



Only two SA victims identified

By Angelique Serrao

Tripoli - Thirteen South African families have begun the harrowing task of identifying the bodies of their loved ones who died on the Afriqiyah Airways plane that crashed in Tripoli earlier this week.

By Saturday afternoon only two South Africans had been identified: Catherine Tillett and Norbit Teferner.

A source who had been to the morgues where the bodies are kept said the victims had sustained mainly facial injuries, which made identification difficult.

Jean Wolmarens, the project manager of Global Aviation in Tripoli, had gone to the hospitals to try to identify some South African victims.

He managed to identify Catherine Tillett and Norbit Teferner, both of whom had worked at Global Aviation.

"We spent five or six hours going through the morgues, looking at every single body. Other than Catherine and Norbit, we couldn't make any identification. Norbit's wife, Paula, has not yet been identified."

On her journey to Tripoli, Jenni Tillett had said that her sister's job was to train for emergency procedures.

"She would have known if there was a problem with the landing. That was what she did for a living. She probably would have got into the brace position," Tillett had speculated.

Some of the families had brought dental and medical records to help with identification. They had also brought items that may have DNA on them, such as razors.

Relatives were also asked to supply their DNA. Information such as what clothes they were wearing and jewellery would also help the search.

The South African embassy in Libya has been doing everything in its power to help the 13 families. The last family members arrived in Tripoli yesterday.

Ambassador Mohammed Dangor met them at the airport and took them to their hotel.

"We are assisting South African citizens and facilitating that they engage with Kenyon, a professional company that has experience, having dealt with the Indonesian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina," Dangor said.

Kenyon is a professional crisis management company hired by Afriqiyah Airways.

"We've had total co-operation with the Libyan authorities and want to thank them for their attitude and hospitality," Dangor said.

"It is often disasters that bring people together and show how caring human beings can be."

He said 13 South Africans had been confirmed dead, but there were several people with dual nationalities whose identities still had to be resolved, among whom may be more South Africans.

Dangor met some of the families on Friday night and said they were mainly concerned that identifying their loved ones may take some time.

French and South African forensic investigators have been invited by the Libyan authorities to help with the identification. The French have already arrived, but the South African team is yet to get there.

- This article was originally published on page 5 of [The Cape Argus](#) on May 16, 2010

CAPE ARGUS

Published on the Web by IOL on 2010-05-16 08:15:00

© 1999 - 2010 Independent Online. All rights strictly reserved.

Independent Online is a wholly owned subsidiary of Independent News & Media.
Reliance on the information this site contains is at your own risk.