

Statement by Dan Plato, Western Cape Minister of Community Safety

Crime Stats 2017 – Almost a quarter of all crime reported in the country occurs in the Western Cape

I welcome the long-awaited release of the annual national crime statistics today and will be studying the results closely, together with my department.

With almost a quarter (22.78%) of all crime reported in South Africa occurring in the Western Cape, it is evident that too many communities in the province do not have the luxury of feeling safe in their communities.

This is most often the result of insufficient policing resources, despite the best efforts of Provincial Commissioner Khombinkosi Jula and his team.

The fact is that violent crime is highest in areas where the police are most under-resourced. National government has operational control over SAPS and we will continue to advocate for sufficient policing resources, including specialised units to target gangs, guns and drugs.

We also reiterate our call for the SANDF to be used as force-multipliers in gang affected communities – this is a short-term measure to stabilise the gang violence situation.

A third (10) of the top 30 stations with the highest recorded contact crimes in the country are within the Western Cape. Nine (9) of these ten are concentrated within the City of Cape Town, namely: Nyanga, Mitchells Plain, Khayelitsha, Harare, Kraaifontein, Delft, Cape Town Central, Mfuleni and Gugulethu.

The prominence of violent crime remains of great concern.

I agree with the National Police Minister, Fikile Mbalula, who has expressed his concern about the role of alcohol, drugs and firearms in committing crime. I extend my sincere condolences to the Deputy Minister of Police, Bongani Mkongi, and his family on the loss of his nephew – a fatal victim of violent crime recently in Gugulethu.

My Department will now conduct an in-depth analysis on these crime stats, in order to shed more light on specific trends, crime categories and proposed responses. My initial reaction is as follow:

Reporting of crime

I remain concerned with a worrying trend over the last three years which shows decreasing statistical reporting of crime by communities. A total of 361 694 crimes have been reported by Western Cape communities in 2016/17. This is 13 258 less than in 2015/16 (374 952) and 23 242 less than in 2014/15 (381 936).

I urge communities in the Western Cape to continue to report all incidents of crime to their nearest police station. The people of the Western Cape need to have the necessary confidence in the police that those responsible for crime will be caught

and will face their day in court. My department will continue to reach out to communities to help build the necessary trust between communities and the police.

Crime categories

Violent crime in the Western Cape continues to increase, including:

- Murder up with 2.7%, compared to a national increase of 1.8%;
- Robbery with aggravated circumstances increased with 1.3%;
- Sexual assault increased with 6%, compared to a national increase of only 0.9%;
- Carjacking increased with 8.3%;
- Truck hijacking increased with 26.1%;
- Robbery of cash in transit increased with 45.8%;

Murders reported in the Western Cape accounts for 21.1% of all murders in the country with 10 police precincts listed in the top twenty precincts with the worst murder statistics, including:

Station	2016/17	2015/16	% Change
Nyanga	281	279	0.7% Increase
Delft	183	143	28% increase
Khayelitsha	179	161	11.2% increase
Harare	174	166	4.8% increase
Philippi East	150	122	23% increase
Kraaifontein	142	152	6.6% decrease
Gugulethu	136	184	26.1% decrease
Mfuleni	125	139	10.1% decrease
Mitchells Plain	103	119	13.4% decrease
Bishop Lavis	97	77	26% increase

Attempted Murders reported in the Western Cape accounts for 18.6% of all attempted murders in the country with 12 police precincts listed in the top thirty precincts with the worst attempted murder statistics, including:

Station	2016/17	2015/16	% Change
Khayelitsha	256	183	39.9% increase
Nyanga	183	198	7.6% decrease
Delft	178	151	17.9% increase
Kraaifontein	160	134	19.4% increase
Elsies River	156	163	4.3% decrease
Mitchells Plain	144	208	30.8% decrease
Bishop Lavis	143	122	17.2% increase
Manenberg	114	130	12.3% decrease
Ravensmead	111	71	56.3% increase
Mfuleni	109	130	16.2% decrease
Steenberg	102	122	16.4% decrease
Philippi East	98	68	44.1% increase

Although there has been a nominal reduction of 0.2% in total number of **sexual offences** reported in the Western Cape, the 7 115 cases reported represents 14.3% of

all sexual offences committed in the country, compared to 13.7% of all cases reported in 2015/16.

I am extremely concerned about the seven (7) Western Cape stations listed in the top 30 stations with the most reported sexual offences, which include: Nyanga, Gugulethu, Mfuleni, Delft, Harare, Mitchels Plain and Kraaifontein.

It is heartening to see that **Crime Detected As A Result of Police Action** continues to increase with a 13.5% increase in 2016/17 (123 477) compared to 2015/16 (108 782).

These include the 2 929 counts of **Illegal possession of firearms and ammunition** which represents 18.1% of all counts in the country and 3.9% more than the 2 819 counts recorded in 2015/16.

When it comes to **Drug-related crime**, the Western Cape still accounts for more than 36% of all drug-related crime in the province which at 107 379 counts in 2016/17 reflects a 14.2% increase from the 93 996 counts in 2015/16.

At an average of 294 drug-related crime counts per day and an average of 8 counts of illegal firearms and ammunition per day, it becomes clear where the SAPS' focus should be.

I have been vocal over the past few years that the prevalence of and accessibility to guns in the Western Cape is of great concern which requires greater police action.

Worrying trends of 45.8% increase in **Robbery of cash in transit**, 26.1% increase in **Truck hijacking** and 8.3% increase in **Carjacking**, would seem to further allude to problem of availability of illegal guns in our communities.

Conclusion

It cannot be considered as normal that in the Western Cape, on average, everyday crimes reported to police in the province include:

- 9 counts murders;
- 19 counts sexual offences;
- 9 counts attempted murder;
- 66 counts assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm;
- 109 counts of common assault; and
- 65 counts of robbery with aggravating circumstances.

We need to take a critical look at crime prevention initiatives and interventions instituted by the police, where they are falling short and how best we - society-as-a-whole - can help address these shortages.

We all have a role to play in creating the safer communities we want to live in. More importantly, we all need to ensure that the police remain accountable to the people they serve, and that the public is able to trust in the police's capacity and capabilities to protect them.