

Appendix 6B

The Staff

US Army Field Manual 101-5, Staff Organisation and Operations¹, explains staffs exist to help the commander make and implement decisions. “Staff organisations and procedures are structured to meet the commander’s critical information requirements,” the manual states. “The commander and his staff focus on recognising and anticipating battlefield activities in order to decide and act faster than the enemy. All staff organisations and procedures exist to make the organization, analysis, and presentation of vast amounts of information manageable for the commander. The commander relies on his staff to get from battlefield “information” to battlefield “understanding”, or situational awareness, quicker than his adversary. Once a decision is made, the commander depends on his staff to communicate the decision to subordinates in a manner that quickly focuses the necessary capabilities within the command to achieve the commander’s vision or will over the enemy at the right place and time.”

“True understanding should be the basis for information provided to commanders to make decisions. Formal staff processes provide two types of information associated with understanding and decision making. All other staff activities are secondary. The first is situational awareness information, which creates an understanding of the situation as the basis for making a decision. Simply, it is understanding oneself, the enemy, and the terrain or environment. The second type of information, execution information, communicates a clearly understood vision of the operation and desired outcome after a decision is made. Examples of execution information are conclusions, recommendations, guidance, intent, concept statements, and orders,” the manual adds.

Basic Staff Structure Model

“Staffs at every echelon of command are structured differently, but every staff has some commonalities. The basic model for all staff structures includes a chief of staff (CoS) or executive officer (XO) and three staff groups: coordinating, special, and personal. The number of coordinating, special, and personal staff officers within each staff group varies at different levels of command.”

The Chief of Staff

“The CoS (XO) is the commander’s principal staff officer. He directs staff tasks, conducts staff coordination, and ensures efficient and prompt staff response. The CoS oversees coordinating and special staff officers. He does not necessarily oversee the commander’s personal staff officers, although he normally interacts with them every day. The commander normally delegates authority to the CoS for the executive management of coordinating and special staff officers.”

¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington DC, May 31, 1997.

Coordinating Staff Group

“Coordinating staff officers are the commander’s principal staff assistants and are directly accountable to the CoS. Coordinating staff officers are responsible for one or a combination of broad fields of interest. They help the commander coordinate and supervise the execution of plans, operations, and activities. Collectively, through the CoS, they are accountable for the commander’s entire field of responsibilities. The staff is *not* accountable for functional areas the commander decides to personally control,” FM 101-5 explains.

In the US Army, commanders may designate coordinating staff officers as assistant chiefs of staff (ACoSs), deputy chiefs of staff (DCoSs), directors, or regular staff officers. “There these positions generally reflect the degree of authority the commander delegates to coordinating staff officers and the scope and complexity of operations within a command. However, the commander establishes a staff officer’s actual authority if it is not inherent in his title.” Note that the positions of ACoS and DCoS are not used by the SANDF and that US directors and their South African equivalents may have little in common than the title.

FM 101-5 advises that a coordinating staff officer’s authority is limited to advising, planning, and coordinating actions within his field of interest. “He also coordinates and integrates appropriate special staff officer activities into operations. The commander might also give a coordinating staff officer added authority to act on specific matters within his field of interest.”

“Directors have staff and line authority. For example, the director of logistics operations might be responsible for operating support activities in addition to his normal responsibilities. Typically, a commander might delegate significant responsibility and authority to a director to enable him to accomplish specific functions.”

In South Africa, the coordinating staffs are arranged as follows:

- Unit/Formation Staff 1 – Personnel
- Unit/Formation Staff 2 – Intelligence, Counter-intelligence & Security
- Unit/Formation Staff 3 – Operations, Plans & Training
- Unit/Formation Staff 4 – Logistics

Special Staff Group

“Special staff officers help the commander and other members of the staff in their professional or technical functional areas. The specific number of special staff officers

and their duties vary at each level of command. Special staff sections are organized according to functional areas,” FM 101-5 adds.

In South Africa, special staffs are attached as required. They could include:

- Artillery Staff
- Air Defence Staff
- Engineer Staff
- Medical Staff (attached from SAMHS)
- Signals Staff (attached from CMIS)
- etcetera

Personal Staff

Personal staff members work under the commander’s immediate control. They also may serve as special staff officers as they coordinate actions and issues with other staff members. When performing their duties as special staff officers, these personal staff officers may work through the CoS and under a specific coordinating staff officer for coordination and control purposes. Members of the personal staff include—

- Personnel assigned to act as personal assistants, such as aides-de-camp.
- Personnel the commander desires to supervise directly.
- Personnel who by law or regulation have a special relationship to the commander.

In the US, typical personal staff members include the command sergeant major (CSM), chaplain, inspector general (IG), public affairs officer (PAO), surgeon, dentist, and staff judge advocate (SJA). Members may perform some duties as personal staff officers and some as special staff officers or members of a coordinating staff section. For example, the SJA is also responsible for his staff section’s operations.

Grades

The seniority of staff officers are determined by their grade. In the SANDF these are related to their rank.

Grade	Appropriate Rank	Comment
• Chief Director (CD)	Major General	Part of pan-public service senior management service (SMS). Senior executive at SANDF and Service level.
• Director (Dir)	Brigadier General	Part of SMS. Executive at SANDF and Service level.
• Senior Staff Officer (SSO)	Colonel	Part of pan-public service middle management service (MMS). Functionary at SANDF and Service level; executive at formation level.
• Staff Officer 1 (SO1)	Lieutenant Colonel	Senior functionary at formation level, relative authority declines inverse to importance of office: at unit level a SO1 can be a fearsome figure, at formation level a SO1 is less formidable and at SANDF level, SO1s are more common than corporals. The

		same applies to SO2s and SO3s.
• Staff Officer 2 (SO2)	Major	Functionary at unit level, relative authority declines inverse to importance of office.
• Staff Officer 3 (SO3)	Captain, Lieutenant, Warrant Officer	Functionary at unit level, relative authority declines inverse to importance of office.

Table 6B.1: Staff officer grades

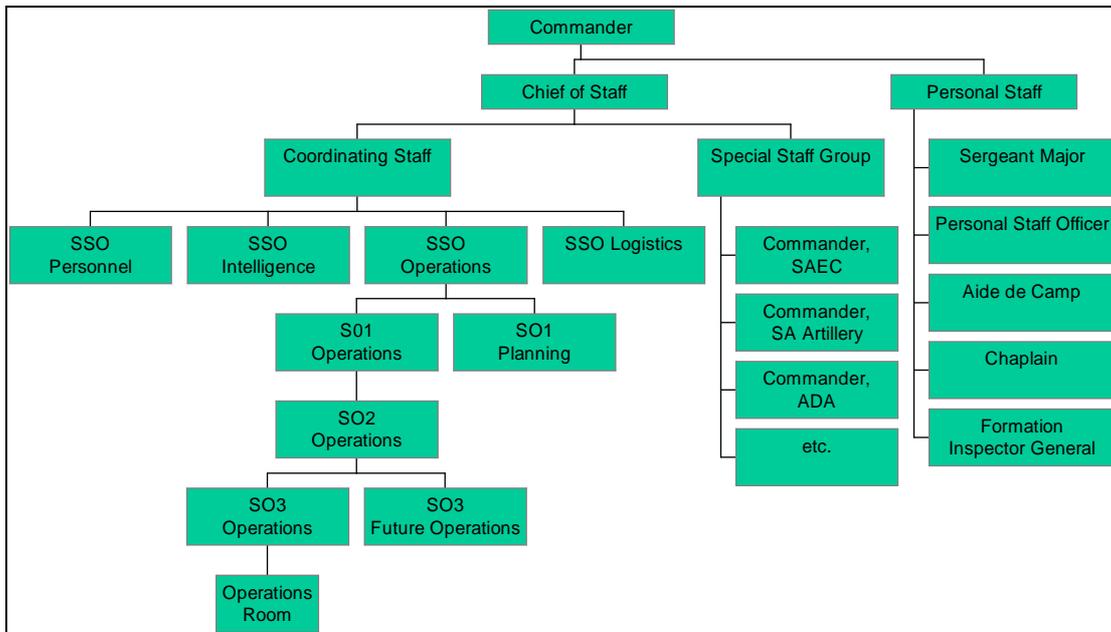


Table 6.B2: A representation of a notional formation staff structure. The SSOs Pers, Int and Log will have similar subordinate staff structures as that depicted for the SSO Ops. There is presently no such position as “formation inspector general” in the SANDF, but there is no reason there could not be. For a brigade, the incumbent could be ranked major or lieutenant colonel.