Press Release

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South African Institute of Race Relations

South Africa's Leading Research and Policy Organisation

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More whites wanted in defence but fewer in the police

Two departments in the security cluster aim to implement employment equity targets that have contradictory objectives. One wants to increase the proportion of white people in its ranks while the other intends to do the exact opposite, says the South African Institute of Race Relations.

The employment equity (EE) targets of the Department of Defence and Military Veterans, as set out in the Defence Review guidelines, propose a staff complement of 65% Africans, 24% whites, 10% coloured people, and 1% Indians.

However, the South African Police Service (SAPS), in its 2010 EE targets, is seeking an employee mix of 79% Africans, 9.6% whites, 8.9% coloured people, and 2.5% Indians. This would match the proportions of whites and Africans in the broader South African population.

By March 2010, the racial breakdown of staff in the SAPS was 74% Africans and 13% whites, meaning the SAPS had yet to meet its 2010 affirmative action targets. This would mean offloading some of the 'excess' white employees.

The defence department's African and white staff proportions as at March 2009 were 70% and 17% respectively. For its targets to be met, the department would have to shed 5% of their African staff and increase the white staff complement by 7%.

These figures appear in this year's edition of the *South Africa Survey*, to be published next week by the Institute in Johannesburg.

Mr Kerwin Lebone, a member of the Institute's research team, said it was curious that, while the SAPS was committed to making the organisation racially representative, the defence department wanted to employ more whites than required by demographic considerations.

'This might signal that the lack of skills in defence is more acute than in the police,' Lebone said.

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