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correctional services

Department:
Correctional Services
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OUTCOME OF INVESTIGATIONS INTO SERIOUS INCIDENTS THAT OCCURRED BETWEEN 2010 AND 2013

**A presentation for to the Portfolio Committee on Correctional
Services**

19 February 2013



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- **Introduction**

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Introduction

- The purpose of this presentation is to present in relative details the progress made / outcome of investigations into:
 - Mangaung hostage situation – 19 November 2012
 - Attempted escape by remand detainees at Johannesburg CC – October 2012
 - Escape of 41 remand detainees from Harrismith CC – 30 May 2010
 - Escape of 8 remand detainees from Durban Westville CC – 21 February 2010
 - Escape of 11 remand detainees from Barkley East CC – 25 September 2012
- The incident reports shall address:
 - Summary of the incident itself
 - Summary of major findings
 - Summary of major recommendations/decisions

Mangaung hostage situation – 19 November 2012

■ Summary of incident:

- On 19/11/2012 at 10:15 two offenders took the visiting Doctor and the unit nurse, hostage whilst in the medical consultation room using two sharpened objects.
- The unit nurse, was released shortly after negotiations.
- The Doctor was released on 20/11/2012 at about 06:50 after a 21 hour negotiation period by the contractor, SAPS negotiators and the SAPS Task Force.

■ Findings:

- Investigation performed by office of DCS controller
- Weapons used was sharpened metal strips smuggled out of workshop to Unit.
- Searching of inmates leaving the workshop insufficient and require improvement – suspected that metal strips were hidden in soles of safety shoes.
- Searching of cells insufficient – metal strips were kept in a spice container which was not searched

Mangaung hostage situation – 19 November 2012 – Continue...

■ Findings:

- Inmate Mabe was classified as a high risk inmate but was contra the security procedures left unattended with other inmates in front of the consultation room after the consultation.
- The driver for the incident was the inmates' need for a transfer to another Correctional Centre – applications for transfer were disapproved.
- The contractor fully complied with contractual obligations regarding contingency planning / log of event.

■ Recommendations:

- Searching procedures and security awareness of officials in this regard need to be relooked by the contractor in consultation with DCS.
- The contractor to consider disciplinary action against the official who left the high risk classified inmate unattended after the consultation.
- The contractor to be commended for professional manner in which command centre was managed.

Attempted escape by remand detainees at Johannesburg CC – October

■ Summary of incident:

2012

- On 22/10/2012 a SAPS vehicle transporting remand detainee inmates from court was bombed by an inmate whilst on the road returning from court.
- On arrival at the Correctional Centre the SAPS officials and injured detainees were assisted by correctional officials.
- Three detainees died as a result of the bomb blast

■ Findings:

- The remand detainees were under the control of the SAPS when the incident happened and the SAPS is therefore responsible for the investigation into the incident.
- A internal DCS investigation was however launched and completed on 09/01/2013.
- No negligence from the side of DCS could be found in the internal DCS investigation.
- Officials of DCS act commendably in assisting the SAPS officials and injured inmates when the transport vehicle arrived at the admissions area.



Attempted escape by remand detainees at Johannesburg CC – October 2012 – Continue...

■ Findings:

- The DCS emergency contingency plan need to be updated to specifically provide for such incidents.

■ Recommendations/decisions:

- Updating of emergency plans in progress
- Letters of appreciation to be addressed to three (3) DCS officials for their vigilance, prompt reaction and assistance to the SAPS officials and the injured inmates to be facilitated by Area Commissioner

Escape of 41 remand detainees from Harrismith CC – 30 May 2010

■ Summary of incident:

- On 30/05/2010 at about 17:00 in the afternoon 41 remand detainees managed to escape from out of the Correctional Centre.
- The cell in which the detainees were incarcerated was unlocked after hours for purposes of a legal visit and the detainees over powered the officials and escaped.
- Twenty nine (29) escapees rearrested / two (2) shot dead by SAPS / ten (10) still at large.

■ Findings:

- Gross negligence and none adherence security procedures by managers and officials:
 - Lack of movement control.
 - None adherence to procedures for unlocking of cells after hours.
 - Poor key control.
 - Poor control over firearms.
- Lack of checking and control actions by HCC and Managers.



Escape of 41 remand detainees from Harrismith CC – 30 May 2010 continue

■ Recommendations / decisions:

- Four (4) officials dismissed but later reinstated on appeal
- Recommendation/decisions/progress wrt any disciplinary action against officials outstanding
- Head of the Centre transferred and replaced.
- Review of security and control measures by Area Commissioner.
- New security fence with CCTV surveillance currently installed.

Escape of 8 remand detainees from Durban Westville CC – 21 February 2010

■ Summary of incident:

- On 21/02/2010 between 15:30 to 15:45 nine (9) remand detainees who was detained in the single cells section managed to saw the bars of the window frame and break off the steel door of the section.
- They then tied bed sheets to the window bars and slipped out down to the 7th floor through the grills on top of the dining hall and escaped through the security fence.
- One (1) of the nine (9) remand detainees fell from the roof and was apprehended by officials and taken to an outside hospital for treatment for injuries sustained.

Escape of 8 remand detainees from Durban Westville CC – 21 February 2010

■ Findings:

Major contributing factors were as follows:

- None adherence to prescribe security procedures e.g.
 - Poor movement control – Section gates not locked at all times, RD's allowed to move freely between passages.
 - Physical searching and testing of cell bars not done.
 - High risk detainees not searched as prescribed.
 - Allegations of smuggling between officials and remand detainees.
 - Unit officials leave units uncontrolled.
 - Poor control over keys.
 - Maintenance officials / contractors move within centre without tools being searched.
- Insufficient staffing further compromised by 12 hour shift patterns.
- Lack of security infrastructure / technology to support incarceration of high risk inmates – no CCTV surveillance at unit – current security fence at Durban easily cut – old type fence.

Escape of 8 remand detainees from Durban Westville CC – 21 February 2010

■ Recommendations / decisions:

- Disciplinary action were recommended and approved by the Regional Commissioner against sixteen (16) officials and managers.
 - Six (6) officials received final written warnings.
 - Seven (7) officials were suspended without salary for periods ranging between two and three months.
 - Two officials not found guilty
 - One case pending-official medical boarded
- Area Commissioner introduce control measures to ensure all security procedures are correctly implemented on a day to day basis.
- Task team (Area Commissioner, Regional Head Corrections) to investigate and recommend on suitability of Unit G7 / E7 to house high risk detainees and technology necessary to enhance and support security.
- Regional Head Corporate Services to facilitate a review of the post establishment by work study.



Escape of 11 remand detainees from Barkley East CC – 25 September 2012

■ Summary of incident:

- On 25/08/2012 at 16:45 remand detainees managed to overpower officials during the serving of dinner.
- Took centre keys from officials, took five (5) officials hostage.
- Assaulted all five (5) officials.
- One (1) official was shot dead with a departmental firearm which the detainees managed to obtain from a steel cabinet in the office of the Head of the Centre.
- Eleven (11) detainees managed to escape.

■ Findings:

- Lack of adherence to various security policy procedures contributed to escape:
 - Poor control over security keys.
 - Procedures for the safe storage of firearm ammunition were breached.
 - Lack of control measures for issuing of security equipment.

Escape of 11 remand detainees from Barkley East CC – 25 September

■ Findings continue: 2012 Continue...

- Lack of control to ensure officials on duty are fit for duty before commencing for their duties – official working under the influence of alcohol.
- Poor movement control – persons moving through gates not identified for gates are opened.
- Centre not complying with instruction that photos be taken of remand detainees on admission.
- Poor control over cellphones of visitors and officials – left lying at main gate and stolen by escapees during escape.
- Lack of checking and control by Managers especially Area Coordinator Corrections, Head Correctional Centre and CC: Operational Support.



Escape of 11 remand detainees from Barkley East CC – 25 September 2012 Continue...

■ Recommendations / decisions:

- Disciplinary action recommended and approved by Regional Commissioner against the Head Correctional Centre, Centre Coordinator Operational Support, Centre Coordinator Corrections and three (3) Security Officials. All cases currently pending.
- Four (4) officials to receive counseling on the performance of their duties. Completed on 22 and 28 February 2013.

Escape of 11 remand detainees from Barkley East CC – 25 September 2012 Continue...

■ Recommendations / decisions continue:

- Area Management to be reprimanded for its failure to ensure checking and control and support and guidance to Centre Management.
- Subject security staff to security awareness orientation.
- Review of post establishment of centre.
- Escapees to be classified as maximum as soon as they are sentenced and transferred to maximum correctional centre.
- The official that died be recognized post humus for his bravery.
- SAPS be formally commended for their support to the centre and their efforts to recapture the escapees.

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THANK YOU

