



NEWS BULLETIN



4th Quarter 2021/22

COMMUNITIES TO PLAY CRUCIAL ROLE IN PREVENTION OF CRIME

The Deputy Minister of Police, Hon. Mr. CC Mathale, together with the MEC for the Department of Police, Roads and Transport, Mr. William Bulwane and Acting Provincial Commissioner, Major-General Solly Lesia, met with the community of Fouriesburg on Friday, 11 March 2022, to address various persistent and increasing criminal trends in the area.

The crime prevention community engagement focused on stock theft; alcohol and drug abuse; sexual offences and other crime-related issues in the area as well as how to improve relations between the police and the community. Stock-theft has become a major threat to livestock farmers and the general safety of people living in rural areas.

Up-and-coming farmers from previously disadvantaged backgrounds are especially hard-hit by this type of crime described by Minister Cele as “economic sabotage.”

Deputy Minister Mathale accentuated the importance of increased community involvement in the prevention of crime. “Every single member of communities can and must play a role in the prevention of crime as they are the eyes and ears on the ground and can observe when strange things are happening in their area. Communities must work with the SAPS to bring perpetrators to book,” said Mathala.

Hon. Mathale also said the Policing Forums should help both the SAPS and their communities who have entrusted them with their votes. He warned members of the forums not to get engaged in corruption because of their positions but to be of service to the greater good of all living in their area.

MEC Bulwane promised that the DPRT will soon fix the R26 to ensure safer commuting between towns in the Eastern FS.

Acting Provincial Commissioner Lesia said the reasons behind the Imbizo is to bring services to the people. The main concern of residents of the local Mashaeng township is the lack of employment and all the socio-economic hardships it brings.

GENERAL FANNIE MASEMOLA APPOINTED AS NEW NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSIONER

President Cyril Ramaphosa announced on 31 March 2022 that General Sehlahle Fannie Masemola has been appointed the new national police commissioner of the country.

General Masemola has been a deputy police commissioner with an outstanding record of achievements and policing across South Africa.



MEC MEETS WITH TAXI ASSOCIATIONS



MEC William Bulwane and the Matjhabeng Local Municipality Mayor, Cllr. Thanduxolo Khalipha, on 10 March met with the Lejweleputswa Taxi Association to discuss challenges that are facing taxi operators in Lejweleputswa district.

The conflict was apparently sparked by illegal taxi operators who are not in possession of permits but are pirating routes in the district. It is alleged that some of the operators or owners are teachers, traffic officers, municipal and government officials. According to the law these officials are not supposed to operate taxis.

The Executive Mayor emphasised that the stability of the taxi industry in the municipality is of the utmost importance as it guarantees public transport users to arrive on time at their different destinations.

The MEC and the Executive Mayor committed to find long-term solutions for the taxi question in the Lejweleputswa district. MEC Bulwane also warned that all taxi operators and associations must comply with the law and those who do not act in accordance with the specific rules and regulations, will indeed have to face the consequences.

RAIN A PAIN TO OUR ROADS

The abundant rain over vast parts of the Free State not only brought relief to drought-stricken areas but has put our road network under severe pressure due to flash flooding, sinkholes and landslides and the traffic congestion these caused. Since December 2021, the Department's road management and road workers had their hands full to repair road infrastructure. Law enforcers worked around-the-clock to monitor special warning signs, divert traffic and ensure safe conditions for motorists in the affected areas.

The R30 between Allanridge and Bothaville had to be closed several times as it became too dangerous to negotiate after being flooded repeatedly. Fatal accidents occurred around the area, mainly because of drivers not obeying the special warning and regulatory signs introduced on this section of road.

A huge sinkhole appeared on the R74 on the Olivershoek Pass about 18 kilometres from the Harrismith to the Qwaqwa intersection and a landslide made the S1579 road from Phuthaditjhaba towards the Monontsha Border Post almost impassable. To top it all, the R711 between Clarens and Fouriesburg had to be closed for an indefinite time after the road surface was ruined by the incessant rain.

These roads are still under construction and road users are requested to drive with extreme caution and adhere to the safety measures that were introduced.



SAPS' women honoured

The Premier of the Free State, Hon. Sisi Ntombela, and the MEC for Police, Roads and Transport, Mr. William Bulwane, on 25 February attended the SA Police Services' medal parade at Bobbiespark in Bloemfontein to celebrate the role of women in policing.

Together with the Provincial Police Commissioner, Lt.-General Baile Motswenyane, they presented 168 female police officers with medals for their long-service contribution to the people of Free State. The Premier saluted the women-in-blue and conveyed the province's sincere gratitude to Provincial Commissioner Motswenyane, who continues to lead the SAPS in the province with distinction.



Clampdown on stock-theft

On 15 February 2022 the MEC for Department of Police, Roads and Transport (DPRT), Mr. William Bulwane, and the MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Free State, Mr. *Thembeni Nxangisa*, met with farmers, livestock owners and anti-stock theft patrollers in Qwaqwa at the Phuthaditjhaba Police Station to discuss ways and means to combat stock-theft and other crimes in rural areas.

MEC William Bulwane encouraged livestock owners and anti-stock theft patrollers to work with the South African Police Service (SAPS) to assist them with information that will combat stock-theft crimes. He said the community must work together with the police instead of pointing fingers. He mentioned that the Department will engage with the South African embassy in Lesotho to discuss the stock-theft issues. "Let us respect each other. Take care of your crops and work with the police. Do not employ foreign nationals with no official paperwork because it presents a challenge to trace suspects when those persons commit crimes. Let us work together to ensure stock-theft is eliminated," MEC Bulwane said.

During a question-and-answer session, community representatives complained that the Anti-Stock Theft Unit of the SAPS does not always assist farmers when they call for help. They also mentioned that not all people in rural areas have mobile phones and emphasised that police stations at the border need to have landlines. One of the community members said: "We are fed-up with the illegal removal of cattle worth millions, and we believe suspects are protected by our police. Livestock not claimed at authorities in Lesotho are auctioned off quickly and transported away.

Lately farmers are being murdered and something must be done quickly. Cattle patrolling must be done - even if it is on horseback."

The executive authority told the meeting that the department will provide two additional *bakkies* to assist in rural safety patrols.

In South Africa, each year more than 131 000 cases of stolen livestock are reported. In the Free State alone about 4 000 stock theft cases are reported annually. In 2019/2020, the value of stolen livestock was estimated at about R1.1 billion and on average there are about 182 cattle, 282 sheep and 138 goats being stolen every day in South Africa.

The meeting was also attended by representatives of the SANDF, AFASA, Free State Agriculture Union. Representatives of various royal houses found in the eastern Free State were also in attendance.



FORUM TO LOOK AFTER THE DIFFERENTLY ABLED

The Department recently has created a Disability Forum to further awareness of disability issues, eradicating unfair discrimination against persons with disability, and to contribute to transformation and disability mainstreaming within the department.

The Disability Management is currently the function of HRM (HR Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Subdirectorate).



FORUM REPRESENTATIVES:

Disability Focal Person:

Mr. NN Selai (top, right)

Chairperson:

Mr. OA Mlangeni - Roads, Reitz (first row, left)

Secretary:

Ms. NS Thahetse - Traffic Management, Virginia (first row, centre)

Members:

Ms. NM Motja - Security Management, Virginia (first row, right)

Mr. SS Tladi - Roads (middle row, left)

Ms. MA Manka - Representing HRD Bloemfontein (middle row, centre)

Ms. K Maqubu Representing Wellness (EHW), Bloemfontein (middle row, right)

Ms. B Motjeane Representing Conditions of Service, Bloemfontein (bottom row, left)

Ms. Y Magadla Representing HRP Unit, Bloemfontein (First row, centre)

Ms. M Lejaka Representing HRP Unit, Bloemfontein (First row, right)

Mr. GG Els of Traffic Management, Virginia: No picture available at the time of print.



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LEARNERS, LEAVE CRIME ALONE!

The MEC for Police, Roads and Transport, Mr. William Bulwane, visited Rebatlathuto and Kwakwatsi Secondary School in Koppies on 4 February 2022 to encourage learners not to get involved in criminal activities and rather focus on their education.

Bulwane congratulated learners at the schools for doing well in their studies, especially in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. He encouraged the learners of Rebatlathuto to even work harder this year and said: "We are proud of you for achieving a 96.4 % matric pass rate last year and I challenge you to get 100% this year. I know you will!"

He urged them to focus on their school work, not engage in bullying and stay away from drugs and alcohol.

MEC Bulwane also urged learners of Kwakwatsi Secondary school to work harder this year. The school achieved an 84% pass rate last year and the MEC encouraged them to strive for a 100% matric pass rate in 2022. "We want you to put more effort by starting as early as today to study. Do not procrastinate and waste time. Have a purpose in life and diligently work towards it,"

He concluded by saying he expects future doctors, lawyers and pilots from the school. "This will only be possible if you listen to your teachers and respect them, study hard, don't get involved in criminal activities or drugs and stay out of harm's way."



MEC MEETS WITH SAPS IN ZAMDELA

The MEC for Police, Roads and Transport in the Free State, Mr. William Bulwane, visited Zamdelela on 3 February 2022 to interact with police officers. He instructed them to make sure they successfully combat crime in the areas where they are stationed.

"We need a changed in society if we want to root out crime. Let's serve our communities at all times. Police officers must always comply with our mandate," said the MEC.

MEC Bulwane also met with Taxi Associations from Mafube, Moqhaka, Ngwathe, Kutlwanong and Metsimaholo to inform them of the roadshows the Department will be embarking on.



METSIMAHOLO RURAL SAFETY

On 25 March the Department of Police, Roads and Transport in partnership with other stakeholders held an event on rural safety at the Sasolburg Multi-purpose centre.

The main focus was on the challenges of livestock owners and emerging farmers around Sasolburg and Zamdela, specifically stock theft, employment of foreign herd boys, land for grazing, bylaws and the need for support from government departments such as Agriculture and Rural Development.

People voiced their concerns on the availability of grazing land which is supposed to be a role of the municipality as they have to provide land for cattle feed. SAPS said they have problems with impounded animals as there are no places to keep the animals when they are impounded.

Mr. Litaba Mohapi from the department explained the role of livestock owners and police in combating livestock. The need to address common challenges such as the marking of animals. People complained that they have limited access to the Pretoria Office to submit their applications to get brand mark certificates.

It was evident from the discussions that all stakeholders have to work closely together with organised agriculture and try to establish one association for emerging farmers within the Metsimaholo municipality.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH IN BOTSHABELO

The Department of Police, Roads and Transport (DPRT) and South African Police Services, (SAPS) supported a community outreach program on 12 March 2022 at Botshabelo stadium hosted by Mr. Litaba Maphisa. The purpose of this event was to give school shoes and bags to children in need; make them aware of crime and criminality and teach them about the consequences thereof.

Constable Masilo of the SAPS said parents must know what is going on in their child's life – where does he or she go? With whom do they hang out? Be your child's friend and at all times keep communication channels open between you."

The Department of Health also came to support and to teach scholars to stay away from drugs.

Mr. Maphisa, owner of Tabzos pub in Botshabelo, said in his address he grew up with nothing and knows the humiliating feeling of not having shoes. This made him adamant that he will do whatever to give back to his community when he became successful



During the Outreach event in Botshabelo, the SAPS urged parents to be aware of their children's whereabouts at all times and to have an open relationship with them.



TIERPOORT MADE AWARE OF CRIME

The Department of Police, Roads and Transport, together with the South African Police Services (SAPS), Correctional Services and the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, conducted an anti-crime campaign at Kgotsafalo Intermediate School at Tierpoort on 16 March 2022 to address drug- and alcohol abuse, the dangers of carrying weapons and how behaviour and attitude can influence one's life.



AMBASSADORS FOR SAFER ROADS

The Department of Police, Roads and Transport (DPRT) together with Road Traffic Infringement Authority (RTIA) was invited to participate in the *Tsogo Road Safety Program* on 3 March 2022 at SAPS' Kagisanong Hall, Rocklands in Bloemfontein.

The Abuti Rams Foundation (ARF) in partnership with the Road Accident Fund (RAF) are implementing the *Tsogo Road Safety Program* for a period of four months within the four selected provinces (Free State, Gauteng, North West and Kwa-Zulu Natal) with 400 participants within the road safety and transport sector.

Presentations were made by various industry experts from institutions such as National and Provincial Departments of Transport, RTIA, the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) and others. They explained the work done within the road safety space and road transport sector. A road safety challenge was also held and two students won money to start their businesses.

Training was also done to give knowledge and skills needed to create business plans with the intention of creating employment. The campaign focuses on educating students interested in road safety to become ambassadors for safer road use in South Africa.



INDUCTION FOR SECURITY OFFICERS

The Department of Police, Roads and Transport has appointed on appointed 508 security officers on 1 February 2021, but due to the Covid-19 regulations that were in place at the time, the Human Resources (HR) section could not give the new officials proper induction courses.

During February this year HR held workshops for these officials in all five districts of the Province.

Human Resources invited the GEPF, SARS and Gems to share information with the employees regarding the benefits in the public service and HR presented the policies, strategic framework and Gender Equality framework.

The information sessions started in Thabo Mofutsanyane at Qwaqwa and then moved on to Fezile Dabi, Motheo, Xhariep and Lejeleputswa.





NEW TECHNOLOGY, NEW PAVEMENTS

The MEC for the Department of Police Roads and Transport, Mr. William Bulwane, on 31 January 2022 launched the Pavement Management and Assessment project at Lengau Testing Station. The MEC was accompanied by the Acting Head of Department: Mr. Robinson Thekiso and Roads Chief Director: Freddy Tokwe.

This project will assist the department to have a clearer understanding of all the issues and challenges of their road network. The collection of road network data assists in understanding and documenting the conditions of both paved and gravel roads and also gives indications of what

type of maintenance activities is required on which sections of the road.

The collection of data will be executed with vehicles that are equipped with laser technologies for automatic crack detection and surface layer conditions, Falling Weight Deflectometer (FWD) for checking the structural strength of the pavement layers underneath the road, Traffic Speed Deflectometer Device (TSDD) for the continuous deflection on our strategic roads. We believe that our province and all road users will benefit from this initiative in the long run.

MEC OBSERVES THE NAKED TRUTH ABOUT KAALSPRUIT



The MEC of Police, Roads and Transport (DPRT), accompanied by Chief Director Road Infrastructure Mr. Freddy Tokwe and Head of Government Fleet Mr. Mohammed No'maan Ismail, on 21 January 2022 visited the Kaalspruit access road 27 km outside Bloemfontein.

The visit was informed by reports that heavy vehicles - including the school bus transporting learners from and to their schools on a daily basis - were unable to use the road due to flash floods damaging the road shoulders.

The MEC's visit with the Road Unit's technical team was to assess the scope of the damage and to decide on what immediate interventions the department can introduce to improve the conditions of the road.

During a media briefing on the matter, MEC Bulwane announced alternative routes to be taken by motorists to avoid the roads affected by heavy rains and floods in the province. He advised motorists to opt for the detours although they generally are longer. "Think safety and ensure you arrive alive at your destination," said Bulwane.

STUDENTS TAUGHT TO RESPECT THE RULES OF THE ROADS

The Department of Police, Roads and Transport (DPRT) together with representatives of the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), launched a road safety awareness campaign for students of Motheo T-VET Technical College in Thaba Nchu on 25 February 2022.

The campaign educated students on the risks of drinking and driving and also texting while driving or walking. Many students participated and asked questions on how to be safer drivers and pedestrians.

The main aim of the campaign by the DPRT and RTMC was to remind young adults – especially those who recently obtained their drivers' licences and do not have a lot of experience driving in various conditions - to take road safety seriously and avoid being reckless, ignorant and arrogant on our roads.



Have your say!

We would like your feedback on the content of the departmental newsletter. We also need ideas for stories and to be informed about activities in all the directorates.

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