

National Police Day 2023: PSA concerned about wellbeing of employees

The South African Police Service (SAPS), as a critical pillar in the country's public services to citizens, continues to face severe challenges impacting on their ability to render services and combat the high level of criminality plaguing South Africa.

The PSA is extremely concerned about factors impairing police officers' ability to serve communities. These include insufficient vehicles, and shortages of fuel and bullet-proofs vests. The number of police officers deployed to serve and protect citizens is furthermore insufficient. The PSA, for example, recently raised alarm about staff shortages at the 10111-call centre where many emergency calls go unanswered.

The PSA is concerned about the effectiveness of the Minister of Police, especially following the release of crime statistics in August 2022, indicating amongst others that 5 700 people were murdered between April and June 2022. Crime, apart from the impact on society, also impacts negatively on foreign investments and tourism, of which the country is in dire need to support the struggling economy and combat unemployment. The PSA has consistently called for more resources and competent senior managers to be provided to the SAPS as issues of chronic staff shortages, insufficient work tools, including ammunition, and the high rate of maladministration and corruption hinder operations.

This prevailing scenario tarnishes the reputation of honest and hardworking professionals who are trying to protect citizens and communities and impacts on their morale. This situation continues to worsen with thousands of skilled SAPS members expected to retire in the foreseeable future. The PSA urges President Cyril Ramaphosa to intervene as a matter of urgency, especially in respect of SAPS management structures, as management instability contributes to the challenges faced by the SAPS.

The PSA appeals to communities to support and cooperate with SAPS members to combat the scourge of crime. The Union repeats its calls for a minimum sentence of 80 years' imprisonment to be imposed on persons found guilty of killing a police officer. Those found guilty of attacking police stations and stealing firearms and ammunition should face equally harsh sentences.

On National Police Day, the PSA pays tribute to all police officers and support staff and remembers SAPS members who were killed on and off duty.

GENERAL MANAGER