

DRAFT

AN OVERVIEW OF ALTERNATIVE NATIONAL SERVICE IN SOUTH AFRICA

1. Research Objectives

The aim of the research is to develop an historical overview of the experience of alternative forms of national service in South Africa, as well as policy proposals in this respect.

2. Research Detail

2.1 Alternatives provided for within the law: The law as it stands provides for a limited set of alternatives for those conscripted to carry out military service. It is necessary to provide detailed descriptions of these alternatives.

What provisions apply for community service for religious pacifists? What are the administrative processes that need to be followed? What has the experience of the Board for Religious Objectors been? How efficiently has the system worked?

What has been the nature of work carried out by community servers? What sectors have they been posted to? What have working conditions been like? How do those doing such service view it? What has the attitude of government officials been?

Other forms of service, not defined for religious pacifists, have also been carried out. We see here examples such as the work carried out by chartered accountants in the office of the Receiver of Revenue, or positions filled by National Servicemen at the Small Business Development Corporation. What are the legal provisions applying? What other positions have been filled?

What is the administrative process involved? What working conditions apply? Under whose administration do these National Servicemen fall? What has been the experience of such service from the point of view of the servers; and of government officials?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the various systems operating?

For all the examples investigated, we need to consider the viability of their forming the basis for an expanded system

of alternative national service. A consideration of this would need to be made.

2.2 Policy on alternative service: An overview of policy with respect to alternative service in South Africa is required. What have the various policies of government been in this respect? What has been forthcoming from non-governmental sectors?

The purpose of this section would be to provide a clear historical account of thinking in this respect within South Africa.

3. Research Methods and Sources

A range of sources would need to be consulted:

- 3.1 Documentation and legislation ;
- 3.2 Personal interviews with participants in alternative schemes;
- 3.3 Personal interviews with key proponents of policy;
- 3.4 Pressclips and other published material.

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