

## **MEC VR Shongwe Address on the launching on the Fundamentals on Security Vetting held at Provincial Disaster Management Centre on the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2012.**

The Author of Fundamentals of Security Vetting In a Democratic South Africa - Advocate Buyile Mdluli

Security Managers from Different Departments

Security Managers from Different Private Companies

Members of the Press,

Distinguished guests,

I greet you all.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me take this opportunity to pass my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to give an input in the launching of this very important book within the security sector.

Advocate Mdluli, this book signals a huge shift and points towards a direction where our intellectuals, scholars and accomplished academics should be directing their energies to.

This is particularly true within black academics and intellectuals. You have entered into an area never explored before and travelled on land never travelled before, by putting this book together and produced this easy to read bible on security vetting.

I must commend and thank you for taking this initiatives and it comes when we are seriously challenged and exposed as Government on the lack or none vetting of personnel. This challenge is not only in Government but it extent to private companies; state owned companies, as well as the security sector itself.

You have made it easy and given us this bible which captures clearly and unambiguously, the steps, the do's and don'ts, the different legislations which governs vetting processes, the norms and the standards as well as clear cut illustration of what needs to be done through case studies.

In my view, you have strengthened us, you have armed us with information properly packaged and easy to interpret, understand and apply.

Advocate Mdluli, I have said earlier that the problems we are faced with as a result of lack or non-vetting is cutting across all sectors and the security industry itself is not immune.

We have witness before incidences where for instance, security companies have employed wrong personnel to guard and protect property and other valuables without having properly vetted them. The results of that, being loses which are orchestrated by the very individuals who are supposed to be protecting and guarding the property.

We have had cases where the first people to be arrested becomes the security personnel themselves, or Police Officials, or Staff members in companies or Government. All this raises one question, that is,

“Do we know the people who are guarding our properties or having access to sensitive data?”

Only proper vetting can help us answer that question and that is why Advocate Mdluli I am sure that this book will allow security practitioners to understand what is required of them and also sensitize them to the legislative backup they have in as far as their work is concerned.

They will not have to run from one act to another in order to justify taking certain actions but the book alludes to all pieces of legislations and Acts that has a direct bearing of security vetting.

It is even more worrying when you hear in the news and elsewhere that information was leaked by someone in the office of the Public Protector, the National Prosecuting Authority, or in the Premier’s or MEC’s office. One would expect that such offices will have screened in details the personnel it employs.

This clearly demonstrate Advocate Mdluli, how serious we must be about vetting that is properly conducted with all the consideration as stipulated in our constitution.

The book provides bases on which the security industry and government benchmark methodologies and improve its strategies for vetting personnel and addressing non-compliance where it occurs. It allows security practitioners to develop procedures that will guarantee integrity and improve security vetting efficiency and effectiveness.

In terms of the Minimum Information Standard document, Security Competence of a person is described as follows :

A Security Competent person is a person's ability to act in such a manner that he does not cause classified information or material to fall into unauthorized hands, thereby harming or endangering the security or interests of the State. Security competence is normally measured against the following criteria: susceptibility to extortion or blackmail, amenability to bribes and susceptibility to being compromised due to compromising behavior, and loyalty to the state or institution.

The above can only be verified and determined in a person through a thorough vetting process that is in line with our laws. This book is an answer and I would like to appeal to all security practitioners to have a copy, read it, understands it and applies it to the fullest.

The book is clearly meant for managers, student and other users. The other users are us, the public. It is important that we are all aware of the finer details of security vetting so that we can apply the techniques in our daily lives to protect ourselves from unintended consequences.

With proper application and implementation of the fundamentals of security vetting we can contribute immensely to the effort of the police to fight crime. Proper security clearance will prevent placing of people who are likely to commit crimes when placed is certain positions.

This will ensure that you are always having security competent personnel at the right places, at the right time, depending on the risks they carry.

An over indebted, bankrupt and an addicted gambler cannot be employed at finance to be a Chief Financial Officer for instance. Only proper security vetting can sensitize us to these facts.

Program Director, security vetting is an answer to the many challenges that we as a country and amongst them are the service providers who consistently get government work yet they do not perform. Through proper vetting we can prevent these service providers from ripping off the people of South Africa.

We don't need in our schools teachers who have a potential of impregnating learners. Such individuals must be picked up earlier and prevented from making contact with unsuspecting learners that would end up being victims. As government, we have a responsibility to protect children and the Department of education must ensure that it screens and vet its teachers and staff.

I am happy about this book because it reminds us the importance of security vetting and also forces us to be proactive. Private companies could do themselves a big favor as well by taking vetting seriously in order to reduce losses. They could assist the police by picking up wanted criminals and suspects during the vetting process.

Advocate Mdluli, as a politician, I am going to encourage my comrades to buy and read this book so that we are empowered and enabled ourselves to apply the principles of vetting when electing one another into positions.

In conclusion Program Director, vetting is essential in the fight against crime and criminality in South Africa and if the book could be used to its fullest potential, we can win the fight against criminals.

It is when our people know that whatever one does has a potential of catching up with him or her in the future that they are likely to think twice before embarking on irresponsible deeds.

Vetting is allowed and legislated in South Africa and it should be done at all times in line with the law. Thank you Advocate for bringing this topic up and further write a book.

Program Director, I thank you.