



Department of Community Safety hosts Rural Safety Summits across the Province



Compiled By: Chantell Hendricks and Ishaam Davids



Left: Minister for Police Oversight and Community Safety, Reagen Allen addressing delegates at the first two day Rural Safety Summit on 23 September 2022 in Bredasdorp.

On 22 and 23 September 2022 the Western Cape Minister of Police Oversight and Community Safety, Reagen Allen and the Head of the Department, Adv Yashina Pillay hosted the first Rural Safety Summit and Policing Needs and Priorities (PNP) engagement in Bredasdorp, (Overberg District Municipality).

The Rural Safety Summit PNP stems from:

- Minister Reagen Allen's commitment to engaging all relevant stakeholders across the Western Cape;
- From a need for an integrated and coordinated approach to crime prevention and

responding to social unrest across the Western Cape;

- Focusing on developing an integrated communication platform (technology platform) among law enforcement role players; and
- To assist local authorities to promote and create safer environments.

Three additional summits were held in Saldanha Bay (West Coast District Municipality) on 3 – 4 October 2022, George (Garden Route District Municipality) on 17 and 18 October 2022 and Goudini, Rawsonville (Cape Winelands District Municipality) from 14 to 15 November 2022.

The Western Cape Government (WCG) views the safety and security of all communities in the Western Cape as a priority, including that of rural communities. To build on this strategic goal, the Department of Community Safety is working towards improving the wellness and safety of communities in district and local municipalities together with local safety stakeholders. The findings of the PNP will also contribute to the provincial PNPs which are submitted annually to the Minister of Police. Thus, it is important to create safer environments and create a united approach towards fighting crime effective partnerships are needed between the South African Police Services (SAPS), all law enforcement entities, and all spheres of government and communities. The themes covered during the summits and PNPs aligns to the Safety Plans hence includes law enforcement, urban design and social cohesion.

All information is currently being collated and a report will be drafted. This report will be used together with the Districts to ensure that current District Rural Safety Plan is reviewed and fine tuned to address the specific needs highlighted during the summits and PNP engagements.

Various stakeholders attended the summits, including the Department of Agriculture, stakeholders from all spheres of Government, Community Police Forums (CPFs), the SAPS, Farm Watches, Neighbourhood Watches (NHWs), District Municipalities, Western Cape Police Ombudsman and the Department of Community Safety.



Above: Delegates attending the West Coast District, Saldanha Bay Rural Safety Summit on 3 – 4 October 2022.



Deputy Mayor for Breede Valley Municipality, Councillor Juben Von Willingh, Mayor of Cape Winelands District Municipality, Ald Dr Elna von Schlicht and Executive Mayor of Witzenberg Municipality, Hendrik Smit.

Below: Dr Ivan Meyer, Western Cape Minister of Agriculture addresses the stakeholders at the Cape Winelands Rural Safety Summit held



Above: From left - Head of Department for Community Safety, Adv Yashina Pillay, Minister of Police Oversight and Community Safety, Mr Reagen Allen, Area Commissioner of Drakenstein at the Department of Correctional Services, Ms Ntomboxolo Kungene and South African Police Service District Commissioner Cape Winelands, Major General Marius Groenewald.



Below: Stakeholders in attendance at the Cape Winelands Rural Safety Summit held at Goudini Spa.

Minister Reagen Allen said, "The more I interact with the various municipalities, Neighbourhood and Farm Watches, CPFs, SAPS, sister government departments and various others, the more I'm convinced that as a united front we would be able to overcome crime.



There are various challenges, but with a strategic, coordinated, and unified approach where all relevant stakeholders are involved, the better our chance to create a safer Western Cape. Let's continue working. I'm looking forward to engaging other Districts during more summits about how we can ensure a safer province."

The Department will continue to render its services and impact lives to the best of its ability and is committed to creating a Safer Province **FOR YOU**.



OPENING OF MOSSEL BAY'S JOINT OPERATION CENTRE (JOC)



Above from left: Dr Ivan Meyer, Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, Alderman Dirk Kotzé (Mayor of Mossel Bay), Minister for Police Oversight and Community Safety, Reagen Allen, Councillor Leon van Dyk and Premier of the Western Cape Government, Alan Winde.

On Tuesday, 16 August 2022 at the 17th Avenue Mossel Bay Golf Club hailed the official opening of the multimillion-rand, state-of-the-art Joint Operations Centre (JOC), which houses all disaster management services for the region. The Western Cape Premier Alan Winde referred to the venture as a "very big partnership".

Initially, the aim was to create a central location for the Neighbourhood Watch groups to operate from and where equipment could be stored.



Above: Head of Department for Community Safety, Adv Yashina Pillay with HOD Sebopetsa and personnel based at the Joint Operation Centre.

On the day of the launch, Premier Alan Winde and a delegation of Western Cape Ministers attended the opening of Mossel Bay's new Joint Operation Centre (JOC).

At the official opening ceremony, the Premier said: *“To tackle disasters and crime, we need to be constantly on the alert and prepared for anything.”* The Premier expressed his excitement at the opening of the facility: *“With this JOC, its impressive equipment, staffed with brave, dedicated firefighters, medical professionals, police officers, IT experts and sea rescue personnel, lives will be saved, and the safety of residents improved.”*

The Centre had humble beginnings. It started out as three containers, but over the past few years, it has been transformed into a state-of-the-art facility situated on 800 square metres, on three levels from where safety and emergency services can be centralised and deployed.

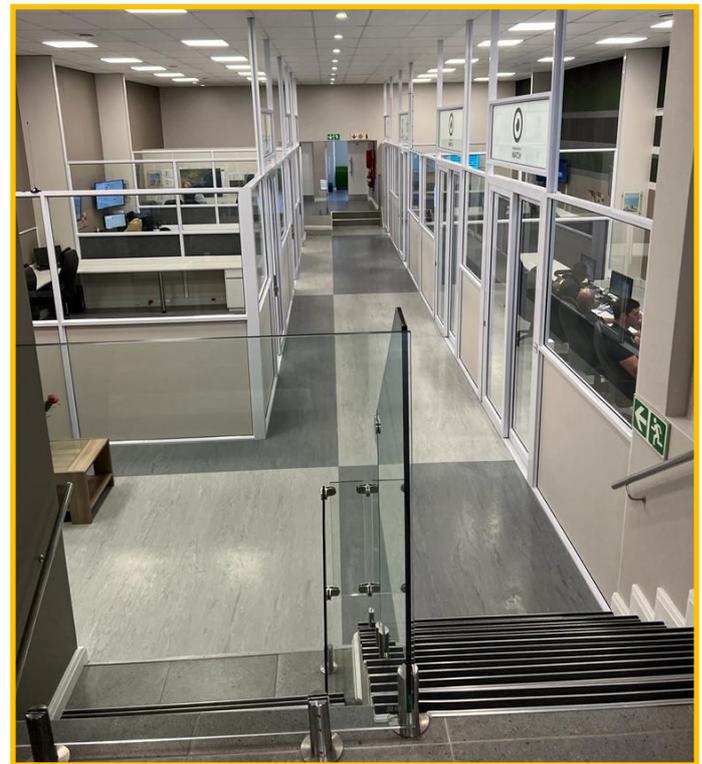
The three levels consist of:

- incident analysis, evaluation, and control of various stakeholders.
- a management and planning level; and
- an operational room.

Among the JOC’s features are:

- The Southern Cape South African Police Service (SAPS) radio server is housed at the Centre;
- Mossel Bay currently has a network of 200 CCTV cameras linked to the JOC;
- A helipad for two helicopters;
- R15 million was spent on making the JOC deaf, blind and wheelchair friendly for staff with disabilities.

The **below** images gives an inside view of certain operation sections of the centre.



“This Centre epitomises integration and cooperation between the various law enforcement agencies. Having all these entities under one roof is what we need across the Western Cape,” remarked Provincial Police Oversight and Community Safety Minister Reagen Allen.

Information supplied By: The Department of the Premier and sourced from local newspapers



K-9 UNIT SNIFFS OUT CRIMINALS



Images showcasing the confiscation of firearm and ammunition by **Swartland and Overstrand Municipality K9 Unit and SAPS.**



The Department of Community Safety (DoCS) supports three K-9 Units in the following Municipalities; Overstrand Municipality, Swartland Municipality and City of Cape Town. Between August 2022 - October 2022, the Overstrand and Swartland Districts utilised the strong sense of smell of their police dogs to effect the arrest of four suspects during three separate operations. The Overstrand unit, which operates throughout the Overberg District, has six officers and six dogs.

The K-9 Unit's main objective is to serve as a crime fighting force multiplier to SAPS and other role-players with the detection and searching of contraband, particularly illegal drugs, explosive devices, firearms, ammunition, as well as aiding the Department of Environment Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) to curb the illegal trade of abalone, crayfish, and other marine products.

On 22 October 2022, the K-9 Unit assisted the SAPS with 2 separate drug searches at houses in Gansbaai.

Along with this the following confiscations were made:



- tik and ecstasy with tik lollies;
- various types of tablets;
- 48 jars containing cannabis;
- magic mushrooms;
- 10 bags containing 2 571 units of abalone, with an estimated street value of R1.2 million was confiscated and two suspects were arrested;

In the Hangklip area a discovery of 6 abandoned bags containing 132 units of abalone with an estimated street value is R 61 500 was confiscated. Similar successful operations in the Swartland and Overstrand regions whereby K-9 Units latched onto criminals with a sharp bite and ensured the arrest of 23 individuals. These arrests made possible through the efforts of man's best friend, who detected an array of illicit items. The Swartland unit has 9 officers and 9 dogs, while Overstrand has 7 officers and 5 dogs.

Highlights from the two units are as follows:

Swartland Unit:

- 5 arrests were made;
- Various drugs were confiscated, including 77 parcels of dagga, with one bag weighing 9.51 kg and 10 methamphetamine (tik) straws;
- R 5 500 in cash was confiscated
- Conducted 5 searches of premises; and
- Conducted Social Crime Prevention and Drug Abuse Awareness sessions at Ruststasie Primary School with the aim on raising awareness around drug abuse.

Overstrand Unit:

- Made 19 arrests during the same period;
- Stopped and searched 30 vehicles;
- Searched 8 houses;
- Confiscated two knives, along with dagga, tik and mandrax; and
- Conducted an information session at the Zwelishle Primary School Career Exposition

Minister Reagen Allen said: "Man's best friend, their handlers and all officials must be commended for these arrests, confiscations, and overall successes. They are continuing to do a sterling job in ensuring that the routes criminals are using to transport their illicit items are interrupted. Part of the reason why the Western Cape Government invested in the K-9 Unit is to ensure that our residents are kept out of harm's way and can live in safer communities."

Information Supplied By: Xenophone Wentzel

Compiled By: Chantell Hendricks



LEAP OPERATIONS, CONTINUE TO MAKE ITS IMPACT



The Law Enforcement Advancement Plan (LEAP) Officers continue to make significant strides in fighting crime as part of the Western Cape Safety Plan. LEAP officers are directly ensuring that the arsenal of criminals are reduced. A few highlights under review and reported between September 2022 – November 2022 are in areas where they are deployed, and have **amongst others:**

- Searched 641 563 persons;
- Searched 2 663 houses;
- Conducted 11 674 patrols in hotspot areas;
- Conducted 888 roadblocks; and
- Searched 8090 vehicles.



LEAP is an initiative of the Western Cape Government (WCG) and is implemented in partnership with the City of Cape Town over the past three years. These officers are deployed in a strategic, data-led, and evidence-based manner to areas where they can make the biggest difference in turning around negative crime statistics.

This includes the top 10 murder areas in the Western Cape, such as Delft, Gugulethu, Harare, Khayelitsha (Site B policing precinct), Kraaifontein, Mfuleni, Mitchells Plain, Nyanga, Philippi East and Samora Machel. Other high crime areas in which they are deployed are Atlantis, Bishop Lavis and Hanover Park, along with Lavender Hill, Steenberg and Grassy Park. LEAP officers are very active as searches and confiscations has occurred in most of the above-mentioned areas.

Minister for Police Oversight and Community Safety Reagen Allen said: *“We have initiated the LEAP programme to strengthen the hand of the South African Police Services, so that greater safety can be achieved in our communities.*



We feel that the national government has abandoned the residents of this province and it is for this reason that we believe they are not providing the required policing resources to the Western Cape. Through the LEAP programme, it is clear we are not sitting idle, and instead are going the extra mile, as we want to ensure our residents can live in safer environment and in dignity."

Minister Reagen Allen continued: "SAPS under a capable government such as ours will be professional, operate in a manner that shows residents they can be trusted, and similarly to LEAP, will be deployed strategically and according to the safety needs of an area. It is critical that residents assist our LEAP officers in this fight against crime. They, along with all law enforcement agencies, other City of Cape Town law enforcement entities and SAPS, require all our support" concluded Minister Reagen Allen".

In the province so far this year 48% of all homicides can be attributed to gun shots.

Minister Reagen Allen said: "With each illegal firearm removed off our streets, we're ensuring that lives are saved and changed. Every day, in our communities, young children and adults alike are exposed to the sound of gunfire ringing out, the trauma of which will have life-long impacts, with some children losing their way as a result, and perpetuating the cycle of violence. By taking guns away, we're giving back a chance at a brighter future."

The deployment of LEAP officers is obligated in the WCG's Safety Plan, which was initiated in September 2019. The Safety Plan, which is the brainchild of Premier Alan Winde, emerged as part of a commitment to address the high murder rate in the province. The primary aim is to reduce the murder rate by 50% by 2029. The WCG and City of Cape Town works collaboratively to deliver the LEAP, and operationally works with the local SAPS.

"We should all put shoulder to the wheel and be united in the fight against crime, as neither LEAP, nor its partners in the City of Cape Town or SAPS would be able to combat crime alone," concluded Minister Allen.

Information Supplied By: Marcellino Martin, Media Liaison Officer to the Minister of Police Oversight and Community Safety and **Compiled By:** Chantell Hendricks



Department of Community Safety

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NOTE FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

We hope that you will enjoy the first edition of the **Municipal Newsletter**, scroll through to see what is inside this edition.

Editorial team: • Adv Yashina Pillay (Head of Department: Community Safety) • Ansaaf Mohamed Director: Strategic Services and Communication.

Writers/Contributors: • Chantell Hendricks (Principal Communications Officer: Communications) • Ameerah Kenny (Assistant Director: Communications) • Ishaam Davids (Deputy Director: Communications) • Xenophone Wentzel (Assistant Director: Safety Promotion and Partnerships) • Marcellino Martin (Media Liaison Officer to the Minister of Police Oversight)

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• **Images:** Sourced from the DoCS photo bank and received from DoCS Project Coordinators and Municipal Chief Communications Officers

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STAKE-
HOLDERS

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