

MEC'sVR Shongwe's Input to the Portfolio Committee for Public Works, Roads and Transport; Community Safety, Liaison on 11 May 2012.

Chair of the Portfolio Committee, Honorable

Honorable Members of the Committee

My team from the Department,

Officials of the Legislature,

I greet you all.

Honorable Chair, allow me to convey my appreciation for giving us this opportunity to present before you the Departmental plans for the financial year 2012/2013.

Before I do that Honorable Chair, it is proper that I note sad passing away of our beloved comrades and prominent figures in our glorious organization the ANC. The people of Mpumalanga and the Country have lost their leaders in the last few weeks.

Honorable Chair, allow me to take this opportunity and send our heartfelt condolences to the family of Cde Scelo Shiceka, Minister Roy Padayachie, Cde Florence Nyanda and Comrade Linah Shongwe.

This are comrades who worked tirelessly in their own right to better the lives of the people of South Africa. It is befitting therefore Chair, that we must find courage and strength from their commitment to continue the struggle for a better life for all our people. The spear must not fall down, those of us remaining behind must carry on from where they left.

May their soul rest in peace.

To demonstrate our commitment to better the lives of our people, to ensure that they are and feel safe, the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison is presenting before the Committee its plans to realize these objectives.

It is our intention to work closely with all security agencies to ensure that the lives of criminals are forever miserable. They must know no joy in their dens except being kept in the police holding cells and prisons. Be it for drunk and driving, raping, killing or any kind of criminal activity that makes the people of the Province feel unsafe.

The criminals and their friends, should know that the security agencies in Mpumalanga as supported by Government, possesses the authority both morally and politically to ensure that, by all means in their power, the people of this Province are not deprived of their human rights in any way, that of being safe.

Honorable Chair, our mandate over the medium term is to lead outcome number 3 which says that "All people in South Africa are and feel safe" addressing the following outputs:

Reduce the levels of overall contact by 4-7 % per annum and intensify efforts of fighting crimes against women and children and the trio crimes (high jacking, business and house robberies)

Mobilization of the communities in the fight against crime

An effective and integrated criminal justice system, manage crime perceptions.

Manage our borders

It is with great pleasure Honorable Chair, to report to the Committee that, already there are positive indications which suggest that there is a decline in the levels of crime in general in our Province.

However, it should be noted that there were some increases in other categories which are now sufficiently receiving the necessary from relevant authorities to ensure that they too, are dealt with.

These indications Honorable Chair are represented by a 6.8 % decrease in crime and I would also like to bring it to the attention of the Committee that our Province is leading in terms of crime reduction in the country. This is a clear indication that there is something right that our security agencies are doing.

On the 1st of June last year the Premier of the Province, DD Mabuza approved the alignment of Traffic Management to our Department. This presented us with an additional responsibility to fight road carnages as well to ensure that indeed our people are and feel safe on our roads.

We introduced a unit called "Traffic Intervention Unit" to particularly concentrate on the so called killer roads in our Province. These roads include amongst others the N4, N11, R40, N2, R33 ect.

We are making good inroads and our roads are no longer a place where people can drink and drive without any consequences, they are no longer a place where violating traffic rules is a free for all, hence our recently adopted slogan which says, "SEKWANELE BOPHA".

We have and are continuing with our efforts to keep in touch with our communities through Izimbizos. We are doing this because making the people of Mpumalanga safe can never be the responsibility of security agencies and government alone. Their active participation is key if we are to win the battle.

We are working very closely with all stakeholders in the fight against crime in the Province through the a root cause based approach and combating. As results we continue to organise the different forums which are attended by SAPS, SANDF, Home Affairs, SARS, Justice and NIA. Our plans are going to give details on all this forums.

Honorable Chair, as you would always know, resource limitations are a permanent constraints in our work to execute our mandate. As my team presents the plans for this financial year, it will become crystal clear that with more resource allocations, we can do more. However, we will use what we have as efficient and effective as possible to deliver maximum results.

In the short stint that I have been with the Department Honorable Chair, I want to qualify our request for more resources based on the experience I have accumulated thus far.

It is our view that the work done by Traffic Officers be declared as an essential service in the Province and that a third shift be introduced to ensure their visibility. We are saying this because, it has been discovered that most accidents happens when traffic officers have knocked off at night.

We understand that the extended working hours will require both financial and human resources, hence our efforts to establish a Traffic Training College in Mpumalanga.

I have been doing my oversight work on the SAPS with them on the ground and through Minmec I have raised many of the issues which affect them to Minister Nathi Mthethwa. I am therefore appealing to the Committee to assist us in improving the working conditions of our traffic officials through creating a conducive environment where in this official are able to turn our killer roads into holly roads.

Together we will fight and win over crime, we will deal effectively with Road carnages to ensure that the people of the Province are and Feel Safe.

Honorable Chair, I would therefore take this opportunity to present before you and the Committee, the Management of the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison as led by our youthful and dynamic Head of Department Mr Thulani Sibuyi.

I thank you.