

## CHAPTER 12

### CONNEXIONAL CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE

#### **Bishop Gavin M Taylor**

While new applicants are being considered by the Connexional Committee we are seeing a steady decline in the number of serving chaplains. This is partly due to a change in the appointment procedures affecting the 3 security services. Where in the past a certain allocation of posts were considered on denominational lines, in the current situation little or no consideration is given to a persons denominational back ground. Currently appointments are advertised in the media and applicants are appointed on merit regardless of what denomination they come from. All that is required is that the person should meet the required conditions, and have a letter of good standing from their church.

While this meets the requirements set out in the labour relations act, it raises questions about how a church like the MCSA will be able to ensure that it can maintain a chaplaincy presence in line with it's demographic representation.

Another concern is that there are fewer people under the of 35, and those representing minority communities, entering ministry, making it difficult to ensure a balanced representation in these services. The Connexional committee will be raising this matter in the Security Services Christian Advisory Board (SSCAB).

At present our MCSA chaplains are stationed as follows:

- 11 in the SA Police Service
- 09 in SA Defence Forces
- 01 in the Botswana Defence Force
- 02 in the SA Department of Corectional Services (DCS)
- 01 in the SA Metro Serrivces (Traffic)

In addition there a 6 school chaplains, some of these are designated as circuit appointments.

In our reviewing of the chaplaincy the Connexional committee has seen the need to align the role of the Principal Chaplain with that of a Superintendent minister. The functions are designated as follows:

- Where possible taking pastoral care of Chaplains and their families
- Encouraging chaplains to sustain good relationships with church structures
- Facilitating formal relationships between chaplains and Circuits/ Districts
- Encourage chaplains to attend the annual retreat and consultation
- Ensuring that chaplains submit annual reports of their work to their respective Synods
- To report and evaluate all transfers of chaplains within each service.
- Attend all meetings of the Connexional Committee and the SSCAB

In conclusion I would like once again to thank all our chaplains for their commitment and service. They in many respects serve as front line missionaries in places where the Word of life needs to be seen and heard.