

**BUDGET SPEECH PRESENTED TO THE MPUMALANGA
PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE BY THE MEC FOR COMMUNITY
SAFETY, SECURITY AND LIAISON (VOTE 9), MR. VR SHONGWE
(MPL)
MBOMBELA**

13 JUNE 2023

Salutations

Honourable Speaker, Makhosazana Masilela,
Deputy Speaker, and Chief Whip of the Majority Party;
Honourable Premier, Mrs. Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane;
Honourable Members of the Executive Council;
Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature;
Chairpersons of various Portfolio Committees, The Chairperson of the
House of Traditional Leaders Kgoshi Lameck Mokoena, and other
Traditional Leaders present,
Executive Mayors and Councillors from District and Local Municipalities,
The Director-General, Mr. MN Mampuru;
The Acting HOD for Community Safety, Security and Liaison, Mr. Godfrey
Ntombela; and Other Heads of Departments;
South African Police Service (SAPS), Provincial Commissioner,
Lieutenant General Semakaleng Manamela,
African National Congress Chairperson in the province, Mr. Mandla Ndlovu
and fellow comrades present here today,
Representatives from SAPS and other government departments,
Representatives from labour federations;
Distinguished guests,
Members of the Media and members of the public;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

SANIBONANI

Introduction

1. Madam Speaker, it is once more a great honour for me today to present and table the Policy and Budget Speech for the 2023/2024 financial year for the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison (Vote 9) to this honourable house.
2. We present this Policy and Budget Speech against the backdrop of high levels of crime in our communities and this include Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) and other crime categories.
3. With high levels of crime, we all know that it becomes difficult for the province to attract more investors. Perceived levels of crime also undermines the province's drive to also attract more tourists.
4. This consequently affect our economy's prospects of growth, development, creation and sustaining of jobs especially for the

young people. The crime statistics in the country denote an increase in some categories of contact crime.

5. This include murder, sexual offences and assault with the intention to do grievous bodily harm.
6. Despite the reductions in some categories of crime in the province in the first, second and fourth quarters of the financial year (April 2022 to March 2023).
7. Madam Speaker, the Honourable Premier, Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, in her State of the Province Address (SOPA), this year, maintained that the circumstances in which we find ourselves in, we did not create.
8. These unsafe conditions, that we find ourselves in as perpetuated by criminals and crime syndicates, requires us all to work together for the benefit of our people.
9. As a province, we remain concerned about these high numbers of crime, especially contact crimes. We will therefore not fold our arms but continue with various programmes that are aimed at mobilising communities in the fight against crime.
10. Honourable Members, the department will hold a two-day Provincial Crime Prevention Summit on 29 and 30 June 2023. We will further continue to look at how best we can contribute towards crime prevention through our Provincial Crime Prevention Framework, other programmes of the department and the Security Cluster.
11. We will further engage with municipalities through MUNIMEC Meetings. The Justice Crime Prevention and Security Cluster (JCPS) meetings will be used as vehicles to tackle some of the challenges that we believe breed criminality in our communities.
12. We have heard our communities through all public engagements and complaints we have received. There is an overwhelming cry that they are tired of crime and they demand that we do something to curb crime.
13. Honourable Members, we also welcome the commitment made by the Police Minister, General Bheki Cele, during the tabling of his Budget Speech that more efforts will be made to vigorously combat crime.
14. This he stated, will be among others, done through the following:
 - Community mobilisation and the resourcing of the CPFs

- Gender Based Violence and improvements of the DNA processing.
 - Police Visibility, Mobility, and Rapid Response as well as
 - Building of police stations
15. We believe these and other initiatives will enable the country and our province in particular to respond vigorously to the cries of our people.
16. As a province, we have recently launched our own provincial armed intervention called **OPERATION SIYAVUTHA**. This Operation is disruptive in nature and it is intelligence driven with high density of law enforcement.
17. We must applaud the police in the province under the sterling leadership of the Provincial Commissioner, Lieutenant General Semakaleng Manamela for how the police responded to the Minister's call.
18. This is done in order to combat crime, tracking and tracing of wanted suspects and removal of illegal firearms and money laundering. The intelligence driven initiative is further aimed at tackling cross-border financial crimes.
19. These operations are aligned to the Minister's Strategy called **OPERATION SHANELA**.
20. We also welcome the announcement by Minister Cele that Tactical Response Teams (TRT) commonly known **Amabherethe**, will be deployed as part of responding to stations with high levels of crime. Accordingly, 1000 TRT members are trained. **Amabherethe** are expected to play a critical role in our efforts to make our communities safer.

Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF)

21. Madam Speaker, over the years, despite many efforts that the province under the leadership of the Honourable Mme Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, to combat GBVF, many women and children continue to live in fear.
22. Honourable Members, earlier in February this year, a child disappeared in Senotlelo in Dr. JS Moroka local Municipality. The body of the child was later discovered in a pit toilet in the area.
23. The community responded by taking the law into its own hands. This they allegedly did by killing three more people who they suspected of being responsible for the disappearance and murder of the child.

24. Madam Speaker, a mother and her three children were hacked to death with an axe at Ethandukukhanya in Mkhondo local Municipality in February this year.
25. Honourable Members, we have witnessed the gruesomeness with which the widow of the Chief Clyde Mnisi was murdered just days after the demise of her husband in Mkhuhlu, Bushbuckridge in April this year.
26. These and many other cases, show that women and children remain vulnerable to GBVF.
27. It is a clear indication that despite all the efforts, more still needs to be done to ensure every person enjoy their freedom as enshrined in our Constitution.

Programme 1: Administration

28. Programme 1, has been allocated an amount of **One Hundred and Seventy Million, Eight Hundred and Forty-Seven Thousand Rand (R170 847 000)**.
29. The allocation will be utilised for supporting the core programmes of the department and buying of the new vehicles to complement the current aging fleet.
30. Another substantial amount of this budget will go towards training and capacity building for the employees and capital expenditure. We will continue with strengthening of the internal controls and compliance environment. This will contribute towards improved audit outcomes.
31. Madam Speaker, we are pleased to report to this house that the department has over-collected revenue by 102 percent which translate into R28 million for the year ending on 31 March 2023.
32. Honourable Members, we could have collected more than R2 Billion revenues if all the municipalities were transferring and paying all the money due to the department on time and in line with the Service Level Agreement that was signed with the municipalities with regard to licensing fees.

On filling of vacant posts

33. Honourable Members, we are also pleased to report that since the moratorium on filling of vacant posts was set aside, the department has filled 66 vacant posts. Most of the posts were entry-level positions at various DLTCs and three senior management positions were filled.

34. Honourable Members, the department will contribute to the job massification strategy to ensure that young people are gainfully employed. This will be done through the employment of 426 Tourism Safety Monitors (TSMs), 51 Departmental Internships, 100 Bank SETA Interns and 100 Service SETA Learnerships.
35. Honourable Members, the department is in the process of taking over licensing functions at Msukaligwa local Municipality at Ermelo and Breyten Driver Licensing and Testing Centres (DLTCs). An amount of R12 million has been set aside for this process.
36. With the takeover, some employees may opt not to join the department and this will result in vacancies at these two centres. This will require the department to fill the vacancies.
37. Madam Speaker so far the department has taken over licensing functions at Thaba Chweu, Emakhazeni, Chief Albert Luthuli, Govan Mbeki, Mkhondo, Lekwa, Victor Khanye, Nkomazi and City of Mbombela local municipalities.

Programme 2: Provincial Civilian Secretariat for Police Service

38. The programme has been allocated an amount of **Sixty Million and Forty Seven Thousand Rand (R 60 047 000)** for the current financial year. The Budget will be among others used to fund the Provincial Crime Prevention Summit that will be held in the City of Mbombela on 29 and 30 June 2023.
39. Madam Speaker, the Summit emanates from the decision taken during Executive Council Makgotla earlier this year that as part of responding to high crime levels, a Summit must be held.
40. The summit aims to identify and find ways of mitigating causes of crime. It will be held under the theme: *“Together let’s fight crime to reclaim our peace.”*
41. In the previous financial year, the department conducted three Public Participation Programmes (Izimbizo) in Ermelo, Barberton and Marapyane.
42. The Izimbizo were preceded by the stakeholder engagements in order to gain a deeper understanding of crime issues in the areas where the Izimbizo were held.
43. After the Izimbizo, programmes of action were developed and implemented in line with the issues that were raised by the community and the stakeholders.

44. The programme however, through its Safety Promotion Unit, has also implemented educational and awareness programmes on GBVF, trio crimes, human trafficking, tourism safety, school safety, stock theft and border security among others.
45. More educational and awareness campaigns will be implemented in the current financial year to empower our communities and also contribute to reducing crime levels in our communities.
46. Honourable Members, the department will also support priority stations. There are 30 identified stations, which have contributed the highest number of reported crime cases over the four quarters of the previous financial year.
47. Madam Speaker, as we have been doing in the current MTEF period, we will continue to give more attention and support to top 30 stations that contribute mostly to serious crimes in the previous financial year.
48. The support to these stations will be in the form of awareness campaigns and operations such as Overall Friday Programme on specific weekends and the recently launched Operation Siyavutha.
49. The department will also implement 365 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children throughout the financial year as part enhancing awareness in the fight against GBVF throughout the province.
50. As part of combatting the scourge of GBVF, we will through the Monitoring and Evaluation Section, continue to monitor compliance of the police in implementing the provisions of Domestic Violence Act.
51. Madam Speaker, the schooling environment is expected to be crime and drug free zones in order to ensure delivery of quality learning and teaching.
52. However often in many schools across the length and breadth of our province, our schools are constantly threatened by criminal elements in communities where they are located.
53. Those who trade in drugs and gangs have made our schools their playing ground. We have seized marijuana, knives and other dangerous weapons and other unwanted substances from learners in school premises.

54. Honourable Members, we have visited many schools and we implemented various awareness campaigns to the learners at these schools.
55. We have been to schools in areas such as: Emalahleni, Nkomazi, Emjindini, Elukwatini, Wesselton, Bushbuckridge, Middelburg and Embalenhle to mention but a few.
56. We have programmes such as School Prison Visits where we have taken learners in identified schools to Correctional facilities so that they experience first-hand, the conditions inmates are living in behind bars.
57. This is done as deterrent to crime among learners. These and many other programmes are part of the implementation of the School Safety Strategy, which is implemented in collaboration with other government departments.
58. We are responding to one of our mandates as the Sixth Administration, which is: "*Social Cohesion and safe communities* by ensuring safety in our schools.
59. We will as a department continue to implement border security awareness campaigns in communities located near the borders.
60. The border related crimes will further receive attention through the recently launched Operation Siyavutha. What we have also observed during the Festive Season and Easter long weekend, is the emergence of the so-called runners.
61. These runners are reportedly facilitating the illegal crossing of undocumented people through our borders especially at illegal crossing points. Madam Speaker, we have noted the increased volume of trucks that cross the Lebombo Border Gate destined for Mozambique.
62. The increased volume has on many occasions led to traffic congestion particularly from Thursdays, during certain long weekends, Easter holidays as well as the Festive season.
63. This has resultantly exposed travellers and truck drivers to opportunistic criminals. We have received reports of criminals taking advantage of the situation and cases of hijacking and robberies to mention a few have been reported.
64. This will continue to receive the attention of the police and the criminal justice cluster. We must commend the police for their efforts in recovering most of these vehicles because some were recovered while they were destined to cross the border.

65. The police are working around the clock to deal with these challenges, this is also supported by the department through programmes such as border security awareness campaigns.
66. Honourable Members, we welcome the implementation of the much awaited Border Management Authority (BMA), which came into effect from 1 April 2023. The streamlining of the control of the border environment will contribute towards improved border security.
67. Madam Speaker, in line with the Constitution, one of the mandates of the department is to provide oversight to the police in order to improve policing in the province. We are pleased to report that we have been able to monitor police stations in 2022/2023 financial year.
68. We will continue to do so even in the current financial year. Over and above this, the department is currently hard at work with the project of Police Stations Census.
69. The purpose of the census is to collect reliable, accurate and comprehensive data on all police stations. The data will be used to implement strategies and plans to improve service delivery and fight crime effectively.
70. Honourable Members, we are aware of the fact that when there is service delivery at police stations, the communities will benefit greatly. This will help to strengthen the relationship between the police and the communities.
71. Madam speaker, furthermore for the period under review, the department has conducted the Court Watching Briefs at identified Magistrates Courts across the province.
72. This is expected to improve professionalism within the police service and also increase conviction rates.

Programme 3: Transport Regulation

Programme 3, has been allocated an amount of **Seven Hundred and Seventy Two Million, Nine Hundred and Seventeen Thousand Rand (R772 917 000)**.

73. Honourable Members, the province links the country with eSwatini and Mozambique. The province also connects to Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal, Free State and Limpopo provinces.
74. This interconnectivity happens through major routes such as N4, N3, N2, N11, N12, N17, R36, R573 and R40 to mention but a few.

75. This, as expected, leads to increased traffic volumes which is also exacerbated by the fact that Mpumalanga is a tourist destination. We usually experience high traffic volumes during Easter weekend and the Festive Season.
76. There are some weekends when we see increased number of vehicles on the road especially when there are major events in our province.
77. As part of enhancing road safety and compliance with the rules, we have conducted two hundred and four (204) road safety audits, nineteen (19) reports on road crashes were produced.
78. Madam Speaker, we have also recorded the following successes in the previous financial year:
- **2 308** Speed operations
 - **42** K78 roadblocks
 - **32** drunken driving operations
 - **812 929** vehicles were stopped and checked.
79. Honourable Members, the department has implemented various road safety programmes such as Rest Stops, Pedestrians awareness campaigns, Road Safety debates and alcohol awareness campaigns.
80. Madam Speaker, road crashes in 2022/23 financial year decreased when compared to the same period in 2021/22 financial year.
81. This led to reduction in fatalities, and serious injuries however, slight injuries in 2022/23 increased when compared to the same period in 2021/22.
82. Furthermore, this year Easter weekend the province recorded a reduction in fatalities as compared to the same period last year. This year Easter weekend, **17** people lost their lives while last year during the same period, **23** people died in road crashes during the same period.
83. One of the key factors that contributed to the declines recorded is the meticulous planning and preparation as well as the implementation of the third shift on identified during the Easter long weekend.
84. Among others, our plan was informed by a five-year analysis of the roads that contributed the most to fatal crashes and fatalities during the peak holiday seasons. Such roads include N2, N3, N4, N17, R40 and R573.

85. It is in this context that we will continue to strengthen our road safety and law enforcement initiatives.
86. We are constantly monitoring routes which contributes to most number of crashes and implement various programmes such block patrols, alcohol driven operations and static road blocks on certain routes.
87. Madam Speaker, these decreases cannot be celebrated and the road is still far too long to arrive where we want to be. Loss of one life on the road, is one too many. We will instead continue to work harder.
88. It is in this context that we will relaunch the Traffic Intervention Unit (TIU) in KwaMhlanga in the Nkangala Region in August this year.
89. The TIU members were trained in Limpopo by the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in order to respond to complex situations on the road.
90. Recently we have deployed the unit members along with the police as part of bringing stability in Emalahleni. This followed a three-day closure of the N4 toll road in Vosman by protesters.

BUDGET ALLOCATION

Honourable Members, the budget for the financial year **2023/2024** has been allocated as follows:

Programme 1: Administration

Programme 1, has been allocated an amount of **One Hundred and Seventy Million, Eight Hundred and Forty-Seven Thousand Rand (R170 847 000)**.

Programme 2: Provincial Civilian Secretariat for Police Service

The programme has been allocated amount of **Sixty Million, Forty-Seven Thousand Rand (R 60 047 000)**.

Programme 3: Transport Regulation

Transport Regulation has been allocated an amount of **Seven Hundred and Seventy Two Million, Nine Hundred and Seventeen Thousand Rand (R772 917 000)**.

Programme 4: Security Management

The programme has been allocated an amount of **Eight Hundred and Fourteen Million, Five Hundred and Twenty Eight Thousand Rand (R 814 528 000)**.

Madam Speaker, with your permission, we now present the total budget for the financial year 2023/2024 as:

One Billion Seven Hundred and Sixty-Eight Million, Three Hundred and Thirty Nine Thousand Rand (R1 768 339 000).

CONCLUSION

As I conclude, as a department and the entire security cluster, we are today rededicating ourselves to work closely with each other and our communities to turn the fight against crime, and road crashes. We will leave no one behind in our quest to make our communities safer.

Furthermore, I would like to thank the ANC in the province under the leadership of Comrade Mandla Ndlovu and Honourable Premier, Mrs Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, and my colleagues in the Executive Council for their guidance and support.

I also wish to thank the following:

The Portfolio Committee on Public Works, Roads and Transport; Community Safety, Security and Liaison, chaired by Honourable Norah Mahlangu for the role the committee plays in our work.

The Acting Head of Department, Mr. Godfrey Ntombela, Office of the MEC, the management and staff of DCSSL, all members of Justice Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) Cluster.

I also wish to thank SAPS under the leadership of SAPS Provincial Commissioner, Lieutenant General Semakaleng Manamela for all the breakthroughs that the police make on daily basis in the fight against crime.

I want to thank many people who supported me during my stay at the hospital. It was not only the medical and hospital staff who played the part on my way to recovery. Your thoughts and prayers also kept me going.

Lastly, I am also incredibly indebted to my family, friends and comrades for their steadfast backing, which has always kept me going.

Let me close by quoting the late Oliver Reginald Tambo who once said I open quote: “It is our responsibility to break down barriers of division and create a country where there would be neither white or blacks, just South Africans, free and united in diversity.”

Thank you.