



NEWS RELEASE

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Death of Regular Serviceman

21 May 2009

A Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) regular serviceman, First Warrant Officer (1WO) Tan Poh Eng, was participating in an SAF freefall training session in Bloemfontein, South Africa, on 20 May 2009. 1WO Tan was part of a six-man team that jumped off a Republic of Singapore Air Force C-130 aircraft at a height of 12500 feet to conduct a formation jump. The formation broke off at 3500 feet to deploy their parachutes. 1WO Tan spiralled downwards to the ground and was found unconscious at about 4.45pm (Singapore time).

1WO Tan was given immediate medical attention by an SAF doctor and a medic on-site. He was heli-evacuated at 5.15pm and arrived at about 5.35pm at the Pelonomi Hospital in Bloemfontein. 1WO Tan was pronounced dead at 5.57pm in the hospital. The 53-year-old First Warrant Officer was a parachute jump instructor from the Commando Training Institute.

1WO Tan was part of a 51-member SAF Commando team participating in SAF freefall training which is being conducted from 27 April to 24 May in Bloemfontein. The SAF conducts freefall training in South Africa once every two years.

The Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) and the SAF extend their deepest condolences to the family of the late 1WO Tan. MINDEF will assist the family in their time of grief and is investigating the incident. All SAF freefall training has been temporarily suspended.