



**MINISTRY OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**AN OVERVIEW OF THE 2017/18 ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL
SERVICES.**

DEPUTY MINISTER, THABANG MAKWETLA (MP).

Chairperson and Honourable Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to present to you today; it is a privilege for me to be standing in for the minister today providing a pre-phase for the 2017/2018 annual report. As honourable members are aware, this would be the last annual report of the Department of Correctional Services in the course of this administration.

The report I have the honour to present before you is an illustration of the progress we have registered in the last twelve months. It is however a continuum of work that our Department has made since the dawn of democracy and, more specifically, over the last five years.

Accordingly, during the year 2017/18, we have recorded the highest ever performance in terms of targets achieved standing at 81%. An improvement of 17% when compared to the 2016/2017 financial year.

The National Development Plan commits our government to do everything possible to ensure that citizens are and feel safe. For our part, we endeavour to ensure that: remand detainees attend courts and are held in secure, safe and humane conditions; sentenced offenders are provided with health care needs, effective rehabilitation programmes and educational

programs in line with their correctional sentence plans; and that offenders, parolees and probationers are successfully reintegrated in society as rehabilitated law-abiding citizens.

We are continuing with the migration from incarceration towards a fully-fledged rehabilitation service as an integral part of an integrated criminal justice system. In this regard we have paid attention to our policy and governance systems; not only to deliver greater efficiency but to ensure that in substance, these reflect our commitment to the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders.

With regard to administration we have sought to maintain stability by among other things, the filling of strategic and critical vacancies to realise the objective of rehabilitation and reintegration. We have minimised vacancies at the regional leadership level of the Department over the year in question. And of course at head office; there has also been an improvement in filling of vacancies in the leadership of the different divisions of the Department.

In this regard, the Department successfully placed 86 518- that is 82% - sentenced offenders on various correctional programmes in the year 2017/2018. We have recorded good performance on probationer and parolee compliance with placement conditions. Of the 54 000 and more parolees, 99% - that is 53 615 complied with their conditions, whereas 15 914 probationers out of 16 131 – which is 99 % again- complied with their conditions.

Post prison life continues to be a challenge for many inmates. They idle at home with no prospects for employment. However initiatives for self employment by these ex-offenders are supported by the Department. The syndrome I am referring to here, is what we know affects all members of our communities partly because of the state of the economy of our country at the moment. There is no gainsaying the fact that historical socio- economic challenges are a material condition for our country's problem of crime. We have therefore continued to implement various skills development programs aimed at addressing this root cause; in order to ensure that ex offenders have the wherewithal to eke out a living from an honest day's work when they leave our correctional facilities.

During the first week of October this year the Department of Correctional Services in partnership with the National Library of South Africa; hosted the Funda Mzantsi Championship in George, in the Western Cape Province. Funda Mzansi is an initiative to promote literacy, reading and comprehension among offenders in our correctional facilities.

It began with four book clubs in 2009 and has now grown exponentially to 93 book clubs in 2018 throughout the six regions of the department. About 240 inmates scored top honours at this year's competition.

With respect to this initiative; we must indicate to the committee that it is the drive of the department that going into the future we must explore possibilities of introducing reading for redemption. Wherein through participation in these book clubs, in reading books, offenders can actually gain credit that can be used to reduce their stay in our correctional centres.

But of course in order to achieve this; it means that we must look at the possibilities of a full roll out of access by all inmates in our correctional centres. And also do a proper evaluation of the literature material that is accessible to them. We are also equipping many inmates with agricultural skills and other artisan skills. Many more have been involved in various formal education and training programmes as well. During the year under review, over 10 00 inmates have accessed adult education and training programmes

Our care programme which comprises of healthcare, nutrition and hygiene continues to make a positive impact, with respect to reducing the burden of disease. The detection of diseases such as HIV infection and tuberculosis, accompanied by adequate treatment and the introduction of harm reduction continues to make an impact. It contributes significantly to the health of the communities from which these offenders come from and that they return to after serving their sentences.

The number of inmates initiated on antiretroviral treatment during the current financial year increased by 1 936 from 24 506 in 2016/17. With the implementation of the Universal Test and

Treat programme (UTT) for all HIV positive inmates, we are confident that this will have positive health care outcomes overall.

We achieved a cure rate of 87% for offenders against a set target of 86% in the financial year 2017/2018. This is a slight improvement when compared to the 83% recorded in the 2016/2017 financial year. The achievement can be attributed to the collaboration between the Department of Correctional Services, support partners as well as the Department of Health.

Over crowding continues to be a mammoth challenge; many of our centres are under-staffed with aging infrastructure. We cannot allow these challenges to become a permanent feature of our reality. As part of addressing these challenges: the department is implementing a multipronged strategy to reduce population levels of remand detainees; we are promoting consideration of sentenced offenders for parole or correctional supervision; the spreading of offenders evenly across our different correctional centres; advocating for non-custodial alternatives/sanctions to imprisonment and optimal use of correctional supervision. We are also accelerating our infrastructure projects which will increase bed spaces. The Tzaneen and Estcourt new centres are an example of this work.

We will also be paying attention to compliance with security protocols as part this component. This is well in line with the Back-2-Basics security campaign, which aims to ensure that operational managers at centre level instil a renewed sense of security responsibility.

We remain ceased with the efforts to address the overall performance of the department; including challenges around its supply chain management as the Auditor General report eloquently explains.

We would like to thank members of this committee for your support and guidance during the year under review. The annual report we are tabling today; reflects the hard work that our officials throughout the country in this Department are putting to realise the goals of our policy perspective. The ministry would like to thank them most sincerely for their determined efforts and implore them to work even harder as a valued part of our country's esteemed vehicle of last resort in defence of the civilisation we cherish.

Chairperson I thank you. At this point allow me to invite the National Commissioner to take you through the Annual Report of the Department of Correctional services for the year 2017/2018.

I thank you.