

ABSTRACT FORM

TITLE	The role of South African National Defence Force`s Veterinary Service in the control of Rabies Outbreak in South Africa
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TEXT	<p>Rabies is a life threatening viral infection of the central nervous system; the disease primarily affects wild and domestic animals. In South Africa the disease is mainly reported in domestic dog, black- backed Jackal, bat eared fox and yellow mongoose. World Health Organisation reports that Rabies a zoonotic disease causes 59,000 human deaths every year globally.</p> <p>According to the National Institute of Communicable Disease the increase in the number of human cases is related to outbreak of Rabies in domestic dog in affected provinces namely Eastern Cape, Kwazulu Natal, Limpopo and Western Cape Province.</p> <p>In South Africa a total of 10 human Rabies cases are reported annually, mainly due to exposure to rabid dogs. The first recorded human rabies death for 2021 was a 2year old child in Kwazulu-Natal, second human case was reported in Limpopo 9year old child and third is a seven year old boy bitten by a stray dog in June 2021, Most cases reported in 2021 have been in children below age of nine.</p> <p>The disease is transmitted by saliva from a bite of an infected dog or consumption of infected material. Clinical signs of rabies are unusual aggression, excessive salivation, mental dullness, hydrophobia and ultimately death. The incubation period is one to two months but it can vary from 1 week to a year depending on point of entry on the body</p>

	<p>Control of rabies is through vaccination of dogs and cats an important intervention to support rabies prevention and control efforts. In order to achieve zero rabies deaths, bite prevention education and awareness of rabies are needed.</p> <p>Role of Military in Control of rabies, is through outreach programme and during the World Rabies day on the 27 September in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture Rural Development and Land Reform in rural areas, where rabies is endemic and difficult to reach these areas, the military can provide protection to veterinary teams from both Departments. The partnership of the latter will assist in vaccination of most of the dogs in identified areas. The rural areas identified the families owned up to ten dogs with an average of seven per family.</p>
KEYWORDS	Rabies, vaccination, Education , public awareness, Rural areas