

**MEC VR Shongwe's Policy and Budget Speech for Community Safety,
Security and Liaison on the 28th of April 2016**

Honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker

Honourable Premier of the Province, Mr. DD Mabuza

Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature

Honourable Members of the Executive Council

House of Traditional Leaders led by the Chairperson Kgoshi Mokoena

Director General of the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, Mr. Thulani

Mdakane

Head of Department, Mr. William Mthombothi and fellow HODs present

The South African Police Service (SAPS) Provincial Commissioner Lt. General

Mondli Zuma

Chairperson of the CPF Provincial Board Mr. Kevin Pillay

Public Safety councilors from various municipalities

Representatives from the JCPS Cluster

Distinguished guests and all dignitaries present today

Members of the media,

Comrades and Friends

Ladies and gentlemen

Sanibonani.

Opening

Honourable Speaker, the Department of Community Safety Security and Liaison is mandated to deliver on outcome number 3 which seeks to ensure that “All People in South Africa are and feel safe”.

Our view is that safety cuts across all sections of society irrespective of colour or creed. Where there is no safety, there can never be development, there can never be peace and it will be a survival of the fittest.

We want all people to feel and be safe including vulnerable groups like women and children as well as people living with disabilities.

Ours is the improvement of the community and road safety through traffic management, mass mobilization, the overseeing of the performance of the police and provision of security as captured in our mission statement.

On the arrest of traffic officials.

Honourable Speaker, early this month, the Hawks arrested 12 (twelve) traffic officers in the Province for allegedly being involved in corruption and bribery. It is alleged that some of these officials were extorting money from motorists particularly tourists.

All the implicated officials were immediately suspended pending the outcome of the criminal charges instituted against them by the Hawks.

Immediately after the arrests, we called a meeting with all Traffic Officials in the Province to understand the root causes of the alleged acts, which threatens their wellbeing of the society.

We view the acts of the officers in a serious light because if it is true, it does not only tarnish the image of government but it also affects the progress that we are making in our war against road crashes.

It is crucial ladies and gentlemen, that we deal decisively with corruption in law enforcement because failure to do so would contribute towards reinforcing negative driver behavior and disregard for traffic rules. This will impact negatively on our efforts to make our roads crash-free.

As part of addressing the challenges in the law enforcement fraternity, we have agreed to organize sessions for traffic officials in the department to receive professional advice to put a stop to the temptation to take money from motorists. The sessions are already underway in the different regions.

On RAF

Honourable Speaker, last month we opened a new office of the Road Accident Fund (RAF) here in Mbombela, near the taxi rank. We hope that the strategic location of the offices will ensure quicker turnaround time to people and most importantly an easy access to RAF services.

We hope that the people of Mpumalanga will use this office to claim directly to RAF in order and avoid using third parties.

Honourable Speaker, we supported this initiative because we have noted the

emergence of unscrupulous operations by greedy professionals and fraudulent syndicate milking the Road Accident Fund and robbing the victims in the process.

As we do our constituency work and interacting with communities, let us encourage them to go direct in order to register their claims.

On organized crime in Nkomazi

Honourable Speaker, in the last Imbizo of 2015/16 financial year, we visited Schoemansdal in Nkomazi Local Municipality. This was after receiving reports that incidences of organized crime were on the rise in the area and criminals were particularly targeting 4X4 bakkies, SUVs and livestock.

It was alleged that the vehicles were stolen and later crossed illegally into Mozambique and Swaziland.

Community members had also complained and made strong allegations that some police officials were part of the syndicate. The community then took the law into their own hands and this led to the death of four community members.

As part of responding to the cries of communities, Provincial Commissioner Lt. General Zuma acted swiftly and among others the Station Commander of Schoemansdal Police Station was replaced.

He further took all the firearms of the police officers in that station for ballistic test to determine whether they were never used in any criminal activities.

To this end, Honourable Speaker we are still waiting for the results of the

ballistic testing and if some officers are found to have participated in any wrongdoing, corrective measures will be taken against them.

Overall Friday

As part of mobilizing communities against crime at targeted areas while enhancing law enforcement visibility, the department together with SAPS and other agencies conducted five (5) Overall Friday operations.

During these operations taverns and other liquor trading areas were visited. This we did because of a link between alcohol consumption and violent crime as well as drinking and driving incidences. This programme will be sustained throughout the year to enhance safety of the people of Mpumalanga.

Operation Sethu

Ladies and gentlemen, last year in November, we launched Operation Sethu at Masobye Village in Dr. JS Moroka Municipality. The campaign is aimed at enhancing efforts geared towards the promotion of child road safety. It was inspired by a tragic loss of my daughter, Sethu, in April 2015.

With Operation Sethu we will conduct various activities that will include school camps in which identified learners between 8 and 13 years will be targeted.

The learners will be taught about the importance of road safety. We will continue to roll other activities in line with the programme in the current financial year.

A foundation named Sethu

Programme 1: Administration

Honourable Speaker, our efforts towards a clean audit are on cause and I must acknowledge the work done by the Compliance Committee to attend to all issues raised by the Auditor General and resolve them.

Honourable Speaker and members, the key task of the Programme 1 is to render support to all other programmes. An amount of **One Hundred and Ten Million, Nine Hundred and Forty Two Thousand Rand (R110 942 000)** has been set aside for this programme.

Programme 2: Civilian Oversight

Honourable Speaker and members, as part of preventing crime, we will also invest in awareness campaigns to mobilize communities against crime. This will assist in reducing the costs of investigations, prosecutions and imprisonment of criminals.

Our experience and international trends suggest that it is more cost effective in the medium to long term to invest in projects which prevent crime, than in spending more on the institutions of policing, courts and correctional services.

The importance of such proactive measures is emphasized by two factors. First is that, not all crimes can necessarily be solved by policing.

In particular, crime in rural communities can often be traced to socio-economic circumstances which cannot be addressed by police alone. This strengthens

the need for an all-inclusive approach in the fight against crime, there should be no spectators.

Secondly, the causes of crime need to be properly classified for the purposes of preventive interventions. Particular types of crime have different causes; these in turn may vary from one place to another and thus require specific solutions and interventions.

To fully effect and harness the participation of communities to reduce the levels of crime, the Department will conduct two (2) community outreach programmes and Peace and Stability Indaba.

Over the last few years we have been planning to convene the Peace and Stability Indaba to find ways of mitigating causes of violent crime in the Province.

An amount of **R 2, 7 million** has been set aside for the outreach programmes and Indaba.

To further mobilize communities against crime, the Department will conduct 60 educational awareness campaigns for example human trafficking and border security. Further campaigns on vulnerable groups, rural safety and school safety will also be undertaken.

The department will continue to support and resource Community Police Forums (CPFs) in the 86 police stations in the province.

As part of ensuring that we close down the space for people with criminal offences from participating as members if the CPFs, the Department, together

with SAPS, will conduct a confidential level vetting starting with chairpersons and secretaries including that of the Provincial Board.

Honourable Speaker, we will also continue to monitor the work of the police as part of ensuring that our communities receive good services and we will also conduct research on topical issues.

Programme 3: Transport Regulation

Honourable Speaker, crashes and deaths on the road is one of the huge concerns that the country is facing today.

We have lost six members from the same family when they perished in a crash that occurred on the R23 Road between Standerton and Perdekop. Our condolences go to the family.

The last Easter Weekend saw a decrease in road fatalities and that was very much welcomed and the challenge we now have is to ensure that the downwards trend is maintained throughout the financial year.

In order to further reduce number of fatalities and injuries, we must all of us work harder and smarter to inculcate good road user behavior and encourage voluntary compliance.

Human element continues to be the major contributor to injuries and fatalities. We are making a bold statement here that about 73% of road crashes are caused by human element as per the research conducted by RTMC in 2014.

It is true that negligent driving, drinking and driving, un-roadworthy vehicles,

drinking and walking, speeding and fatigue are leading contributors.

Honourable Speaker, the Department will continue to vigorously conduct dedicated roadblocks to check driver and vehicle fitness. In the process, our traffic officials will not hesitate to de-register vehicle licenses and ensure prosecution for non-compliant drivers.

We will continue to intensify operations targeting those who go behind the steering while intoxicated. We need to ensure the arrests of drivers who are found to be above the legal permissible blood alcohol content.

As part of our quest to improve the quality of drivers and increase visibility of traffic officials, the Department will press ahead with the construction of the Traffic Training College in Mkhuhlu.

In this regards, we have set aside One Hundred and three Million and Sixteen Thousand Rand (**R103 016 000**) to complete the college and get it ready for its first intake in 2017.

As part of the preparation to operationalize the college, the Department has set aside Thirty Four Million (R34 000 000) to procure the equipment, personnel recruitment and finalising the SAQA and SASSETA accreditation process.

Honourable Speaker, to intensify our involvement of school children in road safety education, the Department will involve 1320 schools in programmes such as scholar patrol, junior traffic training and road safety debates.

The Department is also planning to engage with different companies in the province in order to reach out to 582 drivers for the purpose of instilling good driver behaviour and safe use of the road.

The Department, through its Justice, Crime Prevention and Security cluster (JCPS) partners, communities and the private security providers will ensure that we implement the various interventions on crime related problems and to ensure that road safety messages and compliance with the rules of the road are promoted.

These messages will also be promoted as part of our contribution to Operation Vuka Sisebente (OVS) which is about the involvement of all stakeholders in bettering the lives of our communities.

Programme 4: Security Management

Honourable Speaker and members, since the transfer of the security service from various Department to DCSSL in 2011, it was discovered that the budget transferred was not in line with the allocated sites. Even after to date,, the budget for this programme continued to be inadequate. This has placed a huge financial constraint on the departmental budget.

To partly deal with the problem, the Department reduced the number of security officers. All the departments have been advised that should if there is a need for extra security service, those needs should be accompanied by sufficient budget.

Schools and hospitals, including new ones will be monitored closely to ensure that they are provided with security service.

Conclusion

Honourable Speaker as I conclude let me thank the Honorable Premier Mr. DD Mabuza for the sterling leadership and guidance.

I would also like to thank all Executive Committee members for their continued support.

I am extending my gratitude to members of the Provincial Legislature, particularly the Portfolio Committee and its Chairperson, the Honourable GS Shabalala, for their guidance and monitoring of the work of the department.

My team from the Department under the leadership of HOD Mr. W Mthombothi.

The SAPS Management in the Province under the leadership of Lt. General Zuma and the entire Justice, Crime Prevention and Security cluster for their continued and reliable support.

I want to thank my wife and my family for their unwavering support and to all friends and comrades who have been my pillar of strength.

Honourable Speaker, allow me therefore, to present and table to this house the budget for Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison as follows:

Programme1: Administration

One hundred and Ten Million Nine Hundred and Forty Two Thousand Rand (R110, 942 000).

Programme 2: Civilian Oversight

Fifty Eight Million Two Hundred and Eighty Thousand Rand (**R 58, 280 000**).

Programme 3: Transport Regulation

Five Hundred and Forty Million, Three Hundred and Thirty Six Thousand Rand (**R 540 336 000**).

Programme 4: Security Management

Three Hundred and Fifty Nine Million, Eight Hundred and Twelve Thousand Rand (**R 359 812 000**).

The total allocation to the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison is **One Billion, Sixty Nine Million, Three Hundred and Seventy Thousand Rand (R1, 069, 370 000)**.

Empumalanga sithi “Sekwanele, Bopha.”

I thank you.