



26 April 2020

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACT¹ REGULATIONS FOR COVID-19 AND THE JUSTICE AND SECURITY SECTOR - A PROVINCIAL OVERVIEW

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is part of a batch of papers prepared by researchers in the Security and Justice Cluster focusing specifically on how Covid-19 measures impact on the Departments in this Cluster and the implementation of the Disaster Management Act Regulations in this regard. This paper aims to supplement the information provided for specific portfolios, namely Police, Correctional Services, Justice and Constitutional Development, and Defence and Military Veterans. The focus of this paper is to provide an additional provincial overview, with updated provincial information, where available, on issues the said Committees will be discussing during the joint virtual meetings with Ministers in the Cluster.

Information is sourced from *inter alia* live television broadcasts, alerts and news, media reports, updates by the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) Command

¹ Act 57 of 2002



Parliament resumed from 15 April 2020, with virtual Committee meetings. The Select Committee on Security and Justice will have joint virtual meetings with Portfolio Committees overseeing departments responsible for carrying out Covid-19 measures, like the Police, SANDF and the Department of Justice and Correctional Services.

Parliament's oversight over Executive action during the lockdown and beyond should include dealing with the most pressing issues and assisting in restoring trust in the police and a return to the rule of law and respect for human rights, dignity and compassion for our people. This is especially important since the lockdown will now be lifted in stages or levels, post 30 April 2020, with most restrictions still in place for the time to come.

4. CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

The community or local transmission of the Covid-19 virus has also affected those who serve on the frontlines, and Departments have started reporting Covid-19 infections. As at 22 April 2020, the DCS reported 114 Covid-19 infections, of which 57 were inmates and 57 were staff.⁴

The following table shows that most infections (inmates and staff) were reported in the Eastern Cape (87) and Western Cape (23).

DCS COVID- 19 INFORMATION	TOTAL NUMBER OF DCS INMATES	TOTAL INFECTIONS (STAFF, INMATES)	TOTAL INMATE INFECTIONS	TOTAL STAFF INFECTIONS	TOTAL SCREENED	TOTAL TESTED	TOTAL RECOVERIES
NATIONAL DCS TOTALS	160 000 inmates in 243 centres	114 ⁵	57	57			2
Province	DCS Centre	DCS Provincial infections	Inmate infections	Staff infections	Total Screened	Additional tested	Total recoveries
EASTERN CAPE	East London; St Albans	87	56	31		27 inmates - St Albans negative	1
WESTERN CAPE	Worcester; Warm Bokkeveld	23	1	22			
LIMPOPO	Kutama Sinthumule private facility ⁶	2	0	2			1

⁴ Timeslive (2020a).

⁵ GCIS (2020).

⁶ Timeslive (2020b).



GAUTENG	Pretoria Head Office (1); Johannesburg Management Area (1)	2	0	2			
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The Department should provide updated statistics providing a provincial, DCS area and correctional centre breakdown on: infections (inmates and staff), testing (inmates and staff), recoveries (inmates and staff).

4.1 DCS COVID-19 MEASURES

One of the early measures instituted at the beginning of the lockdown was a suspension of public visits to detention facilities, including DCS facilities, namely:⁷

- Correctional Centres,
- Remand Detention Facilities,
- Holding Cells;
- Military Detention Facilities; and
- Department of Social Development facilities, including Child and Youth Care Centres, shelters, One Stop Centres, and Treatment Centres.

These visits are suspended for a period of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, which period may be extended up to the duration of the national state of disaster by the cabinet member concerned.

Other measures announced by the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services include:

- An approach focused on prevention, containment/treatment and disaster recovery within prisons.
- The Department has activated infection prevention control measures at all management areas and has pushed for the sanitisation of reception areas, cells, offices, vehicles and ablution facilities.
- Intensified Covid-19 screening and testing at all prisons after a confirmed case at an East London Correctional Centre in the Eastern Cape.
- A ban of inmates receiving cash and other niceties physically from their family members as cash was among the ways that the virus spread. To this end, Shoprite Money Market services could potentially offer a permanent solution to get cash to inmates through a cash deposit.
- Unannounced visits to ensure compliance with Covid-19 safety measures at correctional facilities.
- The Department has ensured bulk distribution of PPEs (Personal Protective Equipment) to all centres in the country. Centres that had shortages adopted interim

⁷ Ministry of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (2020). .



measures while awaiting delivery of essentials - these have now been delivered. The Department has a system in place to assist correctional centres in need of stock while awaiting delivery. Centres have flexibility to share resources. The Department has committed to provide both officials and offenders with essentials to protect them against the spread of coronavirus. According to the Minister, there was no shortage of PPEs across correctional centres.⁸

PRISON RIOTS AND HUNGER STRIKE THREATS

- The Minister of Justice and Correctional Services launched the roll-out of Covid-19 screening and testing at Johannesburg's "Sun City" correctional centre (the most populated/overcrowded DCS facility nationally) which was televised live.⁹
- On the weekend following the launch, the Sunday Times newspaper reported that the strict protocols showcased to Minister Lamola on Wednesday 'were a charade':¹⁰
- "When a Sunday Times team visited the jail on Friday, there was no sign of the precautions that greeted Lamola. A journalist entered without being screened for Covid-19 symptoms or having his hands sanitised. Visitors and officials mingled as if there was no risk of contagion. Staff said new inmates were admitted without health screening and were not kept apart from the existing prison population. Even the "hand sanitiser" that was used was really tap water, the newspaper reported."¹¹
- In a response to the article, the Minister said that essentials that do not meet the required standards would be returned to the supplier. Where necessary the Department reserves its right for defective products supplied. An investigation would be instituted in respect of visitors to the Johannesburg facility that were not screened and sanitised. It is mandatory for everyone who enters the centre to be screened. The allegations raised would constitute a breach of the operating procedure and was a cause for grave concern. The Ministry confirmed that the centre's bail office would not have been closed – due to overcrowding, the payment of bail and fines to release prisoners is not prohibited during lockdown.
- The increase in community transmission of the Covid-19 virus has prompted some civil society organisations to call for the early release of qualifying prisoners to help curb the spread of Covid-19.
- **On 20 April 2020, media reports started to surface that prisoners have threatened to go on a hunger strike due to unacceptable Covid-19 measures**, which the Department rejected as opportunistic in light of its current Covid-19 containment measures in prisons.
- According to Minister Lamola, prisoners were spreading fake news about the coronavirus in the hopes of getting early release as was happening in a few countries abroad. He said Government was looking at many ways to create physical distancing at the country's overcrowded prisons, while also admitting that it was close to impossible to practise physical distancing in prisons.
- The Minister of Health, during a visit to the Eastern Cape on 21 April 2020, confirmed in relation to the 53 inmates that tested positive for Covid-19, that the approach to dealing with the virus remained the same: "We need to keep the distance, we need to make sure that those who are found to be positive must be isolated and go for treatment. Those who are contacts must be quarantined

⁸ Timeslive (2020c).

⁹ Mumvu, Z (2020).

¹⁰ Timeslive (2020c).

¹¹ Timeslive (2020c)



separately so that we can check that they don't have the infection". Overcrowding at correctional services remained a concern, but he was aware that the Minister responsible for Corrections was dealing with the issue "of how to decongest and reduce the numbers".¹²

- **On 22 April 2020, the Star Newspaper reported on the intervention of DCS staff to quell a violent protest at the Baviaanspoort Correctional Centre in Tshwane, allegedly over a "lack of protection against the deadly Covid-19".**¹³
- The unrest was allegedly also related to "government delays in giving the go-ahead for the release of more than 19 000 inmates, as a means to curb the spread of the coronavirus in the correctional centres".
- The early release of "qualifying" inmates have been mooted by human rights activists as a necessity to prevent the spread of Covid-19, especially in overcrowded prisons.
- In December 2019, the President had ordered the early release of prisoners.
- According to a document the Star claims to have seen, qualifying inmates that "should be released, in consultation with the Department of Health, for screening and placement under community policing forums and for monitoring and support [include] sick offenders as declared by health authorities; elderly offenders above the age of 65, excluding lifers; all women excluding those declared dangerous by the court and lifers; and low-risk male offenders approaching a five years' minimum detention period for placement on parole, on conditions to be determined by the parole boards."
- The Star claims to have seen graphic videos of about 20 severely injured inmates, with at least two critical cases at Baviaanspoort Medium Prison in Tshwane "after men in Department of Correctional Services (DCS) uniforms appeared to assault prison protesters to quell the unrest."¹⁴
- The DCS on Monday released a statement calling the inmates' strike "irresponsible" and "unwarranted, as the DCS has been regularly updating the nation on progress in terms of the implementation of our Covid-19 Disaster Management Response Strategy".
- The Department also denied claims that inmates had been severely injured. According to DCS, two inmates were treated for minor injuries by health-care officials and were back in their cells. The incident was "reported to the relevant authorities, and investigations are under way."¹⁵

4.2 INSPECTING JUDGE OF CORRECTIONS LOCKDOWN CONCERNS

- The call for the early release of qualifying inmates corresponds to the call by Inspecting Judge of Corrections (JICS), Judge Edwin Cameron, who recommended that a **"more effective way to deal with prison overcrowding in an epidemic is carefully screened, carefully considered releases"**.
- Cameron urged Justice Minister Lamola to consider the release of elderly inmates over 60 years old, petty offenders and non-violent offenders, including all offenders convicted of drug offences in nonviolent circumstances, inmates with sentences of less than one year, and inmates eligible for medical parole, those approaching their parole date, and inmates imprisoned instead of paying a fine.

¹² GCIS (2020). Eastern Cape boosts capacity to fight COVID-19.

¹³ Koko, K (2020).

¹⁴ Koko, K (2020)

¹⁵ Koko, K (2020)



- Judge Cameron, together with the Detention Justice Forum and its members; requested the Minister to urgently amend the Regulations to **allow Independent Correctional Centre Visitors (ICVVs) to access DCS admin blocks** in order to attend to prisoner complaints.
- ICCVs need physical access to centres – while they are not banned as “members of the public”, they are not “correctional personnel” who enjoy exemption as “essential service” employees under the current lockdown Regulations.
- **“Urgently restoring mandatory reporting of prison conditions” was also a priority** – the fact that the DCS Covid-19 measures “prescribes no duty to report, to JICS, how the virus is seeping through our correctional centres...is a gaping omission”.
- The department remains obliged to report every case where a prisoner is segregated. That includes all medical segregations, including Covid-19 isolations.
- Despite this, **“segregation reports to JICS have sharply fallen off, down to 67 during Covid-19 from a monthly average of about 300 [indications of] severe underreporting”**.
- Despite “the statute grant[ing] inmates an appeal to the Inspecting Judge against segregation...[he has] received no appeals” which was worrying. Cameron questioned whether “inmates are still practically able to exercise this right”.
- “Crisis times make oversight bodies more crucial. They ensure that the vulnerable do not go unheard. But JICS is unable to ensure that inmates’ rights are respected, let alone that Covid-19 is properly managed”.

The Department should provide a situational report to the Parliamentary Committees on (a) conditions in prisons insofar as they relate to prisoner complaints and concerns over measures the Department is taking to curb the spread of Covid-19 in prisons, (b) measures to improve communication with inmates about Covid-19 and to address their concerns and (c) the early release of qualifying inmates as a means to alleviate overcrowding and strengthen the Department’s efforts to avoid mass Covid-19 infections among inmates.

5. SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES (SAPS)

The nature of policing puts police officers at the front line in terms of contact with the general population, whether at a police station or on the streets and in communities. In addition, the potential exists for large-scale Covid-19 infections among those arrested, especially as people are arrested in the country daily, and arrests for lockdown violations have exceeded 10 000 in both Gauteng¹⁶ and KwaZulu-Natal¹⁷.

It follows that the SAPS should have strict protocols in place on how to prevent the spread of the coronavirus among SAPS members and those they come into contact with.¹⁸

¹⁶ ENCA (2020).

¹⁷ Singh, K (2020).

¹⁸ Hosken, G and Luvhengo, P (2020).



5.1 SAPS COVID-19 MEASURES

- Standard operational procedures will assist members in efforts to prevent the spread of the virus.
- Police management have also issued national directives on procedures to sanitise holding cells, and how officers should protect themselves with face masks and gloves.
- All police stations have been or are being issued with sanitisers for SAPS members' personal protection and to sanitise working spaces and holding cells.
- Persons arrested during the coronavirus outbreak will be screened for Covid-19 before they are placed in a police holding cell.
- Those who test positive will be taken to a medical facility and be quarantined until they are clear of any symptoms.
- A limitation is placed on the number of persons that can be kept in holding cells.
- Suspects or prisoners who test negative for the coronavirus can be detained together.

5.2 SAPS COVID-19 INFECTIONS AS AT 22 APRIL 2020¹⁹

- According to media reports, a number of police stations including **Athlone**, **Hermanus**, **Mfuleni** and **Belhar**²⁰ in the Western Cape, **Tembisa** in Ekurhuleni, **Douglasdale** in Gauteng and **Folweni** in KwaZulu-Natal²¹ were closed after staff tested positive for Covid-19.
- According to Police Minister Cele, **30 police officers** have tested positive for COVID-19 as at 22 April 2020.
- Of these, 11 police officers are from Cape Town (station(s) not specified).²²
- One female SAPS member that had been in serious condition in KwaZulu-Natal was recovering well and out of ICU.
- No Covid-19 deaths have been reported by SAPS.

The Department should provide updated statistics providing a provincial, and police station breakdown on: (a) all stations where staff have tested positive for Covid-19; and (b) the number of police officers that have tested positive for Covid-19.

5.3 PROVINCIAL MAPPING OF LOCKDOWN INCIDENCES / ARRESTS

- The Covid-19 Lockdown Regulations announced on 26 March 2020, makes it an offence for anyone not to comply with the Regulations:

“- j) Offences and penalties:

- A person is guilty of an offence if that person fails to comply with these Regulations.

¹⁹ Soodyal, N (2020).

²⁰ McCain, N (2020).

²¹ Singh, O and Naidoo, Y (2020).

²² No specifics provided of the location of the other 19 infected SAPS Members



A person convicted of an offence mentioned in sub-regulation (1) is liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment not exceeding six months or to both a fine and such imprisonment.”

- At the end of the initial **21-day lockdown period, almost 107 000 cases were opened and more than 118 000 people were charged for various crimes.**
- The sheer volume of arrests for lockdown violations (including residents found outside the home without an acceptable explanation) has been alarming - more than 10 000 arrests in KZN and Gauteng, respectively.
- According to the City of Cape Town, sixty percent of lockdown arrests in Cape Town were shopkeepers selling alcohol and cigarettes.²³ Metro Police had to attend to sporadic incidences of looting of supermarkets and food trucks. On the positive side, the City reported a marked decrease in the number of trauma calls during the lockdown. Of the 1 326 arrests in respect of inter alia, armed robbery and attempted housebreaking, 549 was for selling prohibited items.
- Implementation of travel regulations during lockdown has not been uniform for law enforcement checking travel permits at roadblocks – in some instances, motorists without the required permits were made to turn back, while others were arrested and/or fined.
- The monetary amount of fines issued have also not been uniform. For example, a mine executive in Gauteng was fined R60 000 for causing mineworkers to report for duty before the Regulations were amended to allow mines to resume operations. On 20 April 2020, a 71-year old man was fined R1 500 in the Western Cape, allegedly for not having a medical script when he was stopped on the way to the pharmacy and the supermarket.²⁴ Reports were also circulating of homeless people in the Western Cape being fined for being outside during the lockdown people.
- Many commentators have bemoaned the fact that the poor have been made to feel the brunt of the lockdown measures, which the majority are unable to comply with under the socio-economic conditions they live – especially those in informal settlements and the homeless.

The following table maps selected prevalent incidences per province reported during the lockdown. As these occurred mostly sporadically, and in the absence of statistics on the number of incidences per province, it nevertheless provides a glimpse of the nature and causes of incidences in the various provinces (discussed in the narrative), and where available, the drivers and causes thereof.

²³ Mafolo, K (2020).

²⁴ Williams, M (2020).



PREVALENT LOCKDOWN INCIDENCES	EC	FS	GA	KZN	LIM	NC	NW	MP	WC
Lockdown violations ²⁵ (by public)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Lockdown violations ²⁶ (by law enforcement)							x		x
Excessive force (security / law enforcement)			x						x
Looting and break-ins ²⁷	x		x						x
Vandalising, burglary of schools and theft	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Public protests / violence ²⁸		x	x						x
Prison riots			x						
Violent crimes (murder, assault, attempted murder)			x				x		
Drug related crimes									x

- By 17 April 2020, **397 schools had been vandalised and or broken** into since the start of the lockdown.²⁹ Provincial departments reported alarming rates of school break-ins in which learning and teaching equipment was stolen together with other expensive items. Criminals targeted schools administration blocks for ICT equipment, and the nutrition centres for the food items. **The provincial breakdown making up the 397 vandalised schools are: Mpumalanga 73; Gauteng 67; Western Cape 57; North West 55; Northern Cape 39; KwaZulu-Natal 34; Limpopo 30; Eastern Cape 26; and the Free State 16.**
- By 17 April 2020, 44 suspects were arrested in Gauteng, including those found in possession of stolen property linked to school break-ins in the province, while two arrests were made in KwaZulu-Natal.³⁰
- At the start of the lockdown, a teenage girl was raped and murdered in Dobsonville, Soweto after she went missing on 4 April 2020 on the way home from the local spaza shop.³¹
- On or about 10 April 2020, two children aged 11 and 5 years old were brutally murdered in Tembisa and Orange Farm, respectively.³²
- On 21 April 2020, angry community members burned two police bakkies and an ambulance at Boikhutso, Lichtenburg in the North West and injured five SAPS members (one was taken to hospital). Public Order Police were deployed to quell the **violence that erupted in retaliation to the deaths of two children in two separate accidents, one of which involved a police vehicle. A boy who was hit by a police K9 (dog squad) vehicle in the second accident died at the scene.**
- On 23 April 2020, a man from Itsoeseng in the North West had thrown himself in front of a moving truck shortly after allegedly killing his wife.³³
- **Public violence in the Western Cape initially centred on the break-ins and looting of liquor shops at a number of sites in the Western Cape. By 11 April 2020, the number of affected liquor stores looted/ broken into totalled 19, which the Police Minister blamed on a syndicate.**³⁴

²⁵ Outside home, travel or operating without permit, taxi infringements

²⁶ Outside home, travel or operating without permit, taxi infringements

²⁷ Liquor stores, delivery trucks, shops

²⁸ "Hunger strikes" over food parcels; evictions

²⁹ Chothia, A (2020b).

³⁰ Chothia, A (2020b)

³¹ Simelane, B (2020).

³² SABC News (2020).

³³ Shange, N (2020e)..

³⁴ Grobler, R (2020)



- As the period of the lockdown progresses, **a number of communities on the Cape Flats like Manenberg, Delft and Elsies River started protesting over food shortages and the unmet expectation of delivery of food parcels.** In Mitchells Plain, stone throwing residents faced off with police who retaliated with rubber bullets. Sporadic incidents of public violence and barricading of roads occurred along the R300, and in Vredenburg. Six water tank stands and 50 toilets were vandalised in Stellenbosch.³⁵
- The Eastern Cape also reported **looting of food trucks in Nelson Mandela Bay,** where schools and even churches were broken into and food and other items were stolen.³⁶
- Protests erupted in Empolweni in Khayelitsha over City of Cape Town **demolitions of dwellings in violation of lockdown Regulations.**³⁷ Metro Police are alleged to have fired rubber bullets without provocation at protesting residents who were peacefully singing struggle songs at the time.³⁸
- A number of people were arrested in Lawley in Gauteng for illegal land invasions, one of which was a soldier.³⁹
- Public protests over evictions also occurred in KwaZulu- Natal.

The Department should provide updated statistics providing a provincial, and police station breakdown on the number of (a) arrests and charges for lockdown violations by members of the public; (b) reports and internal proceedings initiated for use of excessive force by the police; (c) public protests; (d) schools vandalised and looted; (e) illegal demolitions/evictions; (f) looting of food trucks; and (g) of break-ins of liquor stores.

5.4 LOCKDOWN VIOLATIONS AND CRIMINALITY BY POLICE

- On 22 April 2020, Police Minister Cele said that **89 police officers were arrested** since the national lockdown began - most of them for allegedly trying to sell liquor that they have confiscated and/or stolen.⁴⁰
- Other lockdown violations by police involved e.g. five police officers stationed at the Namahadi SAPS in Phuthaditjhaba in the Free State, were found drinking in a tavern while on duty. Six members of the Brooklyn and Silverton Police stations in Pretoria were arrested after they stole R30 000 from people passing through a roadblock.
- A security guard and a police officer are among those arrested after a liquor store in Caledon in the Western Cape was robbed on 19 April 2020.⁴¹
- In another incident, three police officers from the Tshwane Metro Police Department were arrested for extorting a bribe from a motorist in Pretoria who was told that he was not allowed to drive around during the lockdown and that his vehicle would be impounded unless he paid them R7 000. Police were tipped off and arrested the trio

³⁵ Tshikalange, S (2020).

³⁶ Ellis, E (2020).

³⁷ The Western Cape High Court subsequently ordered the City to allow 130 people to return to Empolweni and give back the residents their building materials or supply building material rebuilding the 49 homes that were demolished.

³⁸ Van Wyk, P (2020).

³⁹ Shange, N (2020d).

⁴⁰ No specifics provided of the location of the other 19 infected SAPS Members

⁴¹ Meyer, D (2020).



at a petrol station after they followed the man to his home in Bronkhorstspruit where he had paid a bribe of R3 500.

The Department should provide updated statistics providing a provincial, and police station breakdown on the number of arrests of police officers for (a) lockdown violations; and (b) criminality.

5.5 EXCESSIVE FORCE BY POLICE ENFORCING LOCKDOWN COMPLIANCE

(i) IPID INVESTIGATIONS

- By 4 April 2020, mere days into the lockdown, the police watchdog, the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) was looking into 14 cases of assault by law enforcement officials relating to the enforcement of lockdown regulations.⁴²
- Almost half of the **38 incidents** of police misconduct were reported in Gauteng.
- IPID was also probing an alleged rape by a police officer in the Western Cape.
- On 20 April 2020, IPID reportedly indicated that it was investigating the death of a 23-year old Soweto man after allegedly being assaulted by police.⁴³
- Another matter under investigation involves a 62-year-old man from KwaNobuhle in Uitenhage in the Northern Cape, who was allegedly assaulted, shot and his phone damaged, by police officers who accused him of filming their lockdown operations.

(ii) OTHER REPORTED INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE BY POLICE⁴⁴

- Metro Police are alleged to have fired rubber bullets at Emfoleni residents in Cape Town who protested against the demolition of their shacks on 9 April 2020. A journalist who witnessed the incident said residents were peacefully singing struggle songs.
- Metro Police were also accused of using live ammunition. Police officers allegedly fired rubber bullets at close range at protesters, and fired teargas inside a dwelling, whereafter a baby had to be rushed to hospital for teargas inhalation.⁴⁵
- Similar incidents were reported in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal at violent protests over evictions where the police used excessive force..

The Department should provide updated statistics providing a provincial, and police station breakdown on (a) the number of cases related to excessive force reported to IPID; (b) the number of internal hearings initiated related to use of excessive force; and (c) a breakdown of police criminality cases reported.

5.6 CRIME TRENDS – COMPARISON MARCH-APRIL 2019 AND MARCH-APRIL 2020

(i) Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Crime trends overall at the start of the lockdown appeared to show a downward trend for especially murder compared to the same period the previous year, with the Police Minister

⁴² Nyathi, A (2020).

⁴³ Chothia, A (2020).

⁴⁴ Also includes reference to Metro Police.

⁴⁵ Van Wyk, P (2020).



commenting that violent crimes have decreased. However, this statement did not take into consideration the surge in the number of GBV cases during the same period of the lockdown. Figures released by the GBV Command Centre (GBVCC)⁴⁶ show the following:

- The number of calls in the GBVCC increased during the lockdown period for various reasons including GBV and COVID-19 related issues.
- Before the lockdown, **the number of Calls, USSDs and SMSs the GBVCC received totalled 4 983** for the period 1 - 26 March 2020.
- This figure almost doubled to **8 764 from 27 March - 11 April 2020**, during the first two weeks of the lockdown period which started on 26 March 2020.
- The GVBVCC attributes the general increase of calls to the following: advertisement of the GBVCC services to the public; provision of trauma counselling, psycho-social support in relation to COVID-19; information and advice sought on social relief of distress.⁴⁷

GBV COMMAND CENTRES STATISTICS				
DATE	TELEPHONE CALLS RECEIVED	USSDs RECEIVED	SMSs RECEIVED	TOTAL
1-26 March 2020	4 494	208	281	4 983
GBV Related Percentage	133 (2,67%)			
27 March -11 April 2020	7 131	1 193	440	8 764
GBV Related Percentage	333 (3,79 %)			

(ii) Violent / contact crime (excluding GBV)⁴⁸

- The number of serious crimes nationally has come down drastically since the lockdown, which Police Minister Cele attributes in part to the ban on the sale of liquor.
- A comparison of crime statistics for the period 29 March to 22 April 2020 with the same period in 2019 reveals the following:
 - More than 1 500 murders were committed in the same period in 2019, compared to the 432 reported in 2020 (a 72 per cent decrease).
 - According to the Minister, there has been a “remarkable decrease for domestic-related crimes” which included “murder, attempted murder, rape and sexual assault.”
 - He further indicate that the national picture “reflects a decrease by 69,4% from 9 990 cases between 29 March and 22 April last year to 3 061 since the lockdown until 20 April 2020, meaning a difference of 6 929.”

⁴⁶ Department of Women (2020). GBV Command Centre Statistics.

⁴⁷ Unfortunately, the GBVCC statistics do not provide a provincial breakdown.

⁴⁸ Soodyal, N (2020)



CONTACT CRIME

	29 March to 22 April 2019	27 March to 20 April 2020 (Lockdown)	Case Difference	Percentage Change
Murder	1 542	432	-1 110	-72,0%
Rape	2 908	371	-2 537	-87,2%
Att. murder	1 300	443	-857	-65,9%
Assault GBH	11 876	1 758	-10 118	-85,2%
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	6 654	2 022	-4 632	-69,6%

The Department should provide updated statistics providing a (a) provincial, and (b) police station breakdown on: (i) GBV Command Centre statistics; (ii) murder, (iii) rape, (iv) attempted murder, (v) assault GBH, and (vi) robbery with aggravating circumstances for the lockdown period (compared to same period in 2019).

6. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND THE COURTS - COVID-19 MEASURES

6.1 OPERATION OF COURTS DURING LOCKDOWN

- The Department of Justice has taken measures to ensure court cases go ahead, with video links established with prisons so detainees do not have to appear.
- A circular released by the Office of Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng, instructed that only “essential people” with interests in cases be allowed to be in court.
- Bail hearings are to continue as normal with the number of people allowed in courts limited to less than 100.
- According to the circular, all criminal trials held in the regional and district courts, enrolled between 23 March and 9 April 2020, were postponed until 14 April 2020, with no awaiting-trial prisoners or those held in police holding cells brought to court, except for first appearances, bail applications or unless special arrangements were made.⁴⁹
- The staggering number of arrests in the tens of thousands in at least two provinces, and the more than 118 000 people charged for various crimes since the start of the lockdown, means the court rolls are inundated with Covid-19 related matters, especially for those who may challenge the legality of their arrests or who are unable to pay.

⁴⁹ Hosken, G and Luvhengo, P (2020).



6.2 DOJCD COVID-19 INFECTIONS INFORMATION

- No official national or provincial information has been provided regarding Covid-19 infections in the Department and judiciary.
- The City Press newspaper reported on 19 April 2020, that **seven prosecutors based at the East London Magistrates' Court were ordered to go into quarantine after coming into contact with a senior correctional services officer who had tested positive for the Covid-19 coronavirus in the Eastern Cape.**
- An unnamed prosecutor was quoted as saying that “prosecutors were forced to go and collect decision dockets for statistics purposes and their safety was overlooked. The outbreak of the virus in East London Correctional Centre was...well-known...but the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) ignored all that and exposed us”.
- Three prosecutors based in the Eastern Cape told City Press on Thursday that they only received personal protective equipment (PPE) after the National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers (NUPSAW) issued a statement condemning the NPA for failing to provide protective gear for prosecutors working during the Covid-19 lockdown.
- According to the City Press, WhatsApp messages circulating within the prosecutors' group in the region indicated plans for all prosecutors to be tested.
- City Press has learnt that the majority of prosecutors in East London downed tools that week demanding to be tested and their offices disinfected.
- The Department of Justice regional head reportedly confirmed that the offices in Komga were disinfected, and that the East London offices would follow.
- Arrangements were also made for staff at the East London office to be screened, tested and traced in the following week.
- The NPA had also reportedly engaged its employee wellness programme services to provide support to affected staff.
- A spokesperson had said that the “directions issued by Justice and Correctional Services Minister Ronald Lamola with respect to the requisite measures in courts continue to be observed strictly. Staff in all offices, including in the East London office, have been provided with hand sanitisers and PPE, although supply is affected by general availability in the various areas”.
- Relevant information is communicated to all East London staff via WhatsApp.

KHAYELITSHA MAGISTRATES COURT POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE

- An interpreter at the Khayelitsha⁵⁰ Magistrates Court tested positive for COVID-19, the court's first positive case.⁵¹
- Other staff, including court officials and magistrates, were sent for screening at a nearby local clinic.⁵²
- The entire court precinct was decontaminated and disinfected with special chemicals on 21 and 22 April 2020.
- According to the Spokesperson for the Department of Justice and Correctional Services, Chrispin Phiri,⁵³ the court would remain open, although “running with limited capacity”.
- New matters were postponed.

⁵⁰ The City of Cape Town statistics shows there were 67 confirmed positive Covid-19 cases in Khayelitsha at 24 April 2020.

⁵¹ Public Service Association (2020).

⁵² The Daily Voice (2020).

⁵³ The Daily Voice (2020).



The Department should provide updated statistics providing a (a) provincial and (b) court breakdown on the (i) Number of tests for department and court officials completed during the lockdown period and (ii) the number of positive cases in the department and courts.

7. DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS

7.1 Joint Standing Committee on Defence meeting with Minister of Defence and Military Veterans

On 22 April 2020, the Joint Standing Committee on Defence (JSC) received a virtual briefing on the four letters tabled in Parliament in which the President of South Africa, as Commander in Chief of the armed forces, informed Parliament of the deployment of soldiers in support of the police in enforcing the lockdown regulations. Also included was the letter that authorised 151 SANDF personnel on 28 February 2020 to assist the Department of International Relations with the successful repatriation of South African citizens from Wuhan, China following the closure of China ports of entry for international travel in response to the Covid-19 outbreak in China.⁵⁴ Apart from the successful repatriation of South African citizens in which the SANDF was widely hailed as heroes, the army is mainly deployed in support of police operations at roadblocks and on patrols in residential areas. This would allow the police to focus on law enforcement and crime fighting.

Parliament was informed on 21 April 2020, that 73 180 additional soldiers would be deployed across South Africa until 26 June 2020,⁵⁵ representing a dramatic increase from the 2 820 soldiers initially deployed at the start of the lockdown. In a media report after the meeting, the JSC Chairperson stated that the Committee supported the reasons provided for the increase of soldiers. Furthermore, the Committee was satisfied with the explanation that the initial 2 820 deployed was insufficient, considering the expected scale of the disease and the fact that South Africa was still in the early stages of the pandemic. The Committee welcomed the deployment of the South African Military Health Services and its capabilities in support of the Department of Health in anticipation of the exponential increase in Covid-19 infections expected.

The most recent deployment comes at significant financial cost, “with the injection of R4.5 billion, [which the Committee considers] necessary in the context of the unprecedented nature of the disease, which demands an extraordinary response...some of the cost drivers include the procurement of personal protective equipment, equipment necessary for testing and analysis, and preparation of field hospitals - all of which are necessary to protect SANDF members [which] is of paramount importance”.⁵⁶

Most of the deployed soldiers would be assisting the Department of Health’s Covid-19 measures through e.g. quarantining civilians and delivering personal protective equipment

⁵⁴ In terms of Section 201(3) of the Constitution and Section 18(2) of the Defence Act 42 of 2002

⁵⁵ Parliament of South Africa (2020).

⁵⁶ GCIS (2020)



(PPE) to those on the ground.⁵⁷ Additional soldiers include members of the air force, navy, military health services, military police, defence intelligence, legal services, operational communication, technical services and finance accounting.

Through the SA Military Health Services (SAMHS) soldiers will establish military field hospitals in the provinces most affected by Covid-19, including Gauteng, Western Cape, Free State and KwaZulu-Natal. Hospital facilities will have beds, oxygen generators, dialysis machines and intensive care units. The SAMHS was at the stage of deploying field hospitals at the grounds of 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria, the two military hospitals in Cape Town and the three military hospitals in Bloemfontein.

KwaZulu-Natal is one of the provinces seriously impacted by the viral epidemic. As the province does not have a military hospital, the SAMHS will establish temporary facilities on the grounds of the Natal Military Command Centre.

The SAMHS will also establish four military hospitals and a number of field hospitals in other areas, including at the Pretoria Showgrounds and in the Eastern Cape. Military hospitals require medical equipment and ICU units would need to be established at field hospitals with electric beds and electric mattresses, accompanied by various ventilators and oxygen generators (to ensure a continuous supply of oxygen). Dialysis machines would also need to be installed. Because of the high costs associated with these health facilities, the Department was considering the option of making them more permanent.

7.2 Excessive force used by SANDF

The JSC also raised concerns about the sporadic cases of alleged abuse of power by some members of the SANDF, which could damage the legitimacy and image of the SANDF in this fight against COVID-19.

Several videos and photos circulating on social and mainstream media platforms showing alleged abuse of power, include the assault of civilians and forcing civilians to do demeaning physical “exercises”. One video captured on a cell phone was seen by the owners of a dog being shot by a soldier on patrol in Parkwood in the Western Cape - the authenticity of the incident was confirmed by the SPCA after exhuming the animal’s body.

7.3 Assault and killing of Mr Collins Khosa, Alexandra

The most shameful allegation against the SANDF flows from the senseless assault and killing on 11 April 2020, of Mr Collins Khosa in Alexandra by SANDF members.⁵⁸ While on patrol, SANDF members noticed a half-full glass of alcohol in Mr Khosa’s front yard. This, in itself, was not illegal in terms of the Lockdown Regulations which only prohibits the sale of alcohol. At the time, Mr Khosa was having dinner with his family inside his house. The SANDF members nevertheless searched Mr Khosa’s fridge and confiscated two beers. They started to beat him and dragged him out of his home, where the assault continued in full view of his neighbours – “they poured beer on top of his head and on his body; one member of the SANDF held his hand behind his back, while the other choked him; slammed him against the cement wall; hit him with the butt of the machine gun; kicked, slapped him,

⁵⁷ Madisa, K (2020).

⁵⁸ Shange, N (2020b).



punched him on his face and on his stomach and ribs; and slammed him against the steel gate”.⁵⁹ Mr Khosa later succumbed from the injuries sustained during the assault.

On 15 April 2020, a Defence Force delegation visited the Khosa family to express their condolences. On 16 April 2020 a media statement was released in which the Ministry expressed regret over Mr Khosa’s death and confirmed that an investigation would be conducted into the incident. According to the Ombud, Lt-Gen Vusumuzi Masondo, the investigation would be handled by the SAPS as a murder charge had been laid.⁶⁰ The Khosa family has also since approached the Constitutional Court and the High Court for an order compelling the removal from service of the SANDF Members responsible for Mr Khosa’s death.⁶¹ The family wants compensation from the state.

7.4 Military Ombud Investigations

The Military Ombud informed Power FM Radio on 20 April 2020, that “[s]oldiers deployed across the country are not shielding colleagues breaking the law while on lockdown deployment”.⁶²

As at 20 April 2020, the **Ombud had received 33 complaints against SANDF members - 20 complaints were lodged by members of the public and 13 by SANDF members and former SANDF members** – four of these were anonymous. Complaints from the public included allegations of assault by soldiers, soldiers shooting dogs, physical abuse and general excessive use of force by soldiers deployed to enforce the lockdown regulations. Complaints were sent via e-mail and WhatsApp. None of the cases had been finalised, however, as “there were processes that needed to be followed...once they had received a complaint, they followed up by sending the complainant a form to fill out details of the event, including the time and date, as well as the names and contact details of any witnesses. Once all this information has been obtained, an investigation can be pursued”.⁶³

Masondo said it was imperative that complainants noted the names of soldiers, which were always printed on their shirts. The public has 90 days from the day of the incident to lodge a complaint. The possibility of criminal charges flowing from the Ombud investigations could not be ruled out.

Following its virtual meeting with the Minister of Defence on 22 April 2020, the Joint Standing Committee on Defence (JSCD) expressed confidence in the Military Ombud’s commitment and capabilities to deal with reported abuses and that reports on the investigations will adequately address these “worrying actions”. The Committee resolved to await the completion of the investigations and conduct its own analysis on the adequacy of consequences. It also called on citizens to cooperate with the security establishment by abiding with the Regulations, which it believes will assist in limiting the need to interact with security personnel. The JSCD reiterated the call of the President and the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans for all SANDF members to act within the confines of the law and SANDF’s Code of Conduct, which guides the conduct of all uniformed personnel, especially during deployments.

⁵⁹ Pijoo, I (2020). ‘

⁶⁰ Shange, N (2020a).

⁶¹ Shange, N (2020b).

⁶² Shange, N (2020a).

⁶³ Shange, N (2020a).



The Department should provide updated statistics providing a provincial breakdown on the number of complaints received by the Military Ombud.

7.5 Health and safety concerns

The deployment of the SANDF in support of Covid-19 measures carries significant risks for those on the frontlines to contract the virus.

- On 15 April 2020, the Timeslive online newspaper reported on a statement by the Surgeon General of the SANDF that no uniformed members of the SANDF had tested positive for Covid-19.⁶⁴
- However, four members of the “military community” (i.e. members of the extended community including dependents of serving members, retired soldiers and those with access to SAMHS medical care) tested positive for Covid-19.
- Three of the positive cases were recorded in the Western Cape, and the fourth case in Gauteng.
- The four patients will be treated in SANDF facilities.

The Department should provide updated statistics providing a provincial breakdown on the number of uniformed and civilian members of the (a) SANDF and (b) Department that had tested positive for Covid-19.

7.6 SANDF Covid-19 measures⁶⁵

- All Covid-19 cases are treated and managed as per Covid-19 prescribed protocol.
- The SANDF has also identified quarantine and isolation facilities for the military community in preparation for the expected overflow in military hospitals and sickbays.
- The facilities are Departmental establishments with accommodation capacity in all provinces.
- Frontline workers (emergency medical teams, nurses, doctors, porters and soldiers on street patrol in townships) were issued with personal protective equipment.
- Other preventive measures include thermal screening, hand sanitising and wearing of surgical masks and continuous Covid-19 awareness campaigns for SANDF members.

⁶⁴ Shange, N (2020c).

⁶⁵ Shange, N (2020c)

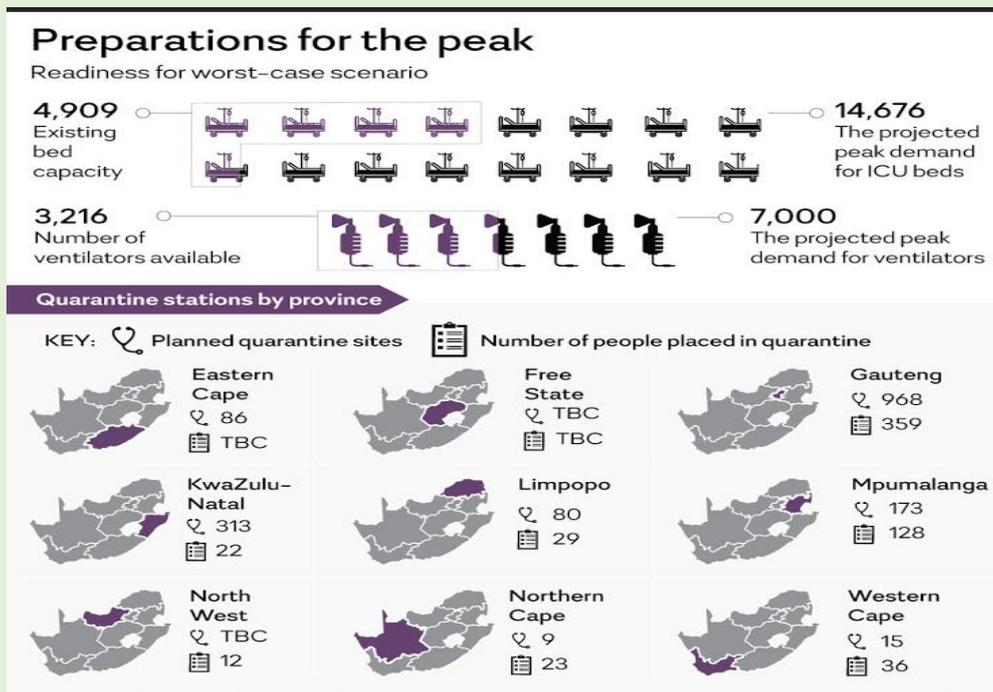


ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION / QUESTIONS

SAMHS and Covid-19 testing capabilities

- (i) What is the SANDF's rationale for not conducting mass screening and testing as per Health Department protocols for Covid-19?
- (ii) How effective has the SANDF's early/random testing on deployed SANDF members been to detect potential Covid-19 infections among deployed soldiers?
- (iii) Does the SAMHS have the capability to conduct Covid-19 tests? If so, please provide information on the number of laboratories and where they are located. If not, whether any steps have been taken to establish such a capacity?
- (iv) How many soldiers (a) have tested positive for Covid-19 and (b) are being treated by (i) the SAMHS and (ii) other health facilities?
- (v) Coronavirus infections in South Africa is expected to increase exponentially in the coming winter months, reaching its peak in September 2020. The information shared with the Portfolio Committee on Health during its recent virtual meeting with the Minister of Health, focused on South Africa's state of preparedness to deal with that eventuality, and the planned quarantine sites per province.

The graphic below shows that South Africa had 3216 ventilators, whereas a projected 7 000 will be required when Covid-19 infections peak.



- (vi) **Are any plans underway or has consideration been given to repurpose Denel to manufacture ventilators and other medical equipment to address the current global shortage of medical equipment and thereby boost South Africa's capability to deal with mass Covid-19 infections as testing and screening intensifies?**⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Duncan, J (2020).



Excessive force used by armed forces - Military Ombud complaints⁶⁷

- (i) Have the SANDF members who allegedly assaulted members of the public been withdrawn from the deployment? If not, why not?
- (ii) Was internal action taken against deployed members for alleged abuses of power?
- (iii) In addition to the Military Ombud investigations, is the Military Police and/or SAPS conducting any investigations against SANDF members? If so, will investigations run concurrently?
- (iv) (a) Does the Military Ombud have the necessary investigative capacity to complete the new complaints timeously and (b) how will the Ombud be assisted to investigate cases in different provinces?
- (v) What is the time-frame for the completion of investigations?
- (vi) (a) Were all complaints registered and (b) has feedback been provided to complainants?
- (vii) Why can anonymous complaints not be “taken forward”?
- (viii) What informs the 90-day period for the lodging of complaints from the day of the incident by members of the public?
- (ix) What measures are the SANDF putting in place to ensure that soldiers desist from disorderly conduct?
- (x) Are any measures in place to strengthen civil-military relations?

⁶⁷ Janse van Rensburg, W (2020).



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