

SAS ADAM KOK III Maiden Operation Corona

On Tuesday, 21 November 2025, the SAS Adam Kok III (AMKK) departed Simon's Town on its maiden Operation CORONA (Maritime) deployment under the operational command of the Joint Tactical Headquarters Western Cape. Following successful Mission Readiness Training on 17 October, the vessel was declared combat-ready and commenced operations fully equipped to conduct maritime border safeguarding patrols along South Africa's western coastline.

Operation CORONA (Maritime) focused on deterrence and law enforcement, using intelligence-driven coordination between the South African National Defence Force, the South African Police Service, and the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and the Environment. The deployment aimed to counter illegal maritime activities, particularly poaching and other contraventions within protected areas.

While the ship patrolled the western seaboard, the Joint Tactical Headquarters Western Cape simultaneously deployed the South African Army Infantry School Reconnaissance Platoon Learning Program in the Overberg area along the southern coastline. This initiative acted as a force multiplier, allowing trainees to participate in real-time operations during their practical phase, supported by a reaction force that included the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and the Environment, Cape Nature, and law enforcement agencies.

Actionable intelligence provided by the reconnaissance learning program led to the seizure of abandoned abalone by the reaction force, including 394 whole abalone valued at R85,685.70 and 283 shucked abalone valued at R56,110.74. These seizures highlighted the effectiveness of integrated intelligence and rapid response coordination. At sea, the SAS Adam Kok III worked closely with SA Police Service members as part of Operation PHAKISA, which also functioned as a reaction force. During the deployment, 14 vessels were interrogated.

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Divers were arrested for operating within a Marine Protected Area, with diving equipment confiscated. Three individuals were arrested for various maritime offences, including possession of drugs (tik), and handed over to police on land. The ship's boarding team conducted visits, boarding, searching, and seizure operations, including escorting the vessel LUNA to the nearest port for further processing at Port Nolloth.

Over the course of the deployment, the vessel sailed approximately 4,500 nautical miles and spent 504 hours at sea. The mission concluded with a parade on board for the ship's company. Captain (SA Navy) S.M. Louw, Officer Commanding Joint Tactical Headquarters Western Cape, praised the crew and emphasized that the deployment served as a visible deterrent, reinforced the importance of intelligence-led operations, and sent a clear message of South Africa's commitment to protecting its marine resources and combating illegal maritime activities.

