

# PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS, TABLINGS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

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TUESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2015

### TABLING

The Speaker:

**Annual report of the provincial public entity for the financial year ended 31 March 2015 tabled in accordance with section 65(1)(a) of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999), as amended:**

**Minister of Economic Opportunities**

Annual Report of Casidra for 2014/15 (Vote 11: Agriculture).

Referred to the Standing Committee on Economic Opportunities, Tourism and Agriculture and also referred to the Public Accounts Committee.

### COMMITTEE REPORT

#### **REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY ON AN OVERSIGHT VISIT TO THE STEENBERG POLICE STATION CONDUCTED ON 27 MAY 2015**

The Standing Committee on Community Safety, having conducted an oversight visit to the Steenberg Police Station on 27 May 2015, reports as follows:

#### **Introduction**

The Committee, as part of its oversight mandate and complying with the Committee Programme, resolved to undertake an oversight visit to the Steenberg Police Station, hereafter Steenberg South African Police Service (SAPS). The Committee undertook this visit in order to gain a better understanding of the functions, successes and challenges of the police station.

The decision to visit this particular station was largely motivated by the Western Cape Crime Statistics for 2013/14 in which Steenberg recorded high numbers of crimes, specifically gang-related crimes.

### **The Delegation**

The delegation of the Standing Committee on Community Safety included the following Members:

Ms MM Wenger (DA) (Chairperson and leader of the delegation)

Mr FC Christians (ACDP)

Ms TM Dijana (ANC)

### **The following parliamentary official accompanied the delegation:**

Mr W Matthews, Committee Coordinator

#### **1. Welcome**

There were brief introductions by all present. The Chairperson provided a context for the visit. The Station Commander, Col Seals, rendered an apology on behalf of the Cluster Commander.

#### **2 Presentation by Col Seals of the Steenberg Police Station**

##### **2.1 Key findings pertaining to the geographical policing area**

There are four sectors in the policing area spanning 16 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 79 701. There are 24 schools in the area. There are reportedly four informal settlements. Although no railway stations are located in the area, there are three railway stations and/or interchanges close to the Steenberg precinct. There is one taxi rank.

All four Sector Managers are Warrant Officers. There are subforums established in all sectors. Property theft is common in all four sectors. The theft of dustbins is prevalent. These dustbins are often (re)sold at an estimated cost of R600.

##### **2.2 Key findings pertaining to crimes related to domestic violence and victim support**

Key influencing factors include liquor, drugs and domestic violence such as the abuse of single female parents by their male partners. Domestic violence cases escalate over weekends and on pay days. Senior officers conduct regular first-level inspections of the relevant registers and present regular in-service and practical training to frontline service members.

Community Service Centre (CSC) members are also instructed to refer victims to the Victim Empowerment Programme (VEP) room. The number of members trained in Domestic Violence Act-related programmes includes 41 for a week-long course and 36 who have completed in-service training.

There is a designated Social Crime Prevention (SCP) Officer who focuses on awareness initiatives, especially at schools and churches. The SCP awareness programmes include initiatives on youths at risk (274), crimes against women and children (41), substance abuse (24), domestic violence (11) and sexual violence programmes during the 2014/15 financial year. Several cases are opened as a result of threats and are dropped either voluntarily or after mediation processes. There are good relations between the Steenberg SAPS and the victim support volunteers. However, the victim support room is not fully resourced in terms of volunteers.

There is a drilling squad that works with school learners in order to build the self-esteem and instil confidence in these youths. Self-defence classes for women are also offered.

### **2.3 Key findings pertaining to crimes related to drugs and gangs**

There are seven active gangs and three major gangs operating in the precinct, including the Mongrel Gang, the Corner Boys Gang and the Junky Funky Kids Gang. There is a focus on using a bottom-up approach that seeks to link runners to prominent gang bosses in order to build concrete cases against these leaders. The runners are used to carry out the gang activity and drug trade with gang bosses coordinating activities without much or any physical involvement. There are cases where gang bosses do not live in the areas where gang and drug activities are carried out. Thus, the focus on establishing links between runners and gang bosses is a strategy to build substantial cases.

There are several social factors that influence the sustainable eradication of gang activity. Gangs (gang bosses) capitalise on the high unemployment rate by paying the rent and/or providing food supplies to persons in the community. This support often leaves residents reluctant to follow through with assisting authorities in the identification, arrest and conviction of perpetrators.

There is coordination between the Steenberg SAPS and other police precincts to address gang activity as well as matters related to the theft of firearms and the use of illegal firearms in crimes.

In order to stabilise gang activity, Col Seals presented planned interventions in visible policing (VISPOL), crime detection, intelligence and information, as well as community mobilisation. See Figure 1 in the annexure for a detailed account of these interventions.

### **2.4 Key findings pertaining to the staffing structure**

The variance in the staffing structure increased from -4 in 2014 to -23 in 2015. Please refer to Figure 2 in the annexure for a more detailed account of the staffing structure since 2010.

The Human Resource Management Head, Captain Steenkamp, reported seven (7) resignations since 2010, with some members losing interest in the police service. She also reported that none of the eight (8) transfers from the Steenberg SAPS since 2010 have been replaced. Because of the low level of VISPOL staff, not all sectors are patrolled 24/7. Only two VISPOL vans are dispatched for four sectors.

### **3. Community–police relations**

Dr Peter Humphreys represented the Steenberg Community Police Forum (CPF) in the absence of the CPF Chairperson. He informed the Committee that the CPF has a good working relationship with the Steenberg SAPS. He added that colonels of the Steenberg SAPS are actively working on the precinct streets.

He stated that the CPF is aligned with the Department of Community Safety's Expanded Partnership Programme (EPP). The CPF uses some of the EPP funding to conduct projects to improve community awareness and mobilisation. He added that the CPF conducts regular checks (five per month) at the Steenberg SAPS. These checks include engaging with prisoners about the treatment they receive, often without the presence of SAPS members to minimise any pressured scenarios. Dr Humphreys reported that the Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) in Sector 2 purchased its own bulletproof jackets and members also use torches, pepper-spray and whistles while on patrol. He added that Sector 4 in particular is volatile and vulnerable. Areas in this sector include Lavender Hill, St Montague Village, Village Heights and Cuban Heights.

It was also reported that sector managers assist NHWs on their patrols and that the NHWs use the bicycles supplied by the Department of Community Safety to patrol the area.

### **4. The Department of Community Safety's input**

Mr Wayne Butler of the Department of Community Safety provided some input and stated that it is recommended that cluster commanders be present at oversight visit briefings. The reason is largely to provide a broader assessment especially regarding gang activities across precincts within the same cluster. Presentations per station, despite its detail, provide an assessment of a single precinct. Information about gang and drug activity across a cluster or clusters provide a broader and more comprehensive assessment of the status of these activities. This is significant especially when considering the mobility of the drug trade, as well as the spread of gang influence across various precincts. He added that once a month, the Cluster Commander brings the Tactical Response Team (TRT) to the precinct to conduct operations.

### **5. Inspection of the Steenberg Police Station**

The Committee conducted a walkabout of the station, however, due to time constraints the Committee only visited the CSC, Section 13 stores, and the Victim Support Room.

### **6. Acknowledgements**

The Chairperson thanked Col Seals and all the SAPS officials present at the meeting, Dr Humphreys and Mr Butler for their preparations, hospitality and contributions. The Committee donated a teddy bear to the Station's Victim Support Room.

INTERVENTIONS TO STABILIZE GANG VIOLENCE		
VISIBLE POLICING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Execution of Search warrants/</li> <li>➤ Searching of Gang members premises.</li> <li>➤ Improve reaction time</li> <li>➤ Stop and Search.</li> <li>➤ Roadblocks and VCP's</li> </ul>	Station Commander VISPOL Head All Operational members Crime Prevention Unit Other Law Enforcement agencies
CRIME DETECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Information Sharing</li> <li>➤ Crime Scene Processing</li> <li>➤ Suspect Identification</li> <li>➤ Opposing bail on all Gang Related cases.</li> <li>➤ Optimise Investigation aids.</li> <li>➤ Utilization of Technology</li> <li>➤ Profiling</li> </ul>	Detectives Special Investigation Team
INTELLIGENCE & INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Analysis and links.</li> <li>➤ Understanding the crime.</li> <li>➤ Intelligence gathering.</li> <li>➤ Proactive intelligence.</li> <li>➤ Profiling of all gang members</li> <li>➤ Gathering of information on gangs</li> </ul>	Crime Intelligence Office
COMMUNITY MOBILISATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Led by Community Police Forum</li> <li>➤ Consist of 5 x Key Pillars</li> <li>➤ An active CPF</li> <li>➤ Neighbour Watch Structure</li> <li>➤ Reservists</li> <li>➤ NGO's</li> <li>➤ Businesses</li> <li>➤ SAPS Sector Managers</li> </ul>	Station Commander VISPOL Head All Operational members Crime Prevention Unit

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STEENBERG SAPS 2014/2015																		
Component	Granted	Actual	Difference	Granted	Actual	Difference	Granted	Actual	Difference	Granted	Actual	Difference	Granted	Actual	Difference	Granted	Actual	Difference
	2010			2011			2012			2013			2014			2015		
Station Commander	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	-1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
Visible Policing	81	90	9	81	90	9	81	83	2	81	78	-3	81	77	-4	81	74	-7
Detectives	34	30	-4	34	30	-4	34	31	-3	34	30	-4	34	30	-4	34	28	-6
Support	31	22	-9	31	22	-9	31	22	-9	31	22	-9	33	23	-10	33	23	-10
Total Station	147	143	-4	147	143	-4	147	136	-11	147	131	-16	149	131	-18	149	126	-23