



**SAF CORE
VALUES**
WALK IT, LIVE IT

This book belongs to :

CDF Foreword

What are Core Values? Why do we have them in the first place? Well, Core Values are traits that are not just worthwhile; they represent an individual's or an organisation's highest priorities, deeply held beliefs, and core fundamental driving forces. They therefore represent the heart of what the organisation and its people stand for in the world.

Over the last 25 years of my life in the SAF, I have spent much time reflecting on our Core Values, and tried my best to live them, as many of us have. In living them, we have come to rely on them as beacons to guide our professional conduct in moments of peace and conflict. They are the inner voices that give us our moral compass and the basis through which we trust that command intent will manifest in decisive action at the last mile.

As a junior officer in the Infantry Battalions, I remember pushing my Platoon and Company of soldiers very hard. We wanted to be the best in the Battalion. Whilst training in Brunei, we wanted to be the quickest up Mount Biang and complete the mission over three days... together. I will always

remember the steep climb up Mount Biang, the heavy rain and the thick vegetation that weighed us down. I also vividly remember the stronger soldiers helping the weaker ones with their equipment, in addition to carrying their own weapons and 'barang-barang'. Leave no man behind.

As a staff officer in the Future Systems Directorate, we were told to be the 'organisational irritant', and to challenge the status quo and create positive change in MINDEF/SAF. Many of our proposals were unpopular and ran against Services' interests as we pushed for a smarter and more integrated SAF. There were hits and misses, but we never lost heart. Throughout, we were led by BG Jimmy Khoo, who was a small man with a big heart. He was not afraid to lead and voice ideas that ran against the status quo, even when it seemed unpopular to do so. Always aspire to the highest ideals of integrity, service and excellence.

On 9 August 2015, Singapore celebrated its 50th National Day Parade at the Padang. Our SAF pioneers were involved in the parade and I will remember their unbeatable spirit. During one rehearsal on a scorching hot

Saturday afternoon, I suggested to CPT (Ret) Shamsuddin who was more than 80 years old, "it's very hot, no need to swing your arms and march, just walk down St Andrews Road normally... people will understand". I will never forget the look he gave me, nor his reply, "Sir, we will march and show the young people, Singaporeans and foreigners today that we are old, but our hearts are still strong for Singapore". We are never done loving Singapore.

We all carry the power to make Singapore and the SAF better. This is our privilege and our burden. Our Core Values must continue to live within, motivate and guide our beliefs and our actions. Over the years, I have realised that the best leaders I have encountered are those who have found a way to live these Core Values and in doing so, positively influenced others to do the same. For me, it is synonymous with "Service with Purpose". I believe that our Core Values create leaders who will have that ceaseless desire to improve on the status quo, and to lead others to do the same.

Let's continue to live out our Core Values.

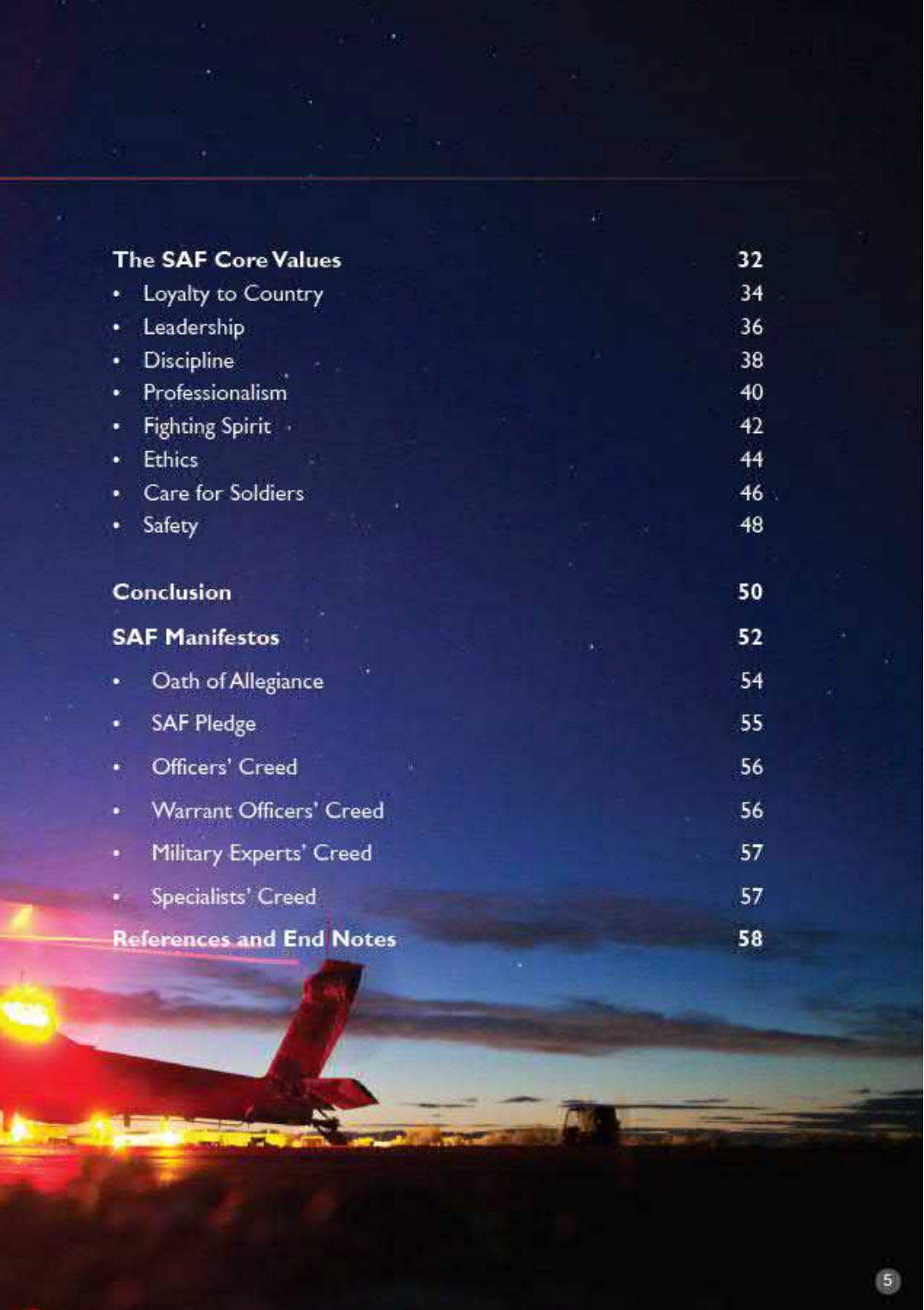


LG Melvyn Ong
Chief of Defence Force

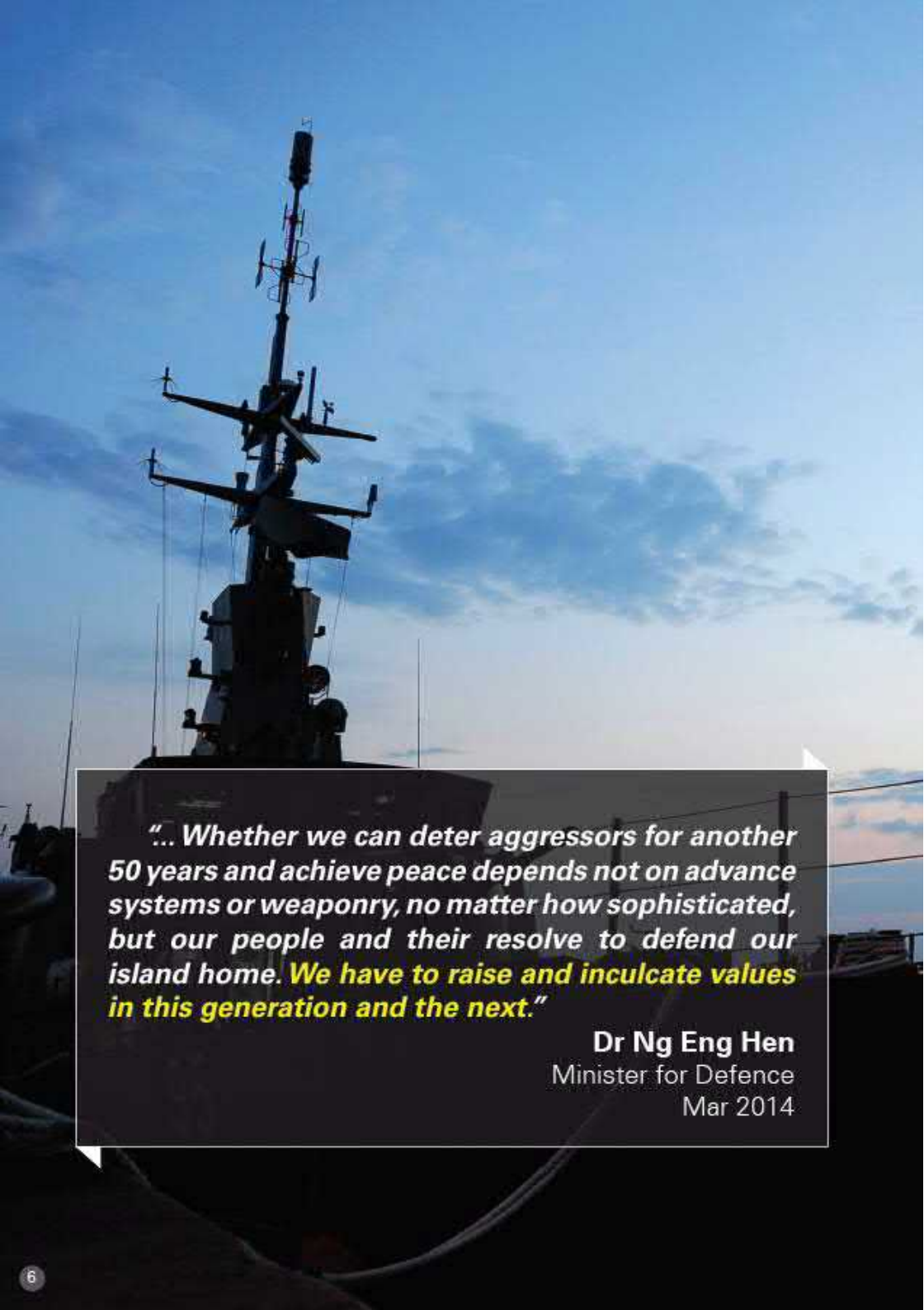
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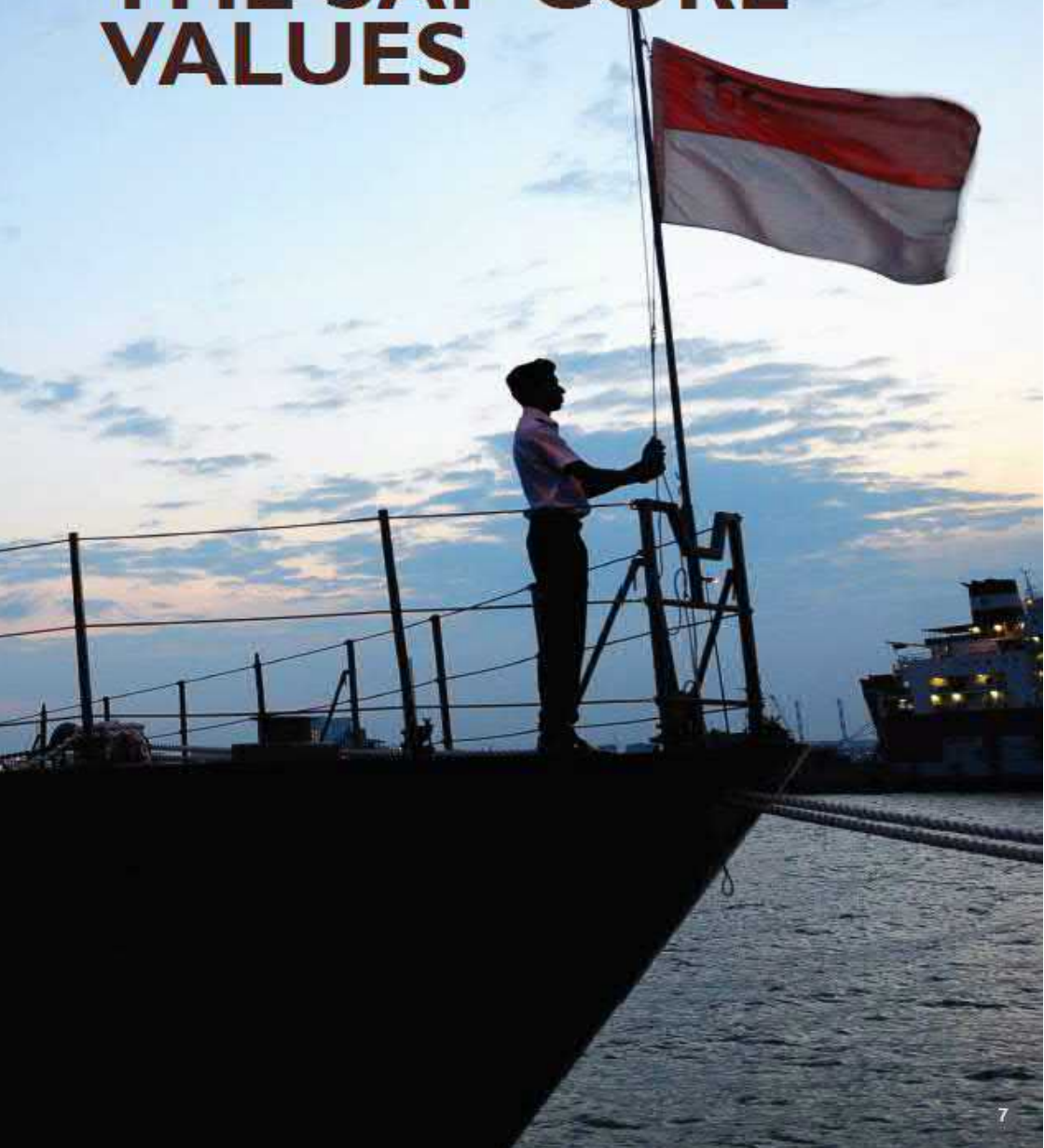
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*".. Whether we can deter aggressors for another 50 years and achieve peace depends not on advance systems or weaponry, no matter how sophisticated, but our people and their resolve to defend our island home. **We have to raise and inculcate values in this generation and the next.**"*

Dr Ng Eng Hen
Minister for Defence
Mar 2014

THE MINDEF/SAF MISSION AND THE SAF CORE VALUES



The MINDEF/SAF Mission and the SAF CORE VALUES

The mission of MINDEF and the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) is to enhance Singapore's peace and security through deterrence and diplomacy, and should these fail, to secure a swift and decisive victory over the aggressor.

The MINDEF/SAF mission defines the “what” and “why” while the SAF Core Values act as the moral compass, guiding our decisions as to “how” to carry out our mission.

This mission is an enduring and sacred duty entrusted to the SAF by our citizens. A strong and vigilant SAF enables Singaporeans to go about their lives in peace, assured that the SAF is ready and able to safeguard our security and defend our Singapore's sovereignty and integrity.



The SAF's mission is unique. Each peaceful day that our citizens enjoy represents another day that we have successfully achieved our mission. On the other hand, the irony is that with each peaceful day we enjoy, we may increasingly become lulled into complacency. Being at peace does not negate the need to prepare for any eventualities. Hence, while our citizens rest, the SAF cannot afford to falter or let our guards down. Whether in peace or war, we must be steadfast in our commitment, unwavering in our standards, ever vigilant and ready.

Key to supporting us achieve our mission is our Core Values. Our Core Values foster our common understanding of what is right and acceptable. It shapes our behaviours to conform to what is demanded of us as defenders of our nation. Without shared values to guide us, we would rely on our diverse personal values and experiences. While this in itself is not wrong, it is inadequate because the mission will stretch each one of us in ways unimaginable. We may find our personal values inadequately aligned to what our mission demands of us as soldiers, sailors and airmen. More importantly, our personal values may even stand in the way of achieving our mission.

Whether in peace or in war, as members of the SAF, we must be clear about what is right, why it is right, and how to execute it right.



The SAF's Duty to the Public

How we conduct ourselves will shape the way that others regard the SAF. The public has entrusted us with their security and our nation's sovereignty. To this end, they have also entrusted us with their sons in National Service. To live up to their trust, we, in turn must display a level of character and conduct beyond what is expected of the average Singaporean. At all times, we must remind ourselves that this trust that we uphold has taken years to build up, but takes only a moment to be completely destroyed.

How we conduct ourselves in our daily lives is just as important as our conduct during operations. Because we train in peacetime as we would operate in war, the same behaviours and standards we expect of ourselves during operations must also be manifested in all our administration, preparation and training.

In or out of uniform, we are still members of the SAF. Our family, friends and associates know us and who we represent. Hence, we need to demonstrate the shared values of the SAF and to abide by the high standards of conduct articulated by the SAF.

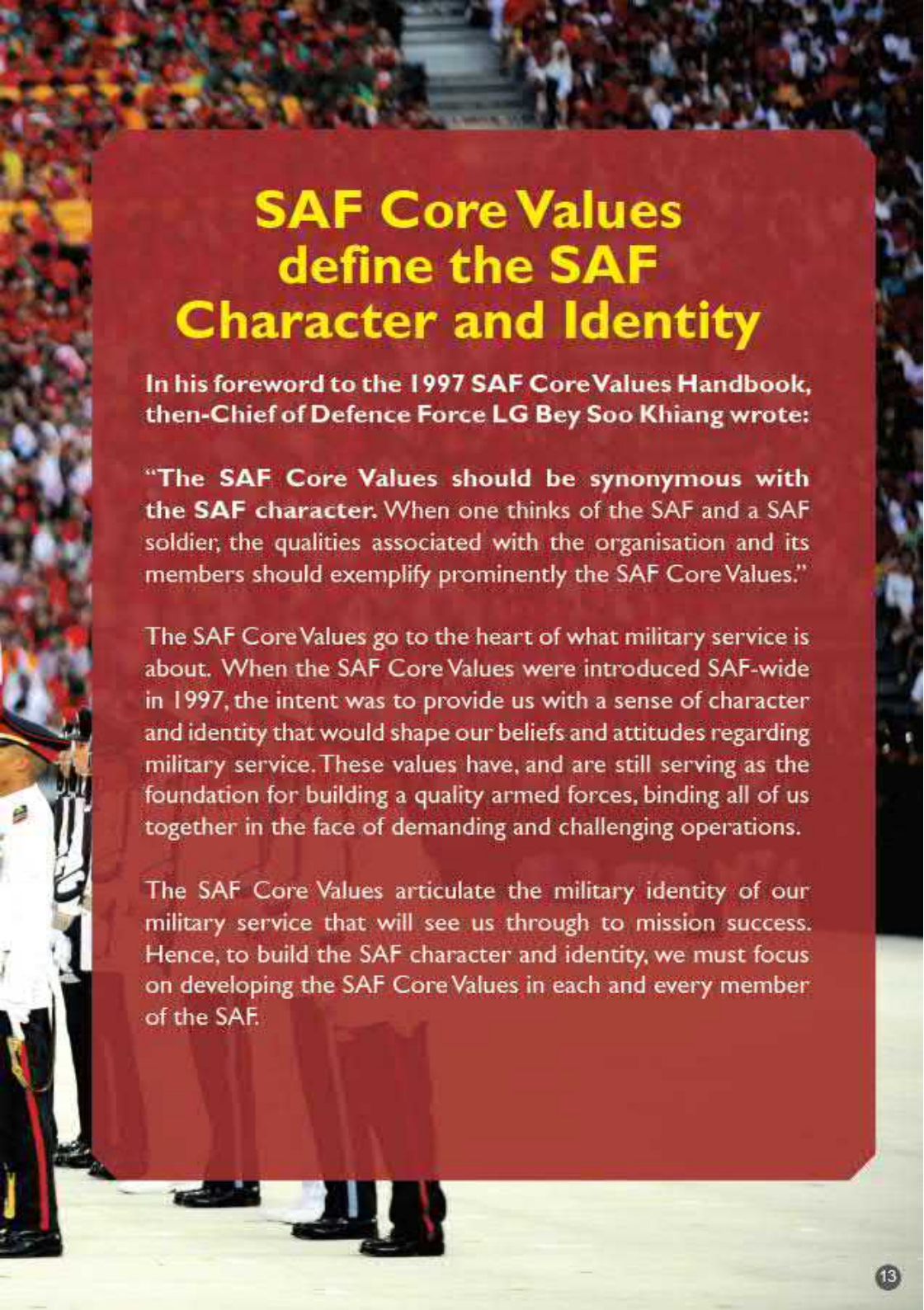


*"Members of our Armed Forces are expected not only to be efficient fighting men and women, skilled in the art of war, but also to be **an example of good citizenship and an embodiment of the values and principles** of a free, democratic and progressive nation. On the shoulders of members of the Armed Forces fall the responsibility for the defence of our country from aggressors without and subversion from within. This is a heavy responsibility and to carry out this responsibility, members of the Armed Forces must be **disciplined not only in military virtues but also in the morals of our society.**"*

Dr Goh Keng Swee

Defence Minister

Jul 1967



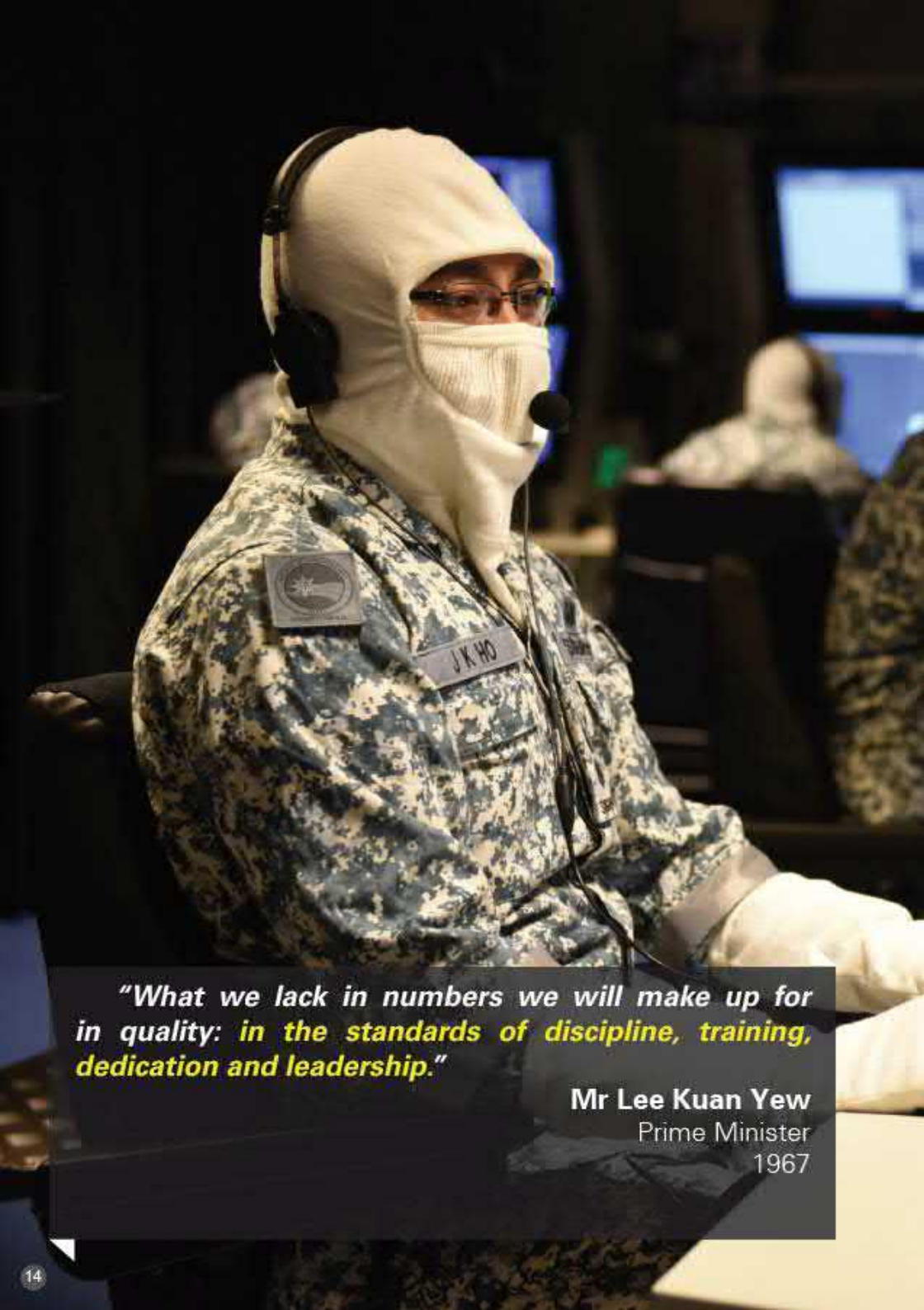
SAF Core Values define the SAF Character and Identity

In his foreword to the 1997 SAF Core Values Handbook, then-Chief of Defence Force LG Bey Soo Khiang wrote:

“The SAF Core Values should be synonymous with the SAF character. When one thinks of the SAF and a SAF soldier, the qualities associated with the organisation and its members should exemplify prominently the SAF Core Values.”

The SAF Core Values go to the heart of what military service is about. When the SAF Core Values were introduced SAF-wide in 1997, the intent was to provide us with a sense of character and identity that would shape our beliefs and attitudes regarding military service. These values have, and are still serving as the foundation for building a quality armed forces, binding all of us together in the face of demanding and challenging operations.

The SAF Core Values articulate the military identity of our military service that will see us through to mission success. Hence, to build the SAF character and identity, we must focus on developing the SAF Core Values in each and every member of the SAF.



"What we lack in numbers we will make up for in quality: in the standards of discipline, training, dedication and leadership."

Mr Lee Kuan Yew
Prime Minister
1967

The Third Generation SAF Operating Context

The SAF's deployment of its combat peacekeepers to the various operations overseas underscore the increased complexity and expanded spectrum of the SAF's operations.

The Somalia and Rwanda incidents experienced by the US and Canadian Forces in 1993 and 1994, respectively, are just two of the many examples of how peace keeping operations can easily escalate into chaos and bloodshed. The volatile and complex nature of such operations can present a range of problems and dilemmas to our people. For example, a Platoon Commander on a peace keeping operation may find his mission threatened by a mob of hostile civilians. If he orders the use of force to subdue them, he may jeopardise ongoing negotiation efforts. If he does nothing, he may endanger his troops and the success of the peace support operation at large.

The pressures of dealing with an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) operating environment require SAF personnel at all levels to act in situations where simply following rules will no longer be adequate or effective. **Our people need to be guided by the SAF Core Values to act in line with the higher command's intent.**

Hence, preparing for operations must also entail preparing our Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen with a deep understanding of how to apply the SAF Core Values in context. This begins with SAF leaders clarifying the meaning and intent of the Core Values and communicating them more explicitly to their Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen.

Threats to Values

When questioned on wrongdoing, people often try to justify their actions with rationalisations such as,

I'm just trying to help the SAF save money.

That's what the boss wanted.

I don't want to spoil the market.

I'm only a junior rank, I can't make a difference.

It's my boss' idea.

I'll be black-marked if I speak up.

To compound matters, some people do not even think that they have done wrong because they have rationalised that “Everyone is doing it, so it's okay” or “It's okay as long as I do not benefit from it”.

Such attitudes reveal the misguided beliefs and the lack of clear thinking that threatens a person's ability to do the right thing. If we do not check ourselves and correct ourselves, such misguided thinking will gradually cloud our sense of right and wrong, and erode our Core Values over time.

In war, dehumanising the enemy is another form of rationalisation used to justify wrongdoing. The My Lai massacre of innocent civilians by US soldiers in 1968 during the Vietnam War, and more recently, the torture of detainees at Abu Ghraib are two such examples. Dehumanisation is dangerous because it is easier for people to abuse a less-than-human enemy without suffering pangs of conscience, guilt or remorse. It is also possible for some to argue that loyalty to their comrades or unit justifies behaviour which may have been illegal, unethical or inhumane. This “the ends justify the means” argument may even be embraced by those who will normally abhor the mistreatment of another human being.

In an environment of rapid change and high operational tempo, individuals who act without reflecting on the values that drive their actions are more likely to compromise standards, even potentially succumbing to unethical or despicable acts of cruelty in war. The individual soldier, sailor or airman who regularly reflects on his or her values is more likely to behave according to those values.

"I was sailing on RSS Enterprise when I saw a boat full of people waving desperately. They appeared to be Vietnamese refugees who were fleeing by sea. (They were worn out and in rugged conditions. It was later reported that some boat people on other crafts had resorted to cannibalism just for survival after running out of supplies from the long duration in open seas. However, some crafts fleeing the Vietnam War were also known to carry small-arms, munitions and explosives.) I contacted HQ to ask what I should do, and they told me to go past it.

There was nothing I could do to help them. My instructions were clear – we were not to get involved. One of my sailors was on the bridge with me. He was very upset with me when he saw that I was not going to stop the ship to help the boat people. He did not understand.

Subsequently, I had to explain to him the difficulty of telling the difference between an actual refugee and a non-refugee. I asked him: What would you have done? Would you have wanted to endanger Singapore, being unable to verify if the vessel actually carried refugees or people trying to infiltrate Singapore?"

*- an Officer's account of Refugees and
"Boat People" at the end of the Vietnam War*





Threats to Ethical Reasoning

Leaders and Commanders should be aware of some of the following psychological and emotional threats to ethical reasoning which can be a consequence of the stressful nature of the new operating environment. Historically, these constructs have resulted in unethical behaviours and in some severe cases, war crimes:

Authorisation (and obedience)

the perception that a particular behaviour is sanctioned, approved or directed by a higher authority - *"I was just following orders,"* or *"This is what my leaders want/expect me to do."* Individuals should understand what is and what is not an illegal or unethical order, and not act on it.

Transfer of responsibility

the perception that some other person bears the responsibility for an unethical act, *"Someone else is responsible."* Leaders and Commanders must take responsibility for their actions and not pass the buck to others.

Routinisation

doing the same thing repeatedly till it becomes *"it is just what we do"*.

Peer pressure

when the influences of one's peers override an individual's ability to think/act individually (and a lack of moral courage to resist the peer influence).

Dehumanisation/ Disqualification

occurs when individuals lose respect for others or think that others are “beneath them” or “lesser beings”. During overseas operations, individuals may feel the tension that they are protecting or helping people they don’t like and are not like them. An example is the dehumanisation of the Jews during the Holocaust and the inhumane treatment accorded to them.

Moral disengagement

refers to individuals not thinking ethically, and especially common when one is so stressed and exhausted (mentally, physically, emotionally) that one just stops thinking and acts mindlessly.

Bracketed morality

refers to individuals assigning a different set of values/beliefs in one context (e.g. during operations) as opposed to another (e.g. back in a garrison environment). For example, some soldiers may think that it is not right to be aggressive towards women and children back at home, but it is okay to be so in the country they have been deployed to.

Misplaced loyalty

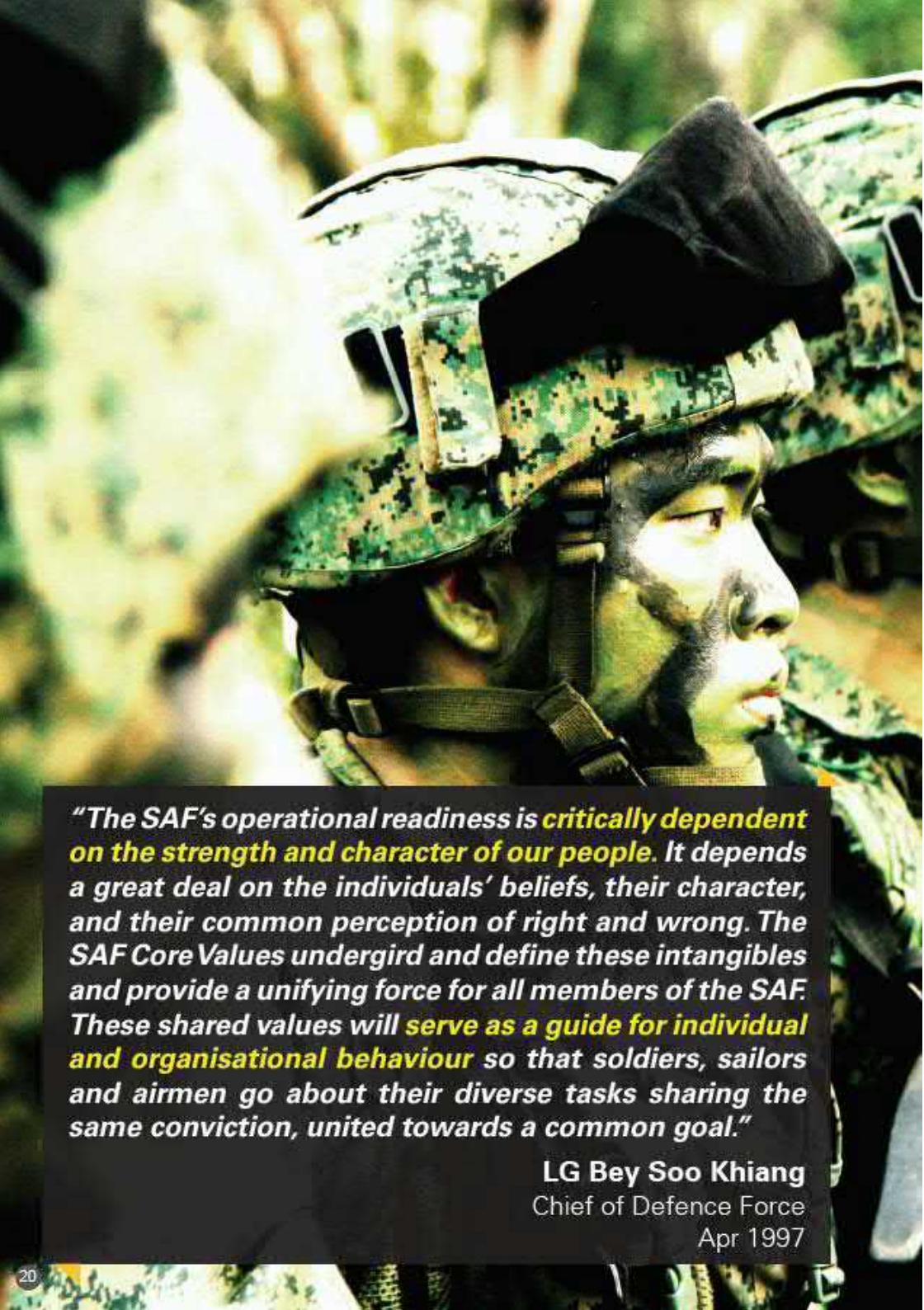
refers to individuals wrongly placing their loyalty to others (such as friends or the group/unit) rather than the organisation’s values. An individual committing an unethical act “to take care of or lie for a unit mate” at the expense of the organisation is an example.

Group think (and Conformity)

similar to peer pressure when the weight of the group’s/unit’s ideas overrides the individual’s ability to think/act alone (a lack of moral courage to resist following what the group does). “Everyone is doing it, so it must be okay and there is no need for me to do otherwise.”

Moral stacking

refers to cognitively justifying an unethical thought/act because the choice is between two “wrongs” or the “lessor of two evils” that one is fixated on. The individual thinks, “it could have been worse” and does not explore alternatives. “Massaging the truth” or using white lies to hide the truth from someone for fear of penalty; perceiving torture to be wrong but using it for interrogation; are common examples of moral stacking.



*"The SAF's operational readiness is **critically dependent on the strength and character of our people**. It depends a great deal on the individuals' beliefs, their character, and their common perception of right and wrong. The SAF Core Values undergird and define these intangibles and provide a unifying force for all members of the SAF. These shared values will **serve as a guide for individual and organisational behaviour** so that soldiers, sailors and airmen go about their diverse tasks sharing the same conviction, united towards a common goal."*

LG Bey Soo Kiang
Chief of Defence Force
Apr 1997

A group of soldiers in camouflage gear and berets standing in a line outdoors. The soldiers are wearing green and brown camouflage uniforms and black berets. They are looking towards the right of the frame. The background is a blurred green forest.

**ORIGIN OF THE
SAF
CORE VALUES**

History of the SAF Core Values

- 1965 Independence of Singapore
- 1967 Promulgation of the "SAF Code of Conduct"
- 1967 First National Service enlistment intake
- 1967 "Profession of Arms" articulated
- 1984 "SAF Declaration" formalised
- 1987 Proposed values system for Institute of Excellence
- 1990 "Officers' Creed" formalised
- 1996 Decision to promulgate the SAF Core Values to rank and file of the SAF
- 1997 Launch of the 7 SAF Core Values
- 1997 Distribution of the first SAF Core Values Handbook to all SAF personnel
- 2004 Third Generation SAF concept conceived
- 2006 "Warrant Officers' Creed" and "Specialists' Creed" launched
- 2007 Clarified the meaning and purpose of the SAF Core Values to the Third Generation SAF
- 2013 "Military Experts' Creed" launched
- 2013 Inclusion of "Safety" to SAF Core Values



Origin of the SAF Core Values

The SAF Core Values did not arise from a “corporate branding” interest. Rather, these Core Values emerged as part of a journey that began with attempts to clarify civil-military relations through the SAF Code of Conduct, when National Service was first implemented in 1967. This quest for greater clarity culminated in a readiness to articulate more explicitly the “SAF character” in the 1990s in the form of a set of Core Values.

The 1980s was a time when the SAF began to develop the concept of a Tri-Service, Tri-Level Military Institute (i.e. the present SAFTI Military Institute). The senior officer planning group realised that the SAF needed to articulate a set of Core Values to guide leadership development such that those trained in the system would bear distinctive and positive attributes. A deliberate decision was made for the SAF Core Values to gradually cascade down to all SAF ranks, beginning with their infusion into the SAF Officer’s Creed launched in 1990, and then through an organisation-wide promulgation effort in the mid-1990s. The latter effort was realised via the publication and distribution of the first SAF Core Values Handbook to all SAF personnel in 1997, and subsequently to all new recruits attending Basic Military Training.

Why these SAF Core Values?

Whether formally articulated or not, all organisations, including other armed forces, have their own set of core values. Have you wondered why the SAF adopted these eight Core Values? The SAF chose these eight Core Values because they are basic military values that will guide how our Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen accomplish the SAF's mission. Being primarily a conscript armed force, our national servicemen spend most of their lives outside the SAF. Hence, it is necessary for the SAF to articulate and actively promulgate these values to all ranks, particularly because of the unique nature of the military service.



The original documents which debated and proposed the values included arguments for each of the Core Values that were very specific to the mission and organisational context of the SAF.

In 2007, the SAF Centre for Leadership Development (CLD) worked with consultants to interview senior SAF leaders and commanders to further update and clarify the unique meanings of the Core Values, especially in the context of the Third Generation SAF. Later in 2013, Safety was also included into SAF Core Values. As a result of these efforts, defining qualities and themes of the Core Values were articulated.





LOYALTY TO COUNTRY
LEADERSHIP
DISCIPLINE
PROFESSIONALISM
FIGHTING SPIRIT
ETHICS
CARE FOR SOLDIERS
SAFETY



SAF Core Values –

Guiding our Daily Decisions

At first glance, some people may find the eight Core Values too many to remember or follow. But these Core Values are to be understood as a complete set for guiding decisions, rather than as isolated values for decision-making. Each Core Value by itself is important, but not sufficient. None should be taken to the extreme at the expense of the others.

In reality, we often face situations where we have to consider more than one Core Value to arrive at the right course of action. For instance, many people emphasise “Leadership” as the primary value to influence or inspire others to accomplish the mission. But “Leadership” alone is not sufficient. It has to be balanced with “Ethics” so that we go beyond “just getting the job done” to doing the right thing. This fine balance is achieved by considering how each Core Value may contribute to selecting the best course of action.

The SAF has always desired to be more integrated. Today, the SAF Core Values serve to unify a diverse group of soldiers, sailors and airmen with a collective sense of identity which distinguishes us from many other professions. Together with the unique SAF customs and traditions, the SAF Core Values are the foundation of our values system and provide us with a common frame of reference for actions and decisions.

The SAF Core Values are also referenced in various SAF manifestos. For example, “Loyalty to Country” is clearly articulated in the Oath of Allegiance and the SAF Pledge. The Oath of Command taken by SAF Officers appointed to Unit Command carries with it “Loyalty to Country”, “Leadership”, “Professionalism”, “Ethics” and “Care for Soldiers”.

SAF Code of Conduct

Guiding our Daily Behaviours

The SAF Code of Conduct was introduced much earlier at the enlistment of the first batch of national servicemen in July 1967. “Loyalty to Country”, “Discipline”, “Professionalism” and “Ethics” are embodied in the Code of Conduct. The Officers’ Creed, the Warrant Officers’ Creed, the Specialists’ Creed and the Military Experts’ Creed represent the respective Corps’ articulation of how SAF Officers, Warrant Officers, Specialists and Military Experts, should uphold and live by the Core Values.

Other existing manifestos which capture the spirit of the SAF Core Values include the “1984 SAF Declaration¹”, the “People Management Philosophy²” (PMP), the “Mission, Demand, Support Management Philosophy³” (MDS), and the “SAF (24/7) Leadership Framework⁴”.





Singapore Armed Forces Code of Conduct

1

We will always honour our Nation. We will do everything to uphold it and nothing to disgrace it.

2

At all times, we must bear in mind that we are the protector of our citizens.

3

We are loyal to the Armed Forces and we take pride in our unit, our uniform, our discipline, our work, our training and ourselves.

4

We must be exemplary in our conduct. We respect others, and by our conduct and bearing win the respect of others.

5

We are courageous but not reckless. We are devoted to duty but not to ourselves.

6

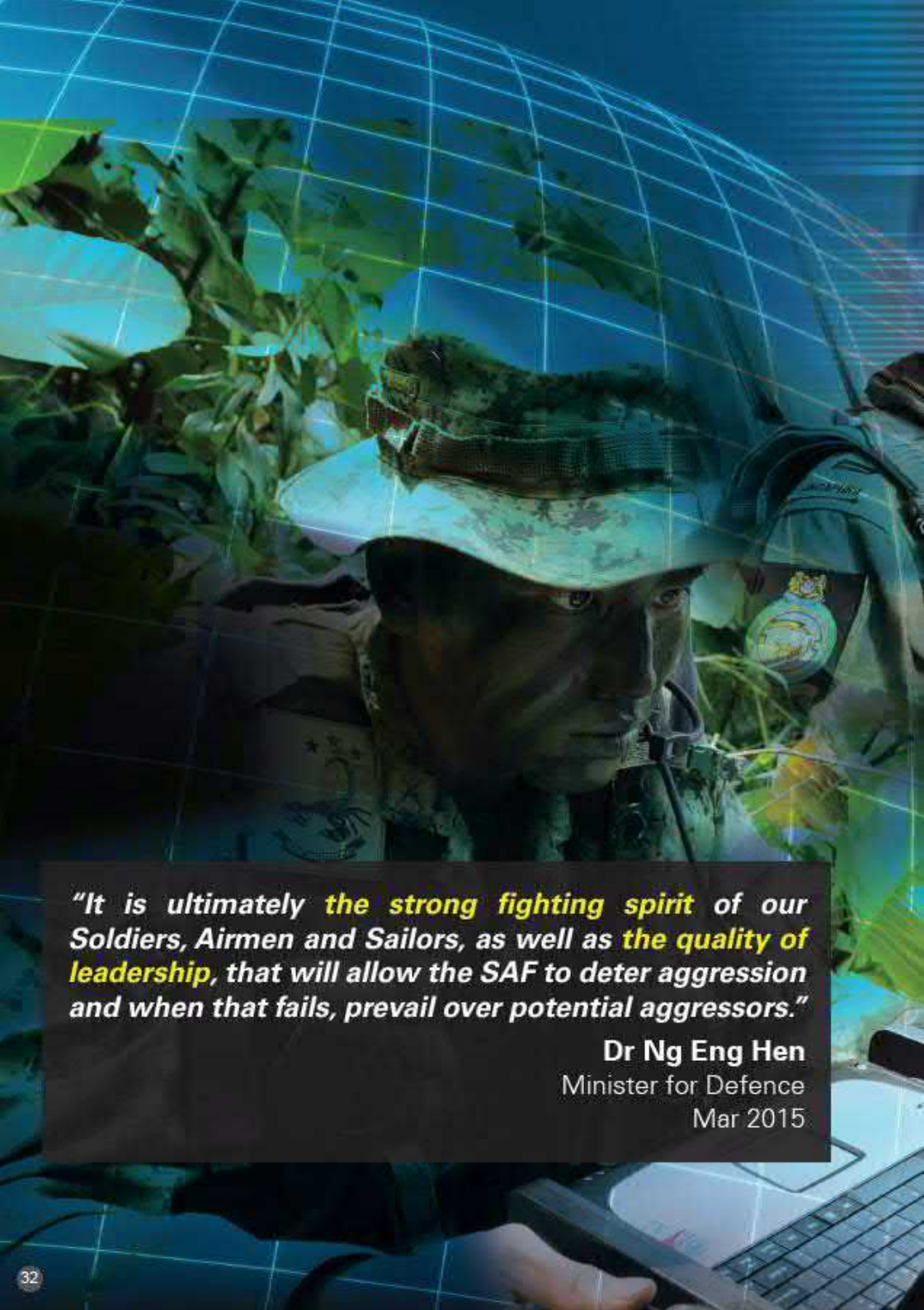
We guard our weapons as we guard secrets.



Walking the Talk

One key factor that impedes efforts to inculcate values in any organisation is when there is a widespread perception of hypocrisy in the leadership: that is, when people feel that leaders fail to “walk the talk”. For example, if we say that “Ethics” is our Core Value, but we allow people to get away with dishonest acts, then this value essentially becomes meaningless.

It is vital that SAF Leaders recognise that “putting on a show”, “being efficient”, or “making things convenient” may derail efforts to inculcate the SAF Core Values. Any perceived disconnection between what is espoused as desirable versus how we actually behave will undermine these efforts; where hypocrisy is present, cynicism is not far behind. **Ultimately, it is important to note that values are not just “taught” but also “caught” through the leaders’ actions.** It is essential that SAF leaders consistently lead by example, embedding the SAF Core Values in both word and deed.



*"It is ultimately **the strong fighting spirit** of our Soldiers, Airmen and Sailors, as well as **the quality of leadership**, that will allow the SAF to deter aggression and when that fails, prevail over potential aggressors."*

Dr Ng Eng Hen

Minister for Defence

Mar 2015



THE SAF CORE VALUES

Commitment

Defend and
Protect

Sacrifice

**LOYALTY TO
COUNTRY**
Nation before Self

Loyalty to Country

LOYALTY TO COUNTRY expresses our commitment to defend the sovereignty of our nation and to protect all that is cherished: our way of life, homeland, family and national interests. It encompasses the full scope of the mission of the SAF.

Oath of Allegiance

I, having entered the service of the Republic of Singapore under the Enlistment Act, do solemnly swear/affirm that I will always bear true faith and allegiance to the Republic of Singapore;

I will be ready, at the order of the Government, to rise up to the defence of the Republic of Singapore,

I will obey the laws of the Republic of Singapore and the orders of my commanders;

I will carry out my duties with integrity, courage and commitment at all times; and

I will preserve and protect the honour and independence of the Republic of Singapore with my life.

“Loyalty to Country” is best expressed in the **Oath of Allegiance** taken by every **Soldier, Sailor and Airman** upon entering service with the **SAF**. Irrespective of our background and personal beliefs, this oath affirms our commitment to defend our nation. Whether we call it patriotism, a sense of duty or service to the nation, what counts is that we do not take the easy way out when confronted with tough choices, especially when faced with life and death situations.

Being loyal also means putting the country's and the SAF's interest before self. In the expanded spectrum of operations, our duty requires us to participate in operations other than war, such as peacekeeping and humanitarian support missions, to safeguard our national interests. The potential endangerment of our lives is something we face and accept as part of every mission, whether it involves deterrence, diplomacy, nation-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian relief or war.



Leadership by
Example

Being True
to Self and
Others

Inspiring and
Developing
Others

LEADERSHIP
Leading by Example

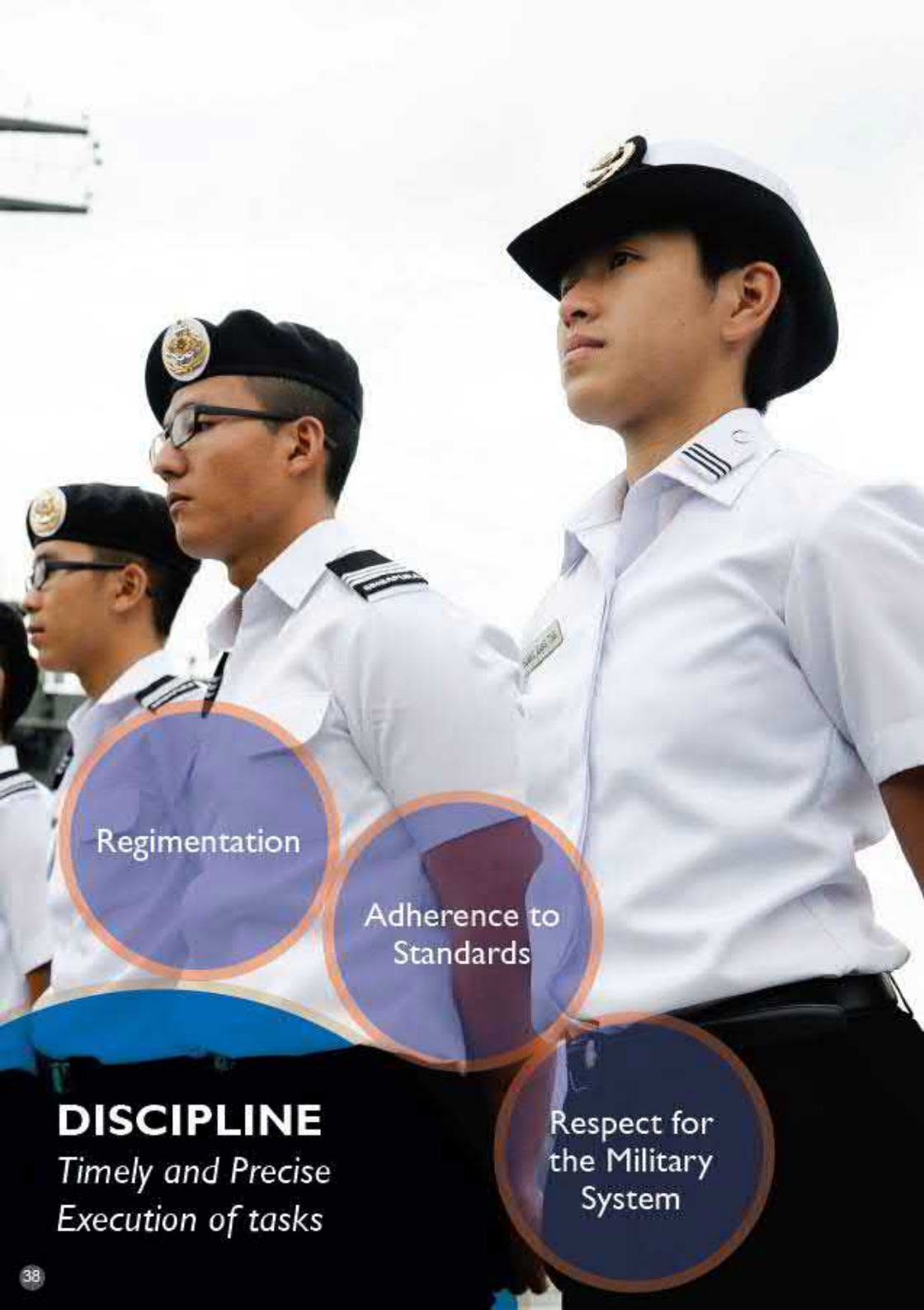
Leadership

To demonstrate **LEADERSHIP** is to display the highest character, to inspire others and to uphold what the SAF stands for. **Leaders must take charge, lead by example, role model the desired behaviour, inspire and motivate others to fulfil their full potential.** Above all else, the leader must be a good role model. By showing how things can and should be done, he or she can effectively coach and develop the junior commanders.

In the SAF, leadership is expected of us regardless of rank. Operating in a VUCA environment demands that everyone at all levels must demonstrate leadership. As the SAF moves towards network-centric warfare⁵ where command is centralised and control is decentralised, individual servicemen and servicewomen are expected to operate autonomously and cross-functionally in task-configured units. In such an environment, leaders must be flexible, adaptive and work effectively in teams to handle new paradigms under conditions of change, uncertainty and complexity.

Demonstrating the qualities of leadership also comes from being members of the military profession. Being part of the military profession means that the SAF leaders at every level must be able to develop strong soldiering qualities in the troops, to lead by example and build a common sense of purpose and pride in their troops. They need to be trustworthy and inspire confidence in others so that the men will entrust their very lives to them.

Being appointed to a position of authority and responsibility does not automatically confer leadership upon a person. **To demonstrate leadership, the leader must take the initiative to influence and motivate their followers to carry out their tasks confidently and to the best of their ability.** The leader needs to spend time to engage his or her troops; explaining their roles, keeping them informed of developments, and ensuring that their views are taken into account. The leader must also be effective in coaching and developing their junior commanders so that they can deal with the challenges of an expanded spectrum of operations.



Regimentation

Adherence to
Standards

Respect for
the Military
System

DISCIPLINE

*Timely and Precise
Execution of tasks*

Discipline

DISCIPLINE ensures the responsible obedience⁶ of orders and the readiness to respond to emerging threats. It demands a respect for and appreciation of the military system and the role the military plays in defending the nation. Discipline is a defining characteristic of the military combatant. It is built through vigorous training, drills and self-control; reinforced by mental stamina, inner strength and physical toughness.

Obedience to orders and the timely and accurate execution of assigned tasks are crucial to how the military operates. Such discipline must come from the individual's motivation to accomplish the mission and one's internal self-control over his or her actions. Obedience of orders should not stem from fear of reprisal or desire for incentives. Individual Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen must appreciate that they are part of a larger system, and what they do or fail to do can critically impact the outcome of the overall mission. This kind of discipline builds trust in the system. It is the glue that holds every member of the SAF together, giving us the courage and will to continue with the mission even under the most demanding circumstances.

The essence of discipline is the respect for the military system even when it is difficult and painful, and doing it to the best of our abilities. Such discipline is cultivated through regimentation and tough training geared towards operational readiness and combat effectiveness. At the same time, commanders instill discipline by ensuring that their orders are lawful, ethical and well-reasoned, guided by the principles of leading by example, open communication, consistency and care for soldiers.

In a network-centric organisation, discipline extends to how we exercise respect for formal chains of communications. We must adhere to the proper chain of command to voice our opinions and not resort to the use of alternative media such as the Internet to air our grievances. **For the SAF to operate successfully in a network-centric environment, our people must possess a respect for the system while being flexible and adaptive to changes.** We need to demonstrate a balance between autonomy of action and appreciation of the responsibilities that come with being a part of a larger system.

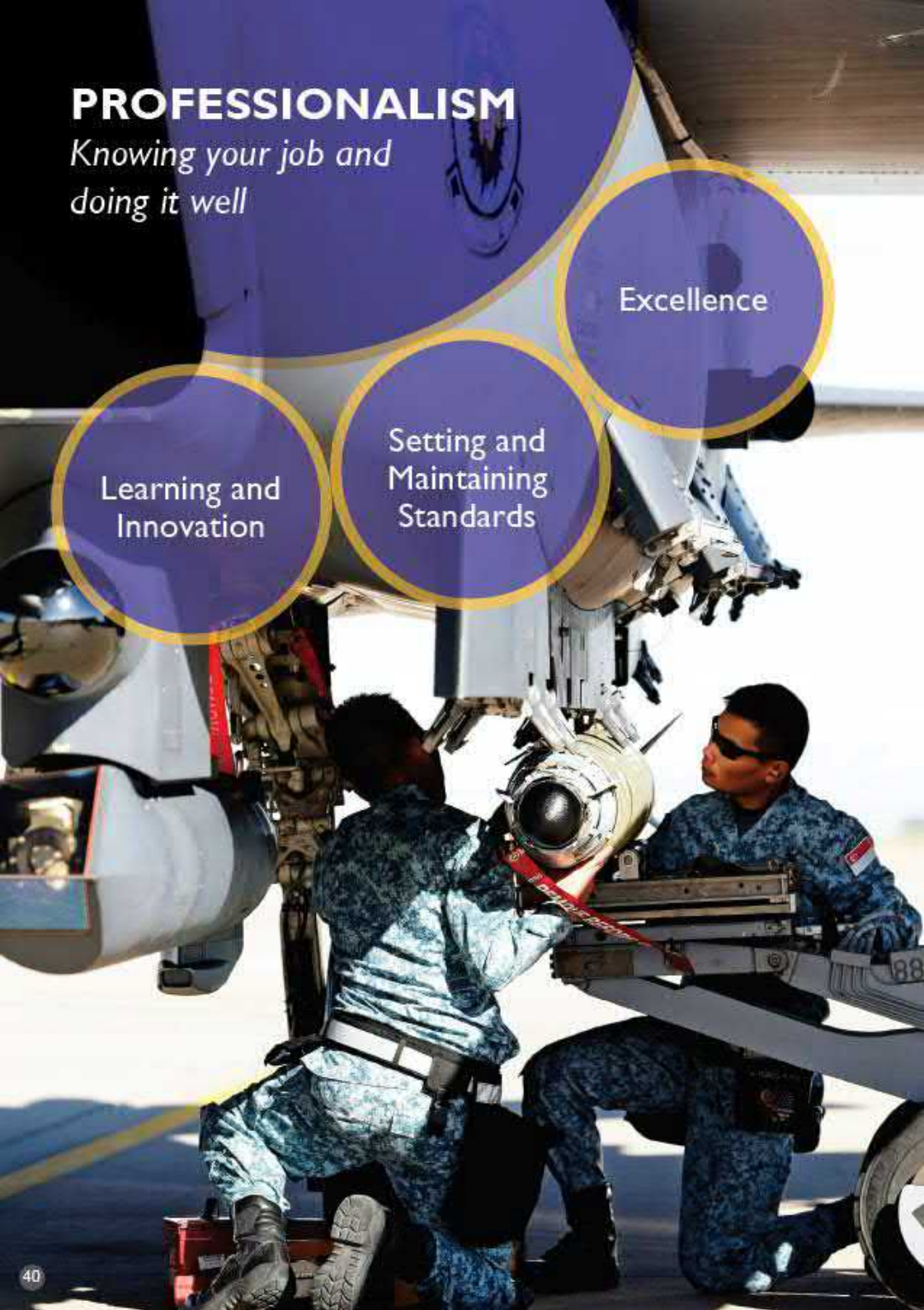
PROFESSIONALISM

*Knowing your job and
doing it well*

Excellence

Learning and
Innovation

Setting and
Maintaining
Standards



Professionalism

PROFESSIONALISM demands the highest standards of excellence and competence from each individual Soldier, Sailor and Airman in the SAF. In the military service, that calls for unlimited liability⁷, this means knowing our roles and responsibilities, giving our best in all that we do, as well as learning and training continuously to sustain operational readiness. **Professionalism requires a systems perspective, creating new ideas and solving problems through innovation, networking and the sharing of ideas.**

Over the years, the role of the SAF has extended beyond conventional warfare to participation in various peacekeeping and humanitarian support missions. As an active and responsible member of the international community, the SAF is recognised as a credible military force with far-reaching capabilities, manned by competent Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen who will perform when called upon to do so. This recognition comes not only from our efforts to continually modernise our equipment, but also from the training our troops receive. **Training enhances the professional knowledge and competencies of our troops in their various areas of expertise, thus enabling them to better meet new operational challenges.**

In the Third Generation SAF, any Soldier, Sailor or Airman who values professionalism will strive for excellence and not allow himself or herself to become complacent, nor will he or she accept mediocrity from others. They will resist the temptation to compromise on standards. Ultimately, they can be proud of their achievements because they have stretched themselves with the high standards they have set.

Being professional also means valuing learning and taking every opportunity to learn from others with a humble heart and an earnest mind. They are competent Soldiers, Sailors or Airmen who know their job well, and yet continue to hone and improve their skills to achieve excellence. They put the interest of the organisation before self and discharge their duties professionally, with vigour and dedication.



Perseverance

Courage

Resilience

FIGHTING SPIRIT

*Never say die!
Never give up!*

Fighting Spirit

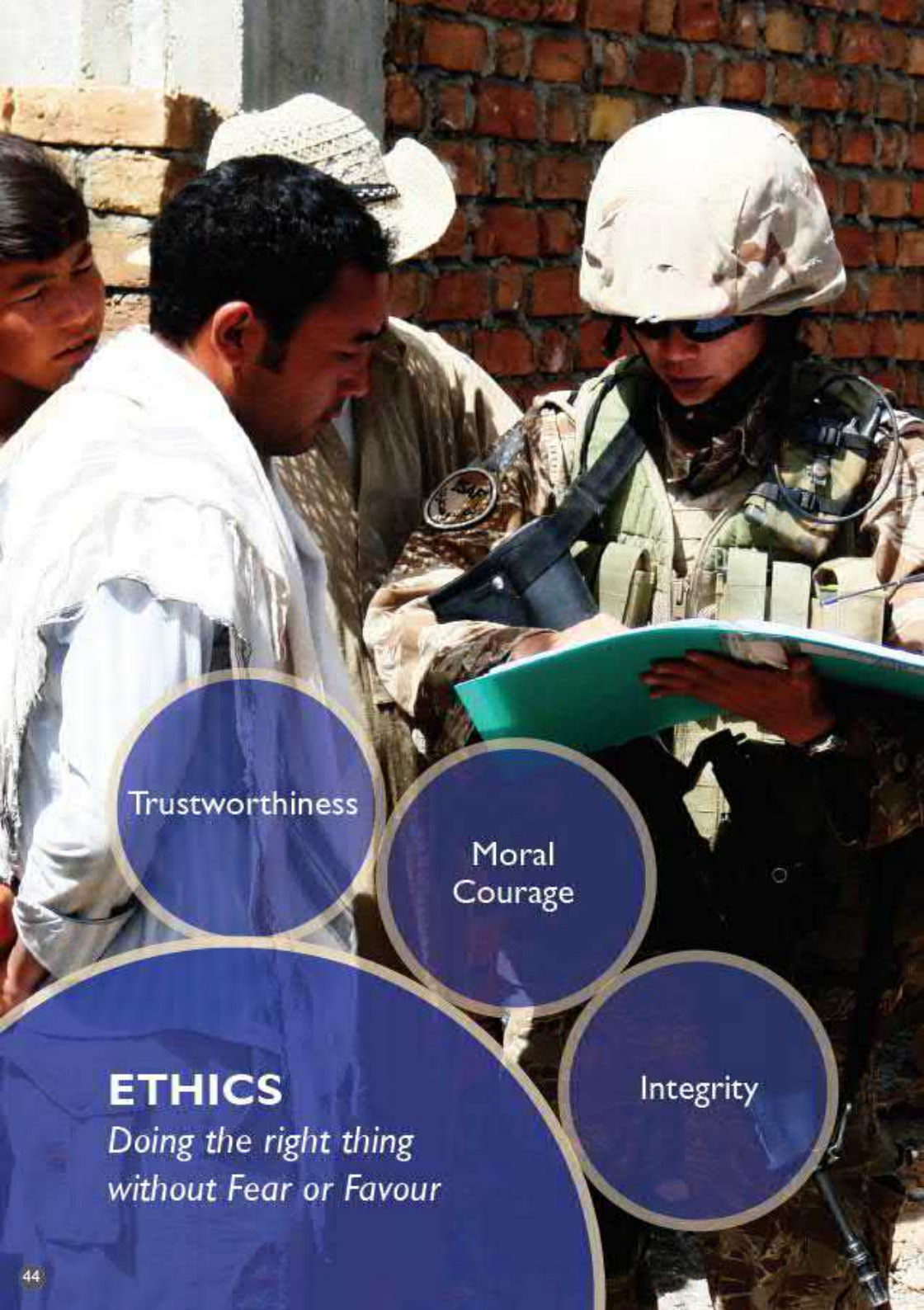
FIGHTING SPIRIT drives us to boldly execute our mission with courage, tenacity and resilience. As a formidable Armed Forces, we engage our hearts, minds and bodies with conviction, no matter what the risks are. Whether in the face of fear, uncertainty or in executing everyday mundane tasks, we press on and never give up.

Our Fighting Spirit is marked by determination, aggressiveness and perseverance. It gives us the will and boldness to engage decisively in battle and secure victory. It is also the dedication and motivation to overcome obstacles and achieve our mission against all odds.

On the homefront, the rapid spread of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus in 2003, and the Jema'ah Islamiah plot to bomb various installations in Singapore soon after 11 September 2001 are reminders of how, with strong fighting spirit, we will prevail and emerge more resilient when we encounter adversity or adversaries.

The rise of unconventional warfare^a (e.g. operations other than war, low intensity conflict, terrorist threats) also means that we must not only be flexible and adaptable to deal with the volatile and complex operating environment but also have the tenacity to remain vigilant while carrying out more routine tasks such as guarding and protecting key installations.

For the SAF to be a credible fighting force, having the hardware operated by capable personnel is foundational. **However, to have us unleash the full potential of our capabilities, we need to get the “heartware” right – we need to have each and every one of us fully engaged and committed, energised and ready to fight whenever and wherever we are called upon.**



Trustworthiness

Moral
Courage

Integrity

ETHICS

*Doing the right thing
without Fear or Favour*

Ethics

ETHICS represents the personal and professional integrity that upholds the noble calling of military service in the SAF. It unites honesty, trustworthiness and uprightness of character with the moral courage to choose to do what is right in peacetime and in war.

In the context of the SAF, ethics concerns the moral courage to do what is right even at personal cost. It is shown through one's exemplary conduct and willingness to take responsibility and be accountable for one's actions and decisions. It means being honest and accurate in one's reporting, having integrity in one's dealings with others and not misusing one's position or power against others for selfish gain. Sometimes making such a decision is difficult because our personal values may not be aligned to the organisation's Core Values. At other times, it may be peer influence, the need for expediency and efficiency or the urge to obey one's superior that could cloud our judgement. As leaders, it is important for us to identify and deal with such threats to our Core Values.

Upholding a high standard of ethical conduct should become second nature for every member of the SAF, as every individual is an embodiment of the organisation. As members of the SAF, we are to conduct ourselves by the highest ethical standards. **In all our actions and decisions, we are accountable not only to ourselves, but also to our fellow comrades in arms, the SAF at large, and the general public.** Unethical conduct can have an adverse effect on morale and discipline. It can also tarnish the image of the SAF and directly affect the confidence of the public in our capability to protect the nation. The ability of the SAF to regulate its own members depends on the trust and confidence placed on its leadership by society.

Ethics plays an even more crucial role in a VUCA operating environment where SAF personnel may be faced with dilemmas in which following the rules rigidly does not always resolve the problem. They must be able to think and decide quickly on an appropriate course of action. This ability to make values-based judgements is developed through constant and deliberate efforts to identify the values underlying one's actions through self and group reflection and sharing.



Nurturing and
Developing
Others

Concern and
Empathy

CARE FOR SOLDIERS

Looking out for each other

Tough and Safe
Training

Care for Soldiers

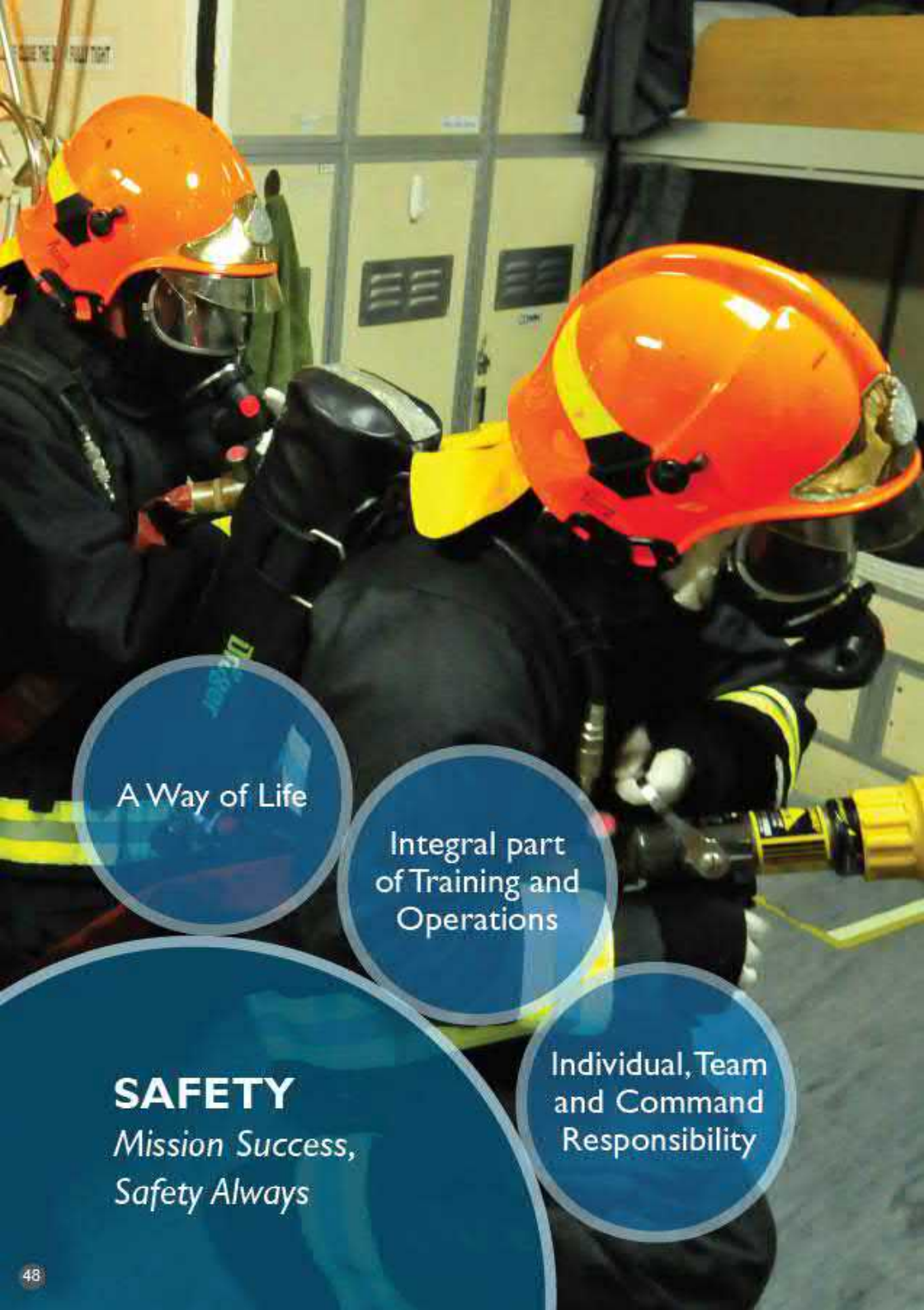
CARE FOR SOLDIERS embodies genuine care and concern for the well-being of fellow comrades, their families and those we pledge to protect. Care goes beyond ensuring safety, adequate rest, tough training and providing proper rations and equipment, to supporting physical, emotional and mental fitness and health.

Every Commander is morally responsible for the care of those under his or her command and to treat every serviceman and servicewoman with respect and dignity regardless of background and culture, in peacetime and during operations. One of the best guiding principles of Care for Soldiers is expressed in the Oath of Command taken by SAF Officers appointed to Unit Command. The Commander affirms his or her leadership commitment to be ethical, to care for his or her servicemen and servicewomen, and to discharge his or her responsibilities professionally.

Care for Soldiers is not the sole responsibility of commanders and leaders. It is also to be seen in daily encounters between buddies. Care for fellow soldiers can take the form of coaching and helping each other during training, or looking out for each other in war.

We put our Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen through tough and realistic training to prepare them to fight and survive in battle. At the same time, we must show empathy and exercise care so as to avoid unnecessary injuries or death during training. **Caring is not about making training easy, but ensuring that our people are well-trained and equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to safely operate their equipment and execute their tasks. As aptly put by Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, “the best form of welfare for the troops is first-class training.”**

Each year the SAF invests heavily to provide our personnel with better weapons and equipment aimed at lowering risk and increasing the survivability of our servicemen and servicewomen. But these efforts are useless if we do not care for the well-being of our soldiers. **Care for Soldiers is absolutely essential for the building of commitment, confidence and cohesion of the troops, and ultimately, combat effectiveness and mission success.** Leaders and Commanders who care for the training, morale and discipline of their troops can be sure they have a loyal and fighting-fit force at hand.



A Way of Life

Integral part
of Training and
Operations

SAFETY

*Mission Success,
Safety Always*

Individual, Team
and Command
Responsibility

Safety

A strong safety culture and a good safety record are hallmarks of a professional, disciplined and capable force. They are a necessary part of the equation if the SAF is to remain an effective fighting force and a strong deterrent. **Each of us has a crucial part to play, by adopting SAFETY as a Core Value and making it a way of life in our units.**

Safety is an integral part of training, operations and mission success. We cannot consider ourselves successful if we achieve one without the other. Our country demands that we maintain a high level of operational readiness through tough and realistic training. At the same time, our countrymen require us to do our utmost to keep their sons and loved ones safe, both during training and operations. To achieve these dual imperatives, we must ensure that our training is tough, realistic and, at the same time, safe.

Military training and operations are inherently risky. We must spare no effort to mitigate risks by conducting proper risk management and performing all tasks vigilantly. We must never be complacent. Complacency leads to mistakes that will endanger lives. The “it will never happen to me” mentality must have no place in the SAF. There should be zero tolerance for safety violations.

Safety is an individual, team and command responsibility. It involves every one, every time, all the time. Being mindful of safety and adhering to safety regulations should be second nature to each individual. Beyond this basic requirement, every one of us is expected to be a safety advocate, championing safety in his or her own area of work. We must be pro-active in proposing improvements to our safety practices and forthcoming in reporting safety incidents, near misses or unsafe acts.

As members of a team, we must always look out for one another and take care of each other through the buddy system. As leaders, we play a pivotal role in setting the right safety standards, expectations and culture for our men and women. This is achieved not just through words and personal example, but also through the systems and processes that we put in place.

CONCLUSION

Even though the SAF Core Values were formally promulgated in the SAF over ten years ago, these values remain just as relevant today. They remind us why we exist, why we wear the uniform, why we train so hard to maintain our operational readiness, why we guard our key installations around the clock, and why we choose to leave the comfort of our homes to go to faraway places to uphold peace. **The SAF Core Values define us. We, in turn, bring the SAF Core Values to life.**

The Third Generation SAF will face many challenges. We operate in an increasingly VUCA environment. We face threats from both conventional and, increasingly, unconventional sources. We need to be flexible, adaptive, creative and innovative to keep in pace with change. Yet in the final analysis, our SAF Core Values are still the most critical aspect of our effectiveness to carry out our mission.

Our people are now better educated, more analytical and more participative in the dialogue that occurs before decisions are made. This is good, because it means we have at hand the appropriate human capital necessary to support the SAF's mission. On the other hand, our people are also now more quick to see any misalignment between what we say and what we do; between what the SAF espouses versus what is acted out daily on the ground. If we do not bring the values to life in ourselves, we become obstacles in bringing the values to life in others.



Our people are also different in fundamental ways. Increasingly, those whom we lead did not grow up in the same environment that earlier generations grew up in. We cannot rely on fortuitous alignments of personal values toward the higher good. We need to help individuals align their personal values to the SAF Core Values, to help them see connections between why they do the daily things they do in relation to the SAF's mission. We need to balance the telling with the teaching; the talking with the doing; the enforcement with the engagement. Because we say every individual matters, because alignment is an individualised process, we need to go about helping individuals align to the SAF Core Values, taking into account their personal starting points.

As a national institution, the SAF continues to play an important role in inculcating values that are not only critical to the military, but also foundational to nation building as well. The Core Values are our contribution to the nation. Operationally, the SAF Core Values have served us well and have been instrumental in the SAF's achievements in missions both locally and overseas. Societally, every person imprinted with the SAF Core Values will be better citizens for the nation. Whether in or out of uniform, when we uphold the SAF Core Values, we can be certain of our moral direction in the midst of change. When we adapt in response to change, we will not lose our core identity. **When we walk and live our shared values, we define for ourselves how our life, our mission, and our purpose should be lived.**





SAF MANIFESTOS



OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

I, having entered the service of the Republic of Singapore under the Enlistment Act, do solemnly swear/affirm that I will always bear true faith and allegiance to the Republic of Singapore;

I will be ready, at the order of the Government, to rise up to the defence of the Republic of Singapore,

I will obey the laws of the Republic of Singapore and the orders of my commanders;

I will carry out my duties with integrity, courage and commitment at all times; and

I will preserve and protect the honour and independence of the Republic of Singapore with my life.



SAF PLEDGE

We, members of the Singapore Armed Forces,
do solemnly and sincerely pledge that:

We will always bear true faith and allegiance to
the President and the Republic of Singapore.

We will always support and defend the constitution.

We will preserve and protect the honour and
independence of our country with our lives.





Officers' Creed

I am an officer of the Singapore Armed Forces.
My duty is to lead, to excel and to overcome.
I lead my men by example.
I answer for their training morale and discipline.
I must excel in everything I do.
I serve with pride, honour and integrity.
I will overcome adversity with courage, fortitude and determination.
I dedicate my life to Singapore.



Warrant Officers' Creed

I am a Warrant Officer of the Singapore Armed Forces.
I embody the SAF Core Values.
I will discharge my roles and responsibilities with passion, dedication and commitment.
I will be sterling in my performance, working in partnership with the Officer Corps in achieving mission success.
I am a dynamic leader ready for challenges.
I will defend Singapore with my life.



Military Experts' Creed

I am a Military Expert of the Singapore Armed Forces.

I lead by example and excel in all I do.

I take pride in my deep expertise, knowledge, and professionalism.

I serve with honour, courage, and integrity.

I dedicate my life to Singapore.



Specialists' Creed

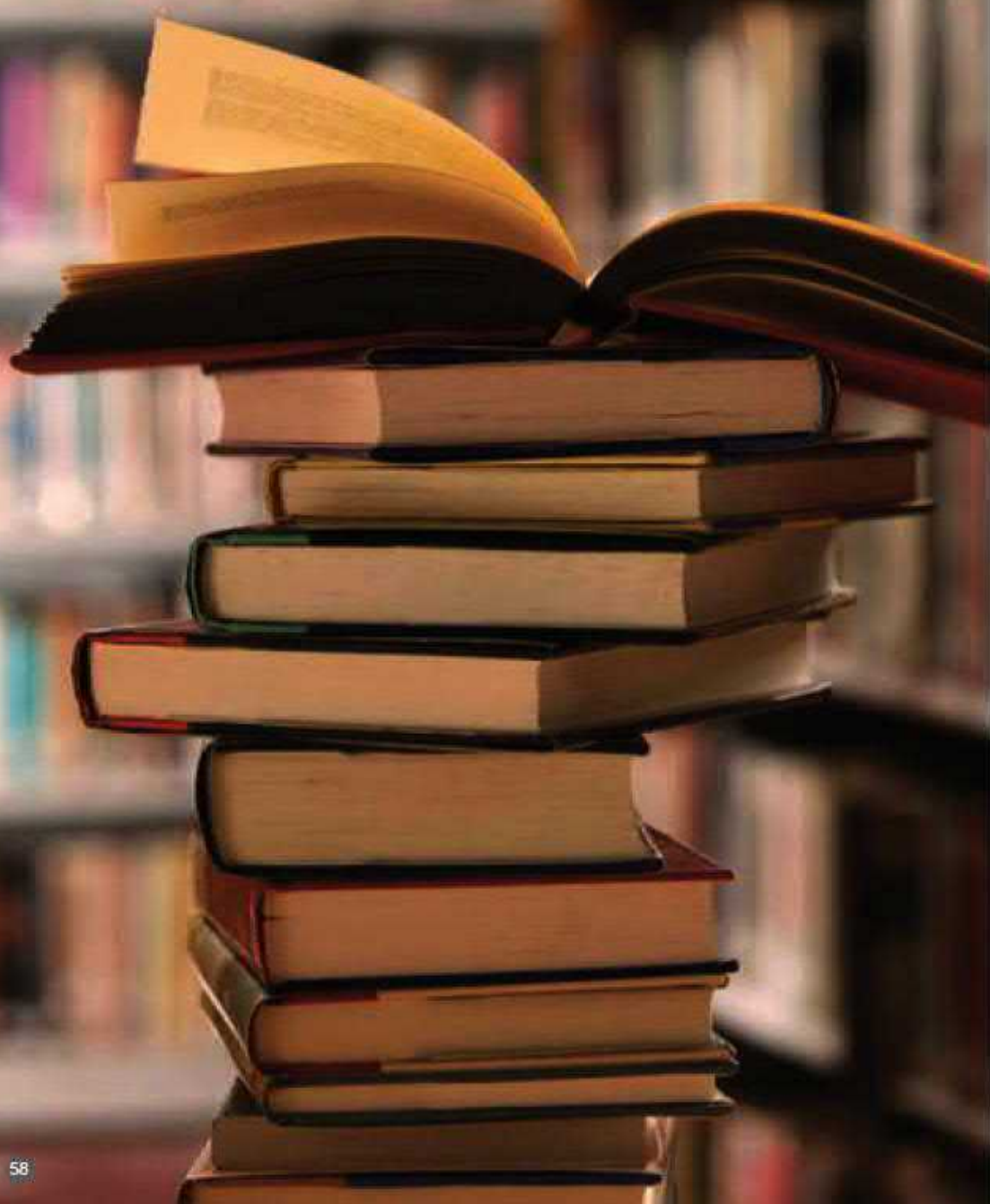
I am a Specialist of the Singapore Armed Forces.

With pride I lead, I excel in my field,
ensure the discipline of my men and their mission readiness.

I will overcome adversity with my fighting spirit.

I will defend Singapore with my life!

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End Notes

1. SAF Declaration - The 1984 SAF Declaration was approved by the Minister for Defence on 13 June 1984 and launched at an Officers' Promotion Ceremony on 29 June 1984. The intention of this SAF Declaration was to devise a corporate philosophy for the SAF that was rooted in its ideological orientation and tenets. The purpose was to help guide the various sub-organisations and the people towards common goals and values that characterise their worth and success.

2. People Management Philosophy (PMP) - The 1983 PMP specifically endorsed leadership by example and people-oriented management as the SAF's leadership and management philosophies respectively.

3. Mission, Demand and Support Philosophy (MDS) - MDS is a general management philosophy which embodies a set of beliefs to guide SAF Commanders in the way they manage and lead their subordinates. SAF Commanders are to provide their soldiers with a sense of mission or purpose in what they do, and the necessary support while demanding the standards of performance so as to achieve the mission.

4. The SAF Leadership Framework - The SAF Leadership Framework was developed and promulgated in 2004 as a result of changes in the people and mission context in the SAF. For systematic improvements, the SAF realised that it needed a comprehensive framework to guide leadership development across its Schools and Units. This framework articulates that the bedrock of SAF Leadership lies in a strong foundation of values and ethics. SAF leaders possess a dynamic capacity for self-awareness, growth, and flexibility to employ a range of leadership competencies and styles to influence and inspire people to accomplish the mission, while building long-term commitment, and also improving the organisation. The moral basis for their leadership is derived from a strong sense of values. As military leaders, SAF leaders influence their people with a good understanding of the SAF's mission and purpose, the operating environment and the desired outcomes.

5. Network Centric Warfare - An approach which seeks to translate an information advantage enabled in part by information technology into a competitive warfare advantage through the robust networking of well-informed geographically dispersed forces. (SAF Dictionary, Dec 13)

6. Responsible Obedience - This refers to obeying orders that are lawful as opposed to blindly following orders even if they are not lawful.

7. Unlimited Liability - Unlimited liability is a term used by General Sir John Hackett to describe the willingness of members of the military profession to risk their lives in performing their professional duties. Inherent in this clause is the individual's willingness to subordinate personal interests for the good of one's unit, one's service, and one's nation.

8. Unconventional warfare - A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy-held, enemy-controlled or politically sensitive territory. This includes the interrelated fields of evasion and escape, guerrilla warfare, sabotage, subversion and other operations of low visibility, covert or clandestine nature. These may be prosecuted singly or collectively by predominantly indigenous personnel usually supported and directed in varying degrees by external sources in war and peace. (SAF Dictionary, Dec 13)



CLD

SAF CENTRE FOR
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT