation. In the years to come, many action points will be continued in order to meet the objectives.

- The inflow of female military personnel has increased since 2004 .
- Women are now present in all military ranks, although they are often still few in number. The proportion of female military personnel rose to 9%.
- There is a slight increase of women in the ranks from major to colonel.
- The attention given to gender has resulted in a conscious search for competent women within or outside the organisation.
- In the past few years, the Defence organisation has appointed more women to senior ranks and civilian positions than it has before.
- The number of female civilian personnel members is increasing across all salary scales and their average salary has also increased compared to 2004.
- The inflow of female civilian personnel increased from 35% to 38%; the actual proportion of women in the civilian workforce increased from 23% to 24%.
- The recruitment campaigns set up by the Defence organisation are aimed at achieving an organisation with a diverse composition.

Retention of women:

In addition to the constant attention given to the inflow of women, there also appeared to be quite an urgent need to devote more attention to the retention of women already working in the Defence organisation. The growing inflow of female military personnel (12%, December 2007) is not yet reflected by the retention of women. The actual staffing level of female military personnel has grown very little in the past years (9%, December 2007). Target figures for the retention of women must be developed in the future. There should be more research, and specific policies to retain women for the Defence organisation must be developed.

Throughflow and career policy:

To stimulate women in their careers, a mentor project for the Defence organisation's female civilian personnel was set up in 2006. Its objective was to provide ambitious women with orientation on a management position. The project proved to be a great success. The interest was overwhelming, with 100 mentees and 100 mentors participating. The participants were very satisfied with the programme and options provided. A number of women were able to immediately flow through to a management position. The project will be repeated in 2007/2008, this time with 55 mentees and 55 mentors. In addition, a mentor project for female military personnel is under development.

Work and care:

Every Defence employee has received a detailed folder explaining all the possibilities for working part-time and the various arrangements with regard to combining work and care. This increases people's knowledge concerning such arrangements and stimulates them to make use of them.

Women en men wishing to work part-time can submit a request to this effect. The starting point is that working part-time is possible, provided there is no conflict with the interests of the service.

Childcare:

Increased attention for childcare at or near the workplace resulted in expansion of childcare facilities at the various barracks' locations. The demand for childcare in the Defence organisation is thus expected to be met by 2008.

As per 1 January 2008, Defence personnel who are absent owing to duties at sea, in the air, or related to exercises or deployments (including missions) for a period exceeding one month will, through adaptation of their terms of employment at their own request, be eligible for an allowance of a maximum net amount of EUR 150 per month as compensation for the necessary additional costs made for children under five years of age, if and insofar as a compensation for such additional costs is not already being provided under the Childcare Provisions Act.

Gender Mainstreaming

Objectives

The goal of the 'Gender Mainstreaming' sub-project is to make gender an integral element of the day-to-day management of the Defence organisation. Successful innovative measures are integrated into regular policy (such as Gender in Training, the mentor project etc.). This has been a point of attention from the very beginnings of gender policy, and also later on during the Genderforce project.

Results

Gender policy is no longer a temporary issue. It now receives structural attention.

- Within the organisational structure, the structural commitment of the senior leadership of the organisation (gender ambassadors) ensures that gender will receive permanent attention. Gender ambassadors, the central gender project leader and the decentralised gender assistants make up the backbone which will ensure the future continuation of gender policy.
- The Defence organisation is systematically working on its gender policy through action plans and annual plans.
- The progress made is tracked and discussed in a critical manner at regular intervals at the highest levels of the organisation, using regular management reports. If necessary, action points are adapted and/or new activities are introduced.

Gender in operations has a great deal in common with the other sub-projects of Genderforce. Experiences should be recorded according to a recognisable method and then transferred. Recording and transferring experiences lies at the core of the objective of the Gender Mainstreaming project. Transfer should not only take place within the operational staff but also with regard to training. Knowledge and experience will be gathered with respect to the cooperation between male and female military personnel, providing leadership to mixed units, the attitude of and effects on the local population, but also on gender-related subjects such as sexuality and missions. The knowledge and experience thus achieved should subsequently also be reflected in the training instruction of military personnel. Coordination with 'Gender in Training' is of importance here. When personnel are deployed on international missions, the fact that they are away from home for an extended period and as such unable to perform their care duties at home is an important issue. Improving care facilities during missions is a subject that ties in with the 'Gender in Balance' aspect. Efforts to this end are being made through the implementation of the Gender Action Plan.

The parties involved in gender policy also contributed to various related issues such as equal opportunities, the new flexible personnel system and the development of diversity policy.

Extra attention for gender for many years to come

Having role models and increasing the proportion of female military personnel are important objectives. The percentage of 12%, being the target set for 2010, is too

low, however, to transform the organisation from a predominantly male organisation into an organisation where everybody feels at home and has the opportunity to develop himself or herself in the best possible way. The workforce must be so diverse in composition that the Defence organisation can have at its disposal all the competencies and qualities that are required for its operations. From extensive research, it has become clear that within an organisation with a personnel composition such as the Defence organisation's, i.e. with a strong majority group, the minority group needs to increase by 30% in order to gain sufficient critical mass to bring real influence to bear on the organisation itself. This means that extra activities will remain necessary for a long time in order to achieve the set objectives.

4. *Eleven Important Lessons*

Perseverance wins the day

- 1) In terms of intensification of and giving more depth to gender policy, the Genderforce project has been most successful. The project made new initiatives possible and existing plans, such as the Gender Action Plan and the integration of Gender in Crisis-response Operations, were carried out. The project also received much interest and publicity from both inside and outside the organisation. However, the conclusion of the project has certainly not yet seen all of its objectives achieved. Important steps have been made and Gender is, prominently, on the agenda. There are however still major efforts to be made for a considerable number of years to come in order to achieve all targets.

Retention is at least as important as inflow and throughflow

- 2) In the plans of the past few years, the emphasis for action points and target figures has been on the inflow and throughflow of women in the Defence organisation. Gradually, it has become clear that the retention of women also deserves a great deal of attention. The increased inflow that has been achieved has not yet led to a substantial increase in the proportion of women in the military organisation.

The Message

- 3) The word Gender is a sensitive issue within the Defence organisation. Gender policy is still seen as a preferential policy for women and as a subject that can be exclusively seen as a part of personnel policy. Many do not yet understand the meaning of gender in relation to the general (peace) assignment and core tasks of the Defence organisation. Making use of the potential of the differences between people seems like a good message. The power of gender makes working at the Defence organisation more effective, multifaceted and pleasant. In the future, much will still have to be invested in discussing and spreading this message.

Gender, what's in for it me

- 4) Many men experience and perceive Gender and the associated measures as important to women, but not important to themselves. It is both important and sensible to change this stance. This can be best achieved by applying the

measures that the Defence organisation is taking, such as the combination of work and care and other parts of personnel policy, to both sexes, thereby ensuring a positive effect on men working in the organisation.

Setting concrete objectives and action points works

- 5) In the past few years, results have been achieved for gender policy by drawing up concrete objectives and accompanying action points. This allows personnel and teams to adopt a targeted approach and to gain a better picture of the small steps on the way to the intended results. It is important to continue to do so, especially in the areas that have, as yet, received little concrete attention.

Dare to experiment and do things differently

- 6) The various elements of the Defence organisations have set out the objectives and action points that they consider achievable in the Gender Action Plan and its related follow-up plans. This gave the separate elements more responsibility for the action points and results and laid a good foundation for embedding the subject. This approach also has its drawbacks. We have 'stayed close to home', results are slow in coming and there have been no major breakthroughs. Personnel policy may serve as an example. Real flexibilisation and tailor-made solutions for individuals have not been forthcoming despite the fact that these are both necessary for retaining women (and men). Career policy is another example. Projects and pilots focused on the coaching and throughflow of 'high-potential' individuals are not yet in place for women, with the exception of the mentor project. This is related to vested interests and existing customs. In order to break through this situation, it is recommended to, in addition to the tried and tested working method, consciously experiment more, set up pilots and draw up policy based on other than existing principles.

Benefit from the outsider's point of view

- 7) In the Genderforce project, much use has been made of 'external expertise', such as the Equal Opportunities Inspection Committee, the Gender Expertise Group, the 'Women, Peace and Conflict' working group and several (external) advisers. Learning from people and organisations outside the Defence organisation remains important. It is advisable to continue with this external orientation in order to keep informed of the insights of 'outsiders' and to disseminate these insights more widely within the Defence organisation.

Measuring progress

- 8) During the course of the Genderforce project, progress reports were drawn up every six months, making progress regarding policy and the intended action points visible and easy to check. The reports are drawn up in conjunction with the various Defence elements and are discussed with the State Secretary for Defence. They play an important part in evaluating and adjusting plans and in the internal directing by the gender ambassadors. This working method guarantees a balanced policy cycle and can be continued and further developed.

Sufficient resources and personnel

- 9) In the past few years, good cooperation has been established between the implementers of gender policy in the Defence elements (the so-called gender assistants) and the Gender project. There are regular consultations, there is room for ideas and plans from the defence elements, and plans are carried out collectively. In the coming years, sufficient personnel and resources must be available to continue on this course. The structure can be further developed within the Directorates of Operations, Plans and Operational Readiness, which, to an important degree, will improve the chance of success in the continuation and safeguarding of Gender in Training and Gender in Crisis-response Operations.

Commitment and direction necessary from the lower political and administrative management levels

- 10) Commitment from senior and management levels of the Defence organisation is sorely needed to ensure the continuation and success of gender policy. The gender ambassadors and the State Secretary have, without exception, become convinced of the necessity of gender policy. It is now time for internal direction and commitment from other, lower management levels. Cooperation through the armed forces' Services could thereby be more effective, making better results possible and preventing the separate elements from having to find out everything for themselves.

Expanding the support base and achieving culture change

- 11) During the course of the Genderforce project, expansion of the support base and cultural change have become important subjects. In the 2006 performance report and the 2007/2008 work programme, these are named as major themes running through the project. The initial scepticism surrounding the necessity of and the possibilities for cultural change has disappeared. The findings of the Staal Commission into undesirable conduct and general conduct in the army have made a clear contribution to this development. During Genderforce, a number of programmes and action points were developed to substantiate cultural change. Among these were communication, the Gender Days and the attention to culture in Gender in Training. Despite the higher priority and the insights gained, the development of the subject is still in the early stages and the subject is still too often perceived and taught in isolation. The subject of cultural change needs to be given more depth in terms of substance and should be translated into concrete action points, with all divisions and projects involved, such as the Staal Commission, working together.