

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT; COMMUNITY SAFETY, SECURITY AND LIAISON ON THE OVERSIGHT VISITS CONDUCTED IN THE PERIOD 23 – 26 JUNE 2015 AT THE NKOMAZI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, EHLANZENI DISTRICT**

**OVERSIGHT VISIT TO THE SCHOEMANSDAL AND KOMATIPOORT POLICE STATIONS**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature (the Legislature) has a responsibility in terms of Section 118 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, (the Constitution) to facilitate public involvement in its legislative and other processes. Sections 114 and 133 of the Constitution, read with Rules 218 and 131 of the Rules and Orders of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature as amended (the Rules) directs the Legislature to hold the Executive accountable for the exercising of powers and performance of their functions. Therefore, the **Portfolio Committee on Public Works, Roads and Transport; Community Safety, Security and Liaison** (the Committee) regularly conducts public hearings and oversight visits to projects of the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison (the department) and Police Stations in the Province; in the various municipalities of the Province.

One of the instruments that enable the Portfolio Committee to execute their mandate is to undertake oversight-visits to Police Stations in the Province.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES**

The following objectives determined the oversight visits to the Schoemansdal and Komatipoort Police Stations:

- To assess the functionality of the Police Stations with regards to the execution of its Constitutional Mandates;
- To interact and deliberate on the successes and challenges that Police Stations are faced with whilst undertaking their daily operations and with specific reference to:

- The implementation of the National Crime Prevention Strategy
  - Overall performance of the Police
  - Implementation of the Employment Equity Act, No 55 of 1998
  - All matters related to the Community Policing Forums (CPFs)
  - Comparative crime statistics
  - Progress on the implementation of the Sector Policing
  - Working relationship between the SAPS management and the labour unions represented at the Police Stations
  - *In loco* inspections with specific emphasis on the holding cells and related matters
- To report all the findings and recommendations to the House for the purpose of informed intervention where needed.

### **3. METHOD OF WORK**

In anticipation of the Taking the Legislature to the People at the Nkomazi Local Municipality the Committee decided to visit some of the Police Stations in its area. The Nkomazi Local Municipality has a total of three border posts within its precinct, linking the local municipality and South Africa to Mozambique and Swaziland. The three border posts are Mananga Border Post, Jeppes Reef Border Post and the Komatipoort Boder Post.

Although there is police presence at these border posts, there are no Police Stations located on the border. Police personnel are deployed by the various Police Stations closer to the border and cases of crime or illegal activities are reported in those Police Stations.

The Schoemansdal and Komatipoort Police Stations were identified to be visited in order to get a holistic view of the acts of crime and illegal activities experienced in these policing precincts; with specific focus on the impact the influx of vehicles and foreign nationals at the border posts have on these Police Stations' statistics.

#### 4. OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

The majority of the relevant stakeholders were present during the visit, namely delegates from the Tonga Cluster, Schoemansdal and Komatipoort Police Stations, local Community Policing Forums (CPFs), South African Police Union (SAPU) and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU). However, it was noted that there were no representatives from the Head Office of the South African Police Service (SAPS) in Mpumalanga.

#### 5. TONGA CLUSTER

The Cluster has a total population of around 491 793 residents and is spread over an area of approximately 2430 km<sup>2</sup>. The Cluster consists of six stations, namely Tonga, Komatipoort, Schoemansdal, Malelane, Mbuzini and Kaapmuiden.

The policing precincts are located between the two neighbouring countries of Mozambique and Swaziland.

The following is a summary of the matters reported by the Acting Tonga Cluster Commander during the oversight visit and with specific regard to the Tonga Cluster:

- 5.1. The Police Stations in the Cluster serve formal, informal, business and farming communities.
- 5.2. The predominant languages are SiSwati, Xitsonga, English and Afrikaans.
- 5.3. The prevalent priority crimes are robbery aggravated (house robbery and business robbery), rape, murder, burglary residential, burglary business and assault GBH.
- 5.4. Three of the Police Stations are headed by female Station Commanders; and the Cluster Commander is also a female.
- 5.5. The Cluster has four Specialized Units, namely the Vehicle Identification Unit; Stock Theft Unit, Local Criminal Record Centre Unit and the FCS Unit.
- 5.6. In terms of the Cluster Performance in the 2014/15 financial year the Cluster performed as follows:
  - 5.6.1. The **Cluster CSC and Complaints (Reaction Time)** was rated a four (04) Star grading; which is number five (05) out of 15 P Comm Mpumalanga stations and number 50 out of 167 stations nationally.

5.6.2. The **Cluster Crime Detection (Detectives)** was rated a three (03) star grading and number seven (07) out of 15 P Comm Mpumalanga stations and number 51 out of 167 stations nationally.

5.6.3. The **Cluster Crime Prevention** was rated a four (04) star grading and number one (01) out of 15 P Comm Mpumalanga stations and number 16 out of 167 stations nationally.

5.6.4. The **Cluster Component** was rated a four (04) star grading and number one (01) out of 15 P Comm Mpumalanga stations and number 15 out of 167 stations nationally.

5.7. Some of the challenges experienced by the Police Stations in the Cluster are as follows:

5.7.1. The borderlines of South Africa, Mozambique and Swaziland are not properly controlled which makes it difficult to control the influx of illegal foreigners and to trace suspects.

5.7.2. Continuous service delivery protests alternating in the different villages which divert the police from executing its main mandate, namely to prevent crime, compared to directing its resources to protest control.

5.7.3. Tribal feuds sporadically derail operational plans by the police having to control crowd marches.

5.7.4. The shortage of vehicles and suitable terrain vehicles to fully implement sector policing; there is a need for at least four vehicles per sector.

## 6. SCHOEMANSDAL POLICE STATION

The Station Commander, Lieutenant Colonel QS Mbuyane, led the team from the Schoemansdal Police Station during the oversight visit.

The following is a summary of the demographics of the Schoemansdal policing precinct:

- The estimate population size is 203 000 which consists of formal residential areas, businesses and farming communities.
- The size of the station precinct is 42 km<sup>2</sup> with nine (09) villages and two (02) Tribal Authorities, namely Matsamo and Mhlaba.
- The station is situated near Swaziland and 12 km from the Jeppes Reef Border gate.

## **6.1. Crime Profile**

- 6.1.1. The main crime generators in the policing precinct are the abuse of liquor, financial gain (to receive payment when a case is withdrawn against a perpetrator) and released prisoners who fall into old habits by committing crimes.
- 6.1.2. The mushrooming of taverns in the station policing precinct poses a severe challenge. Some of the challenges are that taverns do not close on the prescribed time; and the fact that the Mpumalanga Liquor Authority approves liquor licenses whilst the station and the community were against it. The station has a dedicated section that does frequent patrols to ensure that taverns adhere to the relevant prescripts.
- 6.1.3. Although assault cases are committed throughout the week the trend is that this crime increases from Friday to Sunday. Domestic assault cases occur indoors by people known to the victim. Social assault cases occur on the streets and at liquor outlets.
- 6.1.4. Most burglary residential crimes are committed during the night at premises where there are poor or non-existent security measures.
- 6.1.5. Burglary business crimes are committed during the night and mostly at businesses where there are no security measures.
- 6.1.6. Rape is committed by unknown suspects when victims walk alone in remote areas from and to liquor outlets; however, it is also committed by persons known to the victim in the safe environment at home.
- 6.1.7. Common assault and malicious damage crimes are many times committed by persons known to the victim.
- 6.1.8. Armed and common robbery crimes are mostly committed during the night and suspects target victims returning from work at bus stops or liquor outlets.
- 6.1.9. The average time for house robbery crimes is between 00:00 and 04:00.
- 6.1.10. The major challenges relative to crime are as follows:
  - a. The lack of a neighbourhood watch.
  - b. Poor road conditions.
  - c. Lack of street names and streetlights.
  - d. The employment of old people, who are poorly trained, as security guards.
  - e. Inadequate security measures at property.
  - f. No alarm systems at business premises.
  - g. Liquor abuse by women that leads to rape cases.

6.1.11. The Station was rated a three star and number 14 out of the 24 Lt Colonel Station Group in Mpumalanga and number 42 out of 86 stations provincially.

6.1.12. Human trafficking remains a priority for the station and it has a close working relationship with all relevant stakeholders, including the Department of Home Affairs and the various communities.

## **6.2. Staff Component**

6.2.1. The actual personnel strength is 74 out of a station allocation of 91. Hence, there is a shortage of 17 staff members.

6.2.2. The station has a shortage of staffing in terms of ranks or level of personnel. It was reported that the station is supposed to have 21 level six (06) sergeants; however, there are only five (05) available.

6.2.3. Seven (07) warrant officers should be allocated to Support Service; however, there is only one (01) warrant officer available.

6.2.4. The detectives command structure is misaligned because the commander is at level eight (08) and the sub-ordinates are at level five (05).

6.2.5. Since the placement of personnel is not done by the station it happens many times that when personnel are placed at the station; they tend to apply to return to the areas from where they located. The main contributors for this state of affairs are the language barrier and the lack of proper accommodation in the policing precinct.

## **6.3. Sector Policing**

6.3.1. The policing precinct is divided into two sectors. Sector One (01) covers three (03) villages and Sector Two (02) covers six (06) villages. There are well-established crime forums and patrol teams in both sectors; and each sector has a manager appointed.

6.3.2. Challenges experienced by the sectors include the high turn-over of committee members that result in the continuous training of new members; the lack of responsibility of some committee members and poor police visibility when staff members are on leave or absent from work.

#### **6.4. Vehicles**

- 6.4.1. A total of 14 vehicles are allocated to the Station compared to the granted number of 18; therefore, there is a shortage of four (04) vehicles.
- 6.4.2. A severe challenge experienced by the station is the fact that the vehicles allocated to the station are not suitable for the terrain, especially the sedans. Thus, LDV 4x4 vehicles will be a better option to improve service delivery; and this information has been conveyed to the Provincial Office.

#### **6.5. Victim Support**

- 6.5.1. The station has a victim support centre that is manned by four (04) members from the Greater Rape Intervention Project (GRIP). The victims of rape and domestic violence are interviewed at the centre and cases are also opened there. The challenge experienced at the centre is that it is only operational during office hours.

#### **6.6. Community Mobilisation / Awareness Campaigns**

- 6.6.1. The station conducts regular safety awareness through community meetings, awareness campaigns and the local radio stations.
- 6.6.2. Regular campaigns are conducted at schools to educate learners on crime prevention.
- 6.6.3. There is a suggestion box mounted at a strategic point to allow the community to comment on the services rendered by the station. The comments in this suggestion box are emptied on a regular basis and each comment is considered with priority.
- 6.6.4. Regular borderline operations are conducted to discourage trans-national crimes like human trafficking, drug smuggling and stock theft.
- 6.6.5. The implementation of rural safety programmes assists the station with the prevention of farm attacks since information and hints are shared during these meetings.
- 6.6.6. The station engages regularly with municipal councillors to address pertinent issues; for instance the prevalence of vacant houses that are utilised to hide stolen property.

## **6.7. Challenges**

- 6.7.1. The lack of proper street signage and street addresses; and the poor road conditions in some areas impact negatively on the reaction turn-around time. The councillors present at the oversight meeting undertook to assist the station with these challenges.
- 6.7.2. Internal challenges experienced at the station:
- a. Poor visibility in the sectors due to absenteeism of staff members.
  - b. Shortage of manpower.
  - c. The lack of a boardroom.
  - d. There is no docket storage facility.
  - e. The station is currently using bore-hole water due to delays to be connected to the main water supply of the local municipality.
- 6.7.3. External challenges experienced by the Station:
- a. The lack of information from the community on criminal activities; mention was made on the lack of information to the police prior to community unrests.
  - b. The lack of participation of relevant stakeholders in police forum meetings.
  - c. The influx of illegal immigrants from Mozambique and Swaziland.
  - d. The growing population within the policing precinct versus the fixed staff complement of the station.

## **6.8. Holding Cells**

- 6.8.1. The station has five (05) holding cells of which one (01) is utilised for detention during the administration process of suspects.
- 6.8.2. The station is serviced by the Nkomazi Magistrate Court at Tonga; and the periodical court that sits at Boschfontein on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- 6.8.3. Children in conflict with the law are being dealt with in terms of the Child Justice Act; and there is a Station Order with regards to custody management.
- 6.8.4. Awaiting trial prisoners are transported to Nelspruit and Barberton Correctional facilities.

## **6.9. Community Policing Forum (CPF)**

- 6.9.1. The station indicated that it has a good working relationship with the CPF and its chairperson, Mr J Mamba, and that the structure is very active. Monthly meetings to

address crime related challenges are held regularly; however, these meetings are poorly attended. These meetings are especially poorly attended by the youth and middle age groups.

6.9.2. The Chairperson of the CPF in the Schoemansdal Police Station reported the following on the performance of the CPF:

- a. The relationship between the CPF and station management is good and the CPF is kept well-informed of station activities.
- b. Officials respond when needed; however, assistance is sometimes delayed due to the shortage of staff members, lack of commitment or when the level of absenteeism is too high.
- c. Meetings are conducted monthly and proper records are kept of these activities.
- d. The CPF attend Cluster meetings; and it also meet regularly with relevant stakeholders such as business owners, farmers, traditional leaders and traditional healers.
- e. An awareness campaign on human trafficking was conducted at three schools, namely at Tinhlonhla High School at Jeppes Reef, Schuzendal Primary School and Magogeni Primary School.
- f. The shortage of vehicles and the unavailability of suitable vehicles for the terrain pose a challenge to effective service delivery.

## **6.10. Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison**

6.10.1. The department reported that it has a good working relationship with both the Cluster and Station Commanders.

6.10.2. The departmental regional offices also have a good working relationship with the various CPF's and provide support where necessary.

6.10.3. The departmental budget does not provide for a stipend for CPF members since there is currently no directive in this regard. In some provinces voluntarily payment is made to CPF members and this matter that is currently being investigated nationally.

## **6.11. Findings**

The Committee made the following findings:

- 6.11.1. The abuse of liquor and the mushrooming of taverns in the station policing precinct pose a severe challenge to the safety of the community in the Schoemansdal policing precinct.
- 6.11.2. There is a need for the Local Municipality and the station to improve on their working relationship so that issues such as the lack of street names and streetlights can be addressed.
- 6.11.3. There is a high percentage of absenteeism at the station that impacts negatively on the moral of staff members as well as on the visibility of the police in the various sectors; and the shortage of 17 staff members out of a staff complement of 91 is elevating this problem.
- 6.11.4. There is a shortage of four (04) vehicles at the station; and the fact that vehicles available for policing are not suitable for the terrain elevates this challenge.
- 6.11.5. There is a high turn-over of committee members in the various sectors that result in the continuous training of new members.
- 6.11.6. There is no proper docket storage facility at the station.
- 6.11.7. The community does not tender information on criminal activities to the police; mention was made on the lack of information to the police prior to community unrests.
- 6.11.8. The growing population within the policing precinct versus the approved staff complement of the station impacts negatively on the service delivery to the community.
- 6.11.9. CPF meetings are poorly attended; especially by the youth and middle age groups.

## **6.12. Recommendations**

- 6.12.1. The Station must improve its relationship with the Mpumalanga Liquor Authority to ensure that when liquor licenses are allocated it is strictly in terms of the relevant Act.
- 6.12.2. There is room for improvement in the Station and the Local Municipality's working relationship; to ensure that matters such as the lack of street names and streetlights will not infringe on the Station's performance in turnaround time when attending to calls. Furthermore, the Nkomazi Local Municipality must address the lack of street names without delay and a progress report in this regard must be submitted within 30 days after tabling of this report.
- 6.12.3. The Provincial Head Office must address the high percentage of absenteeism at the station that impacts negatively on the moral of staff members and on the visibility of the

police in the various sectors. Furthermore, the Provincial Head Office must fill the 17 vacant posts without delay. A progress report in this regard must be submitted within 30 days after tabling of this report.

- 6.12.4. The Provincial Head Office must ensure that vehicles issued to the Station are suitable for the terrain; and the shortage of four (04) vehicles at the station must be addressed without delay. A progress report in this regard must be submitted within 30 days after tabling of this report.
- 6.12.5. The Station must identify the reasons for the high turn-over of staff members in the various sectors and develop a strategy to deal with this incidence.
- 6.12.6. The Provincial Head Office must ensure that the Station has a proper docket storage facility at the station.
- 6.12.7. The Station must identify the reasons for the lack of community cooperation in tendering information on criminal activities to the police; and a strategy must be developed to improve in this regard.
- 6.12.8. The Provincial Head Office must refer to its national staff allocation model and ascertain whether the allocated staff complement for this Station is still relevant; especially considering the growing population within the Station's policing precinct. A detailed progress report in this regard must be submitted within 30 days after tabling of this report.
- 6.12.9. The Station Commander must provide a detailed report on the reasons for the high rate of absenteeism of members within 30 days after tabling of this report. The detailed report must also indicate what measures will be implemented to improve on this situation.
- 6.12.10. The Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison must assist the CPF to ensure that all CPF structures are functional; and where necessary assist with the revival of CPF structures.

## **7. KOMATIPOORT POLICE STATION**

The Station Commander, Lieutenant Colonel J Madonsela, led the team from the Komatipoort Police Station during the oversight visit.

The following is a summary of the demographics of the Komatipoort policing precinct:

- The estimate population size is 85 000 which consists of residents from Komatipoort, Hectorspruit, the Marloth Park reservation area, Dindela, Mjejane and Orlando informal settlement as well as 91 farms.
- The size of the station precinct is 684 km<sup>2</sup>.
- The station is situated near the border between South Africa and Mozambique.
- Many people in the policing precinct commute daily from Tonga and Naas for employment on the farms; whilst others are employed in Malelane; some who are employed in the area travel from as far as Mozambique on a daily basis.
- The N4 and R571 Roads connect in the policing precinct on route to Mozambique, to the Mananga Border post, Malelane, Nelspruit and Gauteng and this situation causes huge traffic volumes. The huge traffic volumes increase the risk for culpable homicides; reckless and negligent driving on the N4 and R571.

## **7.1. Crime Profile**

7.1.1. The main crime generators in the policing precinct are the following:

- a. The usage of drugs by the youth.
- b. The lack of recreational facilities for the youth.
- c. The increase of taverns in the policing area.
- d. Lack of compliance to the Liquor Act by liquor outlets.
- e. The lack of job opportunities.
- f. The inadequate monitoring and information of parolees.
- g. Inadequate monitoring of second hand goods dealers' registers.
- h. Communities tend to buy stolen goods; and the fact that stolen goods are not properly marked by owners.
- i. Undocumented foreign national persons that use their businesses as accommodation after hours; and related crimes.

7.1.2. The major challenges relative to crime are as follows:

- a. Poor infrastructural development in the three informal settlements.
- b. Lack of tertiary institutions.
- c. Lack of street names and poor street lighting of streets and passages.
- d. The lack of sport and recreational facilities; and the poor maintenance of existing recreational facilities.

- e. The negative impact of the fast growing population compared to the fixed number of SAPS staff.
- f. The influx of undocumented persons across the border and mountains.
- g. The huge traffic volumes on the N4 and the R571 national routes especially during the festive season.
- h. The many unused old buildings in the town that are utilised for illegal activities.
- i. The Station experiences a challenge in obtaining information from the community relative to planned criminal activities. Informants do not provide information because they are scared that their names will be leaked; and in other instances because there are no incentive to do so. However, the station indicated that it will follow the directive on how to recruit and register informants and that this can alleviate the problem.

7.1.3. The following are the priority crimes prevalent in the station policing precinct:

- a. Property crimes: Burglary Residential and Business
- b. Other serious crimes: Theft General
- c. Contact crimes: Assault Common and GBH

## **7.2. Infrastructure**

- 7.2.1. Although the Station has adequate office space, with one to two members occupying an office, it remains a challenge that the detectives are currently accommodated at huge monthly cost at a separate location away from the Station. It will be conducive to Service delivery if all units can be accommodated at the station
- 7.2.2. Although the Station has four (04) SAPS 13 Storerooms it is still inadequate. This is mainly due to the vicinity of the station to the Lebombo port of entry and the SANDF based at Macadamia who utilise the SAPS 13 Stores to store abandoned or stolen property. The Station also has an agreement with SARS that all the counterfeit property can be kept for safekeeping in the SAPS 13 Stores.
- 7.2.3. The Station is not properly fenced and this makes it difficult to control access to its premises. This situation poses a serious threat to the safety to everyone in the Station. It was reported that there was an incident where a female staff member was seriously injured due to a perpetrator who accessed the CSC due to the poor security of the premises.

- 7.2.4. The strong room for state firearms is located in the CSC.
- 7.2.5. The married quarters are not safe and many residential burglary and thefts have been reported at these quarters.
- 7.2.6. The married and single quarters need major renovations as it is currently not suitable for occupation by members. However, it was found that the facilities are occupied due to the unavailability of alternative accommodation in town.
- 7.2.7. The station kitchen does not meet the requirements of the Health Act; hence, no health certificate could be issued in this regard. This situation results in prisoners being transferred to the Tonga Police Station. The detainment of detainees at Tonga Police Station has a negative impact on service delivery in general and on the station budget for fuel. This situation also limits the number of available vehicles during court days since vehicles have to transport detainees to the relevant courts.

### 7.3. Staff Component

- 7.3.1. The personnel complement of the Station is 79 of which the Police Act appointed members are 61.
- 7.3.2. In terms of the fixed staff complement here is currently a shortage of three (03) posts at VISPOL.
- 7.3.3. Two students allocated to the Station who are still busy with training will fill two (02) of the three (03) posts at VISPOL after completion of their training.
- 7.3.4. According to the fixed establishment the total members allocated to the Detective services are nine (09), including the Detective Commander, However, there are currently 12 members posted at Detective services. In terms of the actual members posted the allocation of dockets are 45 per detective as prescribed; and if the number will be decreased to the fixed number of nine (09) it will impact negatively on the work load of detectives.
- 7.3.5. According to the fixed establishment of the Station Support Services it should consist of 23 members; however, there is currently only 19 members. The shortage of members are in the IMC office where there is supposed to be four (04) members but where only one (01) member is placed.
- 7.3.6. The following posts are vacant and must be advertised:
- |   |          |         |         |
|---|----------|---------|---------|
| • | HRM Head | Level 7 | 1 post  |
| • | IMC      | Level 7 | 2 posts |

- |                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Level 6         | 1 post              |
| • Communication | Level 7      1 post |

It was noted that the Communication post has been vacant since 2010.

#### **7.4. Sector Policing**

- 7.4.1. The policing precinct is divided into two sectors. Sector One (01) covers Marloth Park, Hectorspruit and the Tenbosch farms and Sector Two (02) covers Komatipoort, Strydomblock farms and the Manange Road farms on the R571.
- 7.4.2. Sector Two (02) is currently not fully functional because the residents, which consist of business owners and farmers, are not interested to participate in sector policing.
- 7.4.3. The Station is allocated with only one (01) Sector Manager who is on level five (05). A challenge experienced in Sector Policing is the fact that the Sector Manager is a Constable and some of the sector team members are Sergeants; hence, it creates a complex situation where a Constable must give instructions to a Sergeant.
- 7.4.4. There is a need to appoint a Sector Manager for the other sector as soon as possible to ensure that both sectors are covered.
- 7.4.5. Another challenge is the fact that the areas for the two sectors are too vast. It was noted that the station already embarked on a process to review the current system to see whether the policing precinct cannot be divided into more than two sectors to ensure better service delivery and police visibility.

#### **7.5. Vehicles**

- 7.5.1. The total vehicle strength currently at the Station is 16; however, this number is not adequate for the its needs
- 7.5.2. One of the main challenges experienced is the fact that most of the vehicles are in a poor condition and are sent to the state garage on a regular basis for repairs; and it takes a long time to receive these vehicles back in working order. Sometimes it takes up to two months to repair a vehicle and in many cases another vehicle broke down in that time. It was noted that only four (04) out of the 16 vehicles have less than 100 000 km on their odometers.

#### **7.6. Victim Support**

- 7.6.1. The station has a victim support centre but it is in need of furniture.
- 7.6.2. The Station was requested to provide a progress report on the functionality of the victim support centre.

### **7.7. Holding Cells**

- 7.7.1. The station has ten (10) holding cells of which one (01) is utilised for juveniles, one (01) for females and eight (08) for males.
- 7.7.2. The average capacity of the holding cells provide for 150 detainees.
- 7.7.3. Children in conflict with the law are being dealt with in terms of the Child Justice Act. Juveniles are taken to the place of safety situated in Hendrina. It was noted that most of the juveniles are released in the care of their parents or guardians and furthermore that there is a Station Order with regard to the handling of juveniles.

### **7.8. Resources / Operational Equipment**

- 7.8.1. It was reported that there is a shortage of pepper spray and hand cuffs at the Station.

### **7.9. Community Policing Forum (CPF)**

- 7.9.1. The Station indicated that it has a good working relationship with the CPF and that the structure is very active. Monthly meetings to address crime related challenges are held regularly. Furthermore, these meetings are well attended by the CPF Sub-Forums from Sector One (01), namely Hectorspruit, Section 2, Dindela, Marloth Park and Tenbosch.
- 7.9.2. The CPF Sub-Forums in Sector Two (02) are currently not functioning. The main reason is because the community members in this sector are business owners who do not want to attend meetings during the evening or directly after work.
- 7.9.3. The number of vehicles allocated to the Station poses a challenge since it is a fixed number; compared to the rapidly growing informal settlements, like Dindela which increased the policing area enormously.
- 7.9.4. The shortage of suitable vehicles poses a huge challenge to the Station. There is especially a need for 4x4 vehicles during the rainy season when roads in rural areas are difficult to access.

## **7.10. Labour Unions**

- 7.10.1. The representatives of POPCRU and SAPU attended the meeting.
- 7.10.2. Both labour unions reported to have a good working relationship with the Station management.
- 7.10.3. The shortage of staff and the daily stress under which the members work was emphasised. The shortage of staff when some are absent places a heavy burden on those members who are on duty. The situation is sometimes so critical that some staff members forfeit annual leave days because there is no opportunity for them to take leave.
- 7.10.4. The shortage of vehicles and the lack of suitable vehicles for the policing terrain remains a challenge at the Station.

## **7.11. Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison**

- 7.11.1. The department reported that it has a good working relationship with both the Cluster and Station Commanders.
- 7.11.2. The department provides training where necessary.

## **7.12. Findings**

After the deliberations, the Committee made the following findings:

- 7.12.1. There is lack of recreational facilities for the youth that results in the youth becoming involved with crime activities.
- 7.12.2. The increasing number of taverns in the policing area and the lack of compliance to the Liquor Act by liquor outlets pose a challenge.
- 7.12.3. The inadequate monitoring of and lack of information on parolees pose a challenge.
- 7.12.4. Stolen goods are not properly marked by their owners and the community tends to buy stolen goods.
- 7.12.5. Undocumented foreign national people use their businesses as accommodation after hours; and this result in other crimes against them.

- 7.12.6. The four (04) SAPS 13 Storerooms at the Station is inadequate due to the agreement with the Lebombo port of entry and the SANDF based at Macadamia who utilise the SAPS 13 Stores to store abandoned or stolen property; and the agreement with SARS to store counterfeit property.
- 7.12.7. The Station is not properly fenced and this makes it difficult to control access to the station premises.
- 7.12.8. The married quarters are not safe and many residential burglary and thefts have been reported in these quarters.
- 7.12.9. Although the married and single quarters need major renovations and are not suitable for occupation by members it was found that the facilities are occupied due to the unavailability of alternative accommodation in town.
- 7.12.10. The Station kitchen does not meet the requirements of the Health Act; hence, no health certificate could be issued in this regard. This situation results in prisoners being transferred to the Tonga Police Station and has a negative impact on service delivery in general and on the station budget for fuel.
- 7.12.11. The personnel complement of the Station is 79 of which the Police Act appointed members are 61; and it was noted that the Communication post has been vacant since 2010.
- 7.12.12. Sector Two (02) is currently not fully functional due to the indifference of the residents.
- 7.12.13. A challenge experienced in Sector Policing is the fact that the Sector Manager is a Constable and some of the sector team members are Sergeants; hence, it creates a complex situation where a Constable must give instructions to a Sergeant.
- 7.12.14. The total vehicle strength currently at the Station is 16; however, this number is not adequate for the station's needs.
- 7.12.15. One of the main challenges experienced is the fact that most of the vehicles are in a poor condition and are sent to the state garage on a regular basis for repairs.
- 7.12.16. There is a shortage of operational equipment.
- 7.12.17. The shortage of staff and the daily stress under which the members work was noted; furthermore, that the situation is sometimes so critical that some staff members forfeit annual leave days because there is no opportunity for them to take leave.

### **7.13. Recommendations**

- 7.13.1 The Station, local Councillors and the CPF must identify projects whereby the youth can be engaged constructively to minimise the risk of the youth becoming involved with criminal activities.
- 7.13.2 The Station must improve its relationship with the Mpumalanga Liquor Authority to ensure that liquor licenses are only issued when it is in the best interest of the community; and spot checks and patrolling of taverns must be increased to ensure compliance to the Liquor Act.
- 7.13.3 The Station must engage with the Department of Correctional Services to strengthen their working relationship in terms of the monitoring of and information on parolees.
- 7.13.4 The CPF must, in consultation with the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison and the Station, embark on awareness campaigns to educate communities on the negative impact of buying stolen goods. The communities must also be educated on the positive tracking of stolen property when it is properly marked.
- 7.13.5 The Station must develop a strategy where they can inform and advise undocumented foreign national people on the dangers when using their businesses as accommodation after hours; also to advise them not to keep cash on the premises but rather deposit it into a bank account.
- 7.13.6 The Provincial Head Office must investigate the shortage of the SAPS 13 Storerooms at the Station; the lack of proper fencing of the Station, the security at the married quarters and the poor condition and standard of the kitchen and married and single quarters to find a solution to these challenges. A progress report in this regard must be submitted by 30 September 2015.
- 7.13.7 The Provincial Head Office must refer to its national staff allocation model and ascertain whether the allocated staff complement for this Station is still relevant; especially considering the growing population within the Station's policing precinct. Furthermore, a solution must be found for the challenge experienced in Sector Policing where the Sector Manager is a Constable and some of the sector team members are Sergeants. A progress report in this regard must be submitted within 30 days after tabling of this report.
- 7.13.8 The Station must implement a strategy to ensure that Sector Two (02) becomes fully functional.
- 7.13.9 The Provincial Head Office must ensure that vehicles issued to the Station are suitable for the terrain; furthermore, it must refer to its vehicle allocation model and ascertain

whether the allocated vehicle complement for this Station is still adequate. A progress report in this regard must be submitted within 30 days after tabling of this report.

7.13.10 The Provincial Head Office must ensure that the Station is adequately issued with all necessary operational equipment.

7.13.11 The Provincial Head Office must ensure that no staff member forfeits annual leave days due to the shortage of staff at this Station; and that there is adequate time for members to take their annual leave in the annual leave cycle.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The Acting Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee extends his appreciation to Members of the Committee, Councillors from the Local Municipality, departmental officials, all stakeholders and the support staff of the Legislature for their participation during this oversight visit to the community of the Nkomazi Local Municipality, in enhancing the oversight role of the Legislature. The Portfolio Committee tables this report to the House for adoption with its recommendations.

Unless otherwise stated, the department should provide progress reports on all issues raised to the relevant Portfolio Committee by 30 September 2015 and thereafter on quarterly basis.

HON PS NGOMANA (MPL)

12.08.2015

DATE

**ACTING CHAIRPERSON: PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT; COMMUNITY SAFETY, SECURITY AND LIAISON**