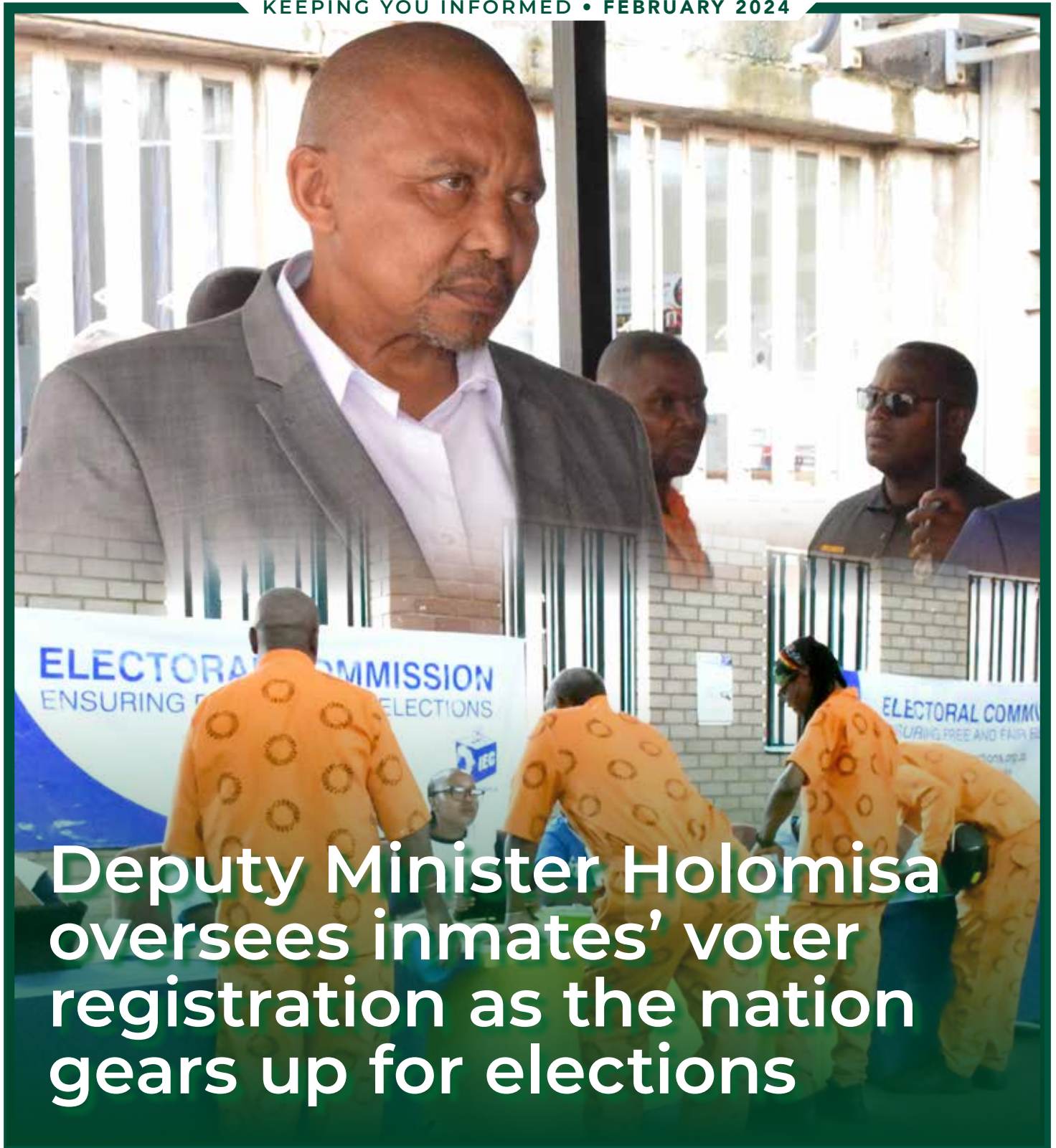


DCS NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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**Deputy Minister Holomisa
oversees inmates' voter
registration as the nation
gears up for elections**



correctional services

Department:
Correctional Services
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



DCS hosts crime awareness Imbizo amid high levels of crime in Marite

By Opheliah Motloutsi

Correctional Services National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale led a Crime Awareness Imbizo at Mathibela Sports Field in Marite outside Bushbuckridge, on 26 January 2024, to address the crime challenges plaguing the area.

The imbizo was organized under the theme: "Working together for a safe and peaceful South Africa." Marite is one of the areas beset by criminal activities such as murders, school and business robberies, hijackings, truck lootings, and Gender-Based Violence. Encouraging the community to refrain from committing crime, parolee, Victor Ndlovu who is a former Mathematics and English educator said that crime does not pay as it separates you from the family and also bring disgrace and psychosocial problems. However, he mentioned that change is possible.

One of the brave school learners from the area appealed to the South African Police Service (SAPS) to intervene in dealing with criminality and further pleaded with the perpetrators of crime to stop terrorising the community, robbing of the school assets and books as it affects their education. Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, Faith-Based Organisations, Local Economic Development Forum, Traditional Healers Organisation, Department of Social Development, Department of Basic Education also echoed the same sentiment and pledged to work with the community to eradicate crime in Marite.

Kgosi Mathupa Mokoena of Mathibela Tribal Authority, said the Marite Community has been gripped by fear borne out of a perception that criminals are working in cahoots with



Kgosi Mathupa Mokoena of Mathibela Tribal Authority addressing the audience during the Imbizo.

some law enforcement officials. He mentioned that several izimbizo and meetings to address crime challenges were held but have not yielded the best results as the levels of crimes continue to increase. Kgosi Mokoena said his people are scared to report criminal activities because they immediately become targets.

The SAPS Provincial Commissioner, Lieutenant General Semakeleng Manamela, urged the community to report crimes happening in their area. Furthermore, she guaranteed the safety of community members who come forward with information to the police. "Suggestion boxes are placed in all the police stations in Mpumalanga to ensure that whistleblowers who come forward with information are protected at all times," said Manamela.

Commissioner Thobakgale said the level of crime in Marite is alarming, more so because the perpetrators



DCS National Commissioner Makgothi Thobakgale delivering his keynote address at Marite.

are young people. "As government departments, we would want to start by planting a seed that will yield positive results and make it a point that we redirect the perpetrators from crime to different paths as plans to eradicate crime around the area are underway," said Thobakgale.

He also urged criminals to stop committing crimes. Furthermore, he indicated that the department recently suffered a loss when one of officials from the area succumbed to his injuries when he was shot. The Commissioner lamented the debilitating loss of a dedicated official, and was at pains to highlight that this was not the first fatal incident involving an official in the area.

The Bushbuckridge Local Municipality expressed words of gratitude to the department for hosting the crime awareness imbizo in Marite as the area is in dire need of intervention from all government departments to combat crime.

Various public service department and private institutions also set up one-stop service delivery stations and showcased products and services while the Department of Correctional Services donated agricultural products exhibited during the Imbizo to Sizabantwana Children Benefit Organisation.

Learners from different schools around Marite listening attentively to the speakers during the event.





An official from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) posted in Johannesburg Management Area briefs the Deputy Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Nkosi Phathekile Holomisa, National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale and other senior managers about the inmates' voter registration processes.

Deputy Minister Holomisa oversees inmates' voter registration as the nation gears up for elections

By Tlou Matjekana

As part of the preparations for this year's upcoming National and Provincial elections, the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), working in conjunction with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) embarked on a three-day voter registration for inmates from 30 January to 01 February 2024 at correctional facilities across the country.

This is to ensure that inmates (sentenced and non-sentenced) also become part of the South Africans who will be exercising their democratic right to cast their vote in the upcoming elections.

Deputy Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Nkosi Phathekile Holomisa, accompanied by a high-level delegation which included DCS National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale and IEC Chief Electoral Officer, Sy Mamabolo, visited Johannesburg and Kgoši Mampuru II Management Areas on 31 January 2024, to oversee the inmates' voter registration. He mentioned that the inmates' voter registration drive is meant to ensure that all South Africans, above 18 years old, with an Identity Document (ID) are accorded an opportunity to exercise their democratic right to vote during elections. "We are here to oversee the process and to confirm that all inmates are being given an opportunity to register in terms of regulations applicable, as they are entitled to vote despite being incarcerated. We have witnessed that the registration process is conforming to the standards that were set," explained Deputy Minister Holomisa. Outlining the inmates' voter registration process, National Commissioner,

Makgothi Thobakgale indicated that an online registration is being administered, with the assistance from IEC. He also mentioned that the Department of Home Affairs is also assisting with the issuing of identity documents for inmates who did not have. "There are over 139 000 inmates who are eligible to vote, although the numbers may fluctuate due to the releases and admissions of inmates over these three days, however, we anticipate that over 20 000 inmates will register to vote," said Commissioner Thobakgale.

The IEC Chief Electoral Officer, Sy Mamabolo highlighted that there are protocols and regulations to be adhered to when operating inside a security institution such as DCS, and assured that the IEC has been functioning within that discipline. He explained that this is to ensure that the security of the system is not compromised. "We have had a good working relationship with DCS in planning for these registrations and the execution thereof. I can also confirm that political party agents are also here to observe that the registrations are conducted fairly. We are also impressed with the progress made so far," he said.

Mr Dumisani, an inmate at Johannesburg Management Area Medium



Deputy Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Nkosi Phathekile Holomisa alongside IEC Chief Electoral Officer, Sy Mamabolo observing the inmates' voter registration processes at Johannesburg Management Area.



Inmates came out in numbers to register to vote in the upcoming elections.

B, thanked DCS for the opportunity granted to them to be able to register to vote. "I would like to thank DCS and IEC for considering and encouraging us to register, and for ensuring that we are also given a chance to vote. I have been voting since 1994 and I look forward to this year's elections," said Dumisani.

Similarly, Luyanda who is incarcerated at Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area thanked the South African government for affording inmates an opportunity to exercise their constitutional right to vote. He also commended the sterling work being done behind the scene to encourage inmates to register to vote. "Throughout the corridors of the correctional facility, there are posters telling us about how to register to vote. Even on the notice boards, there is information reminding and urging us to register to vote," said Luyanda. He urged the government to intensify efforts to educate the general populace about the importance of participating in electoral processes.



DCS senior managers and officials with delegates from the Ethiopian Federal Prison Commission.

DCS hosts Ethiopian Federal Prison Commission delegation

By Kopano Ramashala

The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) hosted the Ethiopian Federal Prison Commission delegation who were in South Africa for a benchmarking visit to the DCS correctional facilities from 29 January to 02 February 2024.

The purpose of the visit was to gain first-hand experience and to learn best practices from DCS on matters pertaining to Self-Sufficiency and Sustainability Framework (SSSF) programmes, management of young offenders, human resources and capacity building.

Acting Chief Deputy Commissioner (CDC): Human Resources, Kenneth Mthombeni outlined the departmental organisational structure, including staffing, remuneration, benefits, career pathing as well as wellness programmes.

CDC: Incarceration and Corrections, Anna Molepo said DCS believes in the approach that corrections is a societal responsibility that can be achieved through partnership with communities and other key stakeholders. To this end, DCS has partnered with external education and training service providers to ensure effective rehabilitation of offenders and contribute in building safer communities.

"During the period of their incarceration, inmates are required to attend training in the field of their interest such as production workshops, confectionaries, farming, cellphone repairs and others. Offenders also have access to education, where they are allowed to further their studies. However, remand detainees are offered only life skills and recreational programmes," said CDC Molepo.

The visit included amongst others, a site visit to Emthonjeni Juvenile Centre, Baviaanspoort Management Area, where delegates had an opportunity to visit sewing classes that produce variety of garments. The delegation then proceeded to the dairy farm at Zonderwater Management Area where over 120 herd of cattle are kept with each cow producing an average of 21 litres of milk per day. The site visit concluded at the Maximum Facility (C-Max) at Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area, which houses high risk offenders.

In his remarks, National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale



National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale exchanging gifts with his Ethiopian counterpart, Commissioner General Damene Darota Damota.



The Ethiopian delegation during their benchmarking visits to Baviaanspoort and Zonderwater Management Areas.

mentioned that he envisages a positive feedback from the Ethiopian Federal Prison Commission that will show the fruits of their benchmarking visit. "As a department and country, the capacity we have, we would like to share with other African countries and we would want to benefit from the capacity of other African countries. This bilateral discussions between the two countries is a step forward towards fulfilling our respective mandates," said Commissioner Thobakgale.

Commissioner General of the Ethiopian Federal Prison Commission, Damene Darota Damota said that they are impressed with the South African correctional facilities and they have taken positive notes on what to improve in the Ethiopian Federal Prison system. "We strongly believe that our benchmarking visits this week in the Department of Correctional Services of the Republic of South Africa is a continuation of a long and solid relationship between our two sister states," he concluded.



The 27 For Freedom Mandela race participants taking-off from the starting point of the 11th instalment of the race, at Drakenstein Management Area.

Correctional Services takes part in the annual 27 For Freedom Mandela Race

By Tlou Matjekana

The 11th instalment of the annual 27 For Freedom Mandela Race took place on 10 February 2024 at Drakenstein Management Area, Western Cape Region, to commemorate the first democratic President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela's release from incarceration on 11 February 1990. This year also marks 34 years since his release.

The globally renowned struggle icon is hailed for playing a central role in laying a foundation towards a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa.

On 11 February 1990, the former President Mandela walked out of the Drakenstein Correctional Facility, formerly known as Victor Vester Prison, as a free man after 27 years of incarceration at various places including the then called Pretoria Prison, Pollsmoor Prison and Robben Island.

Western Cape Regional Commissioner, Delekile Klaas, said that the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), in collaboration with other stakeholders, hosts the 27 For Freedom Mandela Race annually to commemorate Mandela's legacy. He also mentioned that this year also marks 30 years of South Africa's democracy based on a Constitution that unites us," said RC Klaas. Over 1 574 competitive participants, including DCS officials participated in the 27km, 10km and 5km races. National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale participated in the 5km category of the race. Commissioner Thobakgale was excited to witness participants from different races, ages and classes in

their jovial mood before the start of the race. "Today we are honouring the life of Tata Mandela and his contribution towards liberating us from our struggles. By taking part in this race that has brought us together to keep his spirit alive, we are also resembling a united rainbow nation that he fought for. As the department, we embrace such initiatives that are part of nation building and aim to promote a non-racial and democratic South Africa," said Commissioner Thobakgale.

Ms Tsetsa Dingalo (DCS 27km female top runner, 02:36:07) and her coach, Mr Masonwabe Bosiki (DCS 27km male top runner; 01:41:50)



National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale and Western Cape Regional Commissioner, Delekile Klaas during their 5km walk at Drakenstein Management Area.



National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale and acting Deputy Commissioner: Communications, Singabakho Nxumalo receiving their medals after completing the 5km race.



DCS top runners for 27km category, Ms Tsetsa Dingalo (female category) and Mr Masonwabe Bosiki (male category) from Pollsmoor Management Area.

both from Pollsmoor Management Area, were thrilled after being announced as the top runners amongst DCS officials.

Ms Dingalo, thanked her coach for the constant support, training sessions and advises during their preparations for the race. "Being crowned DCS top female runner came as a shock as I did not expect that my name can be on top of the list, however, I am very happy and proud of my achievement today," said Ms Dingalo.

The 27 For Mandela Race results 2024 (DCS officials) are as follows:

27km		10km	
Male	Female	Male	Female
1 st Masonwabe Bosiki 01:41:50 Pollsmoor Management Area	1 st Tsetsa Dingalo 02:36:07 Pollsmoor Management Area	1 st Angelo Booysen 00:33:12 West Coast Management Area	1 st Nicholize Visagie 00:57:44 West Coast Management Area
2 nd Christo Dourie 01:59:06 Overberg Management Area	2 nd Katrina Smith 03:18:25 Overberg Management Area	2 nd Kagiso Thoka 00:38:09 Overberg Management Area	2 nd Charlene Scholtz 00:58:31 Allandale Management Area
3 rd Ernst Henley 02:02:05 Goodwood Management Area	3 rd Only two DCS female officials entered the 27km race category.	3 rd Liaan Minaar 00:45:26 Overberg Management Area	3 rd Nokhanyo Mjobo 01:01:12 Pollsmoor Management Area



Community member, Ms Vivian Skippers posing a question to the panel on housing.

DCS hosts a community Imbizo as part of its interventions in combating crime and social ills at Klawer

By Candice van Reenen

The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) descended on the town Klawer, a small, yet vibrant community in the Western Cape Region on 17 February 2024.

The National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale spoke keenly to the community, following observations made during the imbizo.

In his remarks, Commissioner Thobakgale expressed that the work of DCS is not just in the correctional facilities, but that the department also has to engage with community members. "Our purpose is also to come to you and work with you. We are not here to serve ourselves. The biggest contribution towards fighting crime, must come from the community. We need to reach each and every person and this imbizo must be remembered for having an impact on Klawer," he said.

Community members had come prepared to speak to DCS and other government departments, and were ready to engage on both their concerns and aspira-

tions for a prosperous community. One of the key concerns raised was the high rate of school drop-outs and the subsequent high rate of crime committed by children in Klawer. Commissioner Thobakgale implored the community to encourage children to go to school as a mitigating factor to reducing crime. "As a member of the community, don't only care about your own children, but all the children within the community," he said.

Ms Elizabeth Nel, a resident of Klawer, said that she had recently returned to the town after some years away, and was concerned with the deterioration. In a show of commitment to the regeneration of the town, she devoted herself to start a poverty alleviation project with DCS and other partners, as a first step towards turning the community's situation around.

Sitting among the stakeholders



National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale addressing the community members of Klawer.



Ms Elizabeth Nel volunteered to join DCS and other partners in establishing a soup kitchen to aid in poverty alleviation in the town.

to support and also to provide feedback, was the Executive Mayor of Matzikama, Councillor Johan van der Hoven and Major-General Sizakhele Dyanti from the South African Police Service.

In his closing remarks, Commissioner Thobakgale thanked community members and organisations for raising their issues. He said that through the departmental Strategic Framework for Self-Sufficiency and Sustainability, we were able to work with communities and start gardens and other projects within the community. "We give skills to parolees so that they may use them to improve their lives and alleviate poverty in the community. They have the capabilities to build an entire house," concluded Commissioner Thobakgale.

DCS achieves commendable 88% performance

By **Tiyani Sambo**

An in-depth analysis of the Department of Correctional Services' (DCS) performance report for Quarter 3 (Q3), of the current (2023/24) financial year, reveals signs of a stable and resilient Department that continues to deliver on its constitutional mandate despite fiscal and other operational pressures.

Although the overall Q3 performance dipped slightly by a percentage point, from 89% in Q3 of the previous (2022/23) financial year to 88% in Q3 of this financial year, DCS continues to achieve exceptionally high levels of performance. Addressing the Q3 National Management Performance Review Session held virtually on Wednesday (21 February 2024), the National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale, complimented Free State and Northern Cape, Kwa-Zulu Natal and Western Cape regions for achieving 100% of their targets, meanwhile, Eastern Cape achieved 27 targets, with Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West managing to achieve 26 and Gauteng achieving 25, of their 28 targets, for the period under review.

In his brief synopsis of the state of the Department, with a particular focus on Q3 performance, Commissioner Thobakgale cited overcrowding in correctional facilities as a major challenge that DCS cannot resolve on its own. "We need partnerships to deal with the challenge of overcrowding in correctional facilities," said the National Commissioner. The high levels of overcrowding in correctional facilities is attributed to the high crime rate and several operations conducted by the South African Police Service resulting in more arrests.

However, Commissioner Thobakgale hastened to point out that more can be done to improve performance particularly in relation to non-achievement of targets on offenders participating in agriculture activities as well as the number of offenders, parolees and probationers who participate in Restorative Justice programmes. He emphasised that similar challenges and dynamics are experienced across the regions, which makes him opti-

mistic that the regions lagging behind can claw back lost ground. He also pointed out that the late implementation of arbitration awards is one of the challenges that should have been addressed in the previous quarter.

Deputy Commissioner (DC): Strategic Planning and Management, Anbigay Naicker, provided an overview of the Department's performance for Q3 per Programme and Region, focusing on quarterly reporting processes, interim audit findings, targets not achieved as well as progress on the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) targets.

DC Naicker reported that DCS had achieved 30, out of 34, targets for the period under review, which translates to 88% performance achievement. She reported that Programmes: Incarceration, Rehabilitation, Care and Social Reintegration all achieved 100% of their Q3 targets, with Administration managing to achieve 67%.

The targets not achieved under Programme: Administration relate to the percentage of officials charged and found guilty of corrupt activities, number of sites where Mesh Network and Integrated Security Systems are installed, percentage of Information Systems implemented as per Master Information Systems and Security Technology Plan (MISSTP) as well as the percentage of sites installed with Local Area Network (LAN) infrastructure.

Acting Chief Financial Officer, Lebogang Marumule presented a summary of the National State of Expenditure for the period ended 31 December 2023 and highlighted that the Department had spent R21,009 billion (79.07%), against the spending plan of R20,107 billion (75.67%), resulting in R902,169 million overspending of the projected expenditure. He



National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale has called on Management and staff to do more to improve the overall performance of the Department.



Acting Chief Financial Officer, Lebogang Marumule indicated that the Department has realised significant savings due to the implementation of cost containment measures.

cited compensation of employees, goods and services, interest and rent on land, transfers and subsidies and payments for capital assets as the major cost drivers. He highlighted that the cost containment measures implemented have resulted in significant savings.

Other presentations made during the session included:

- Progress on implementation of audit action plan;
- Progress on implementation of Internal Audit findings;
- Progress on Q3 strategic Risk Register;
- 2024/25 Annual Performance Plan;
- Summary of the 2024 MTEF Budget;
- Updated 2024/25 Strategic Risk Register; and
- 2023 Annual Strategic Planning Session Report.



Some of the young people during their commissions unearthing solutions around harrowing crime levels in Nkomazi.

Correctional Services paves way for youth development in Nkomazi

By Tlou Matjekana

As part of its Community Outreach Programme, the Department of Correctional Services, (DCS), led by National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale, officiated a Youth Empowerment Session on 23 February 2024, at Steenbok village, under Nkomazi Local Municipality, Mpumalanga province.

This follows a call made by Nkosi Lungedlani II during an imbizo organised by DCS in January this year, for the Department to convene an interactive session, wherein issues affecting the community can be addressed, and to create a platform for locals to contribute towards efforts to empower the youth and fight crime in the area.

Some of the challenges afflicting communities around Nkomazi Local Municipality include high levels of crime emanating from substance abuse as well as high youth unemployment. In response, Commissioner Thobakgale and Nkosi Lungedlani II resolved to form a pact and invite various stakeholders and community organisations to collaborate with them in order to divert the youth away from criminal activities and get them engaged in productive activities that contribute to their personal development.

As part of initiatives to unearth talent and create opportunities for the youth in the area, resources are being made available to advance their development and education. To this end, various stakeholders, including the National Youth Development Agency, South African Police Service (SAPS), Department of Employment and Labour as well as other organisations in the skills and development sector such as Meals on Wheels and FOREK Institute of Technology, amongst others, have pledged to work with DCS and the tribal authority

to help the community to find practical solutions to eradicate poverty, substance abuse and unemployment.

Delivering his keynote address, Commissioner Thobakgale acknowledged the impressive turnout which comprised of strong legion of young people, supported by their parents, guardians and community members at large. He said this was clear demonstration and an unequivocal endorsement of DCS philosophy that 'corrections is a societal responsibility.'

He further mentioned that in order to ensure the eradication of high levels of crime in the area, members of the community should also be actively involved in community forums and work together with the SAPS and other stakeholders. "In collaboration with traditional leaders, community organisations and other government departments, we agreed to have this youth empowerment session whereby young people can deliberate on their growth and development as well as the challenges they are faced with. As part of this programme, there will be a plan put in place with a team that will implement the proposed solutions emanating from these engagements," said Commissioner Thobakgale. Some of the proposed solutions that emerged out of deliberations by various commissions include the following:

- Youth Learning Centres;
- Partnership with Non-Governmental Organisations and provision of financial aid;



National Commissioner, Makgothi Thobakgale engaging with young people from Steenbok and surrounding areas in Nkomazi Local Municipality.



Parolees motivating the youth to refrain from criminal activities, and narrating the unpleasant experience of life behind bars.

- Taking Corrections to the communities to eradicate recidivism;
- Traditional Councils to be actively involved on issues affecting communities;
- Create awareness on mental illness;
- Parental support, especially amongst children with mental challenges;
- Establishment of an information hub that can share more information about job opportunities, including available rehabilitation centres; and
- Development of sports facilities.

Cognisant of the issues raised in the commissions, Nkosi Lungedlani II, mentioned that he is delighted to have these kinds of initiatives in his community, which are aimed at eradicating poverty and crime in the area. He further mentioned that he will follow up with the institutions that made proposals for the upliftment of the community.

A learner, Jacky Mamba from Mbhunu Senior Secondary School, said he learned a lot during the Youth Engagement Session, adding that he is thankful for the opportunity to participate in this unique initiative to eliminate social ills in his community. He was also grateful that the initiative will also create a platform for the youth to access information about bursaries and further educational opportunities such as theoretical and practical programmes offered by FOREK Institute of Technology.

DCS aims to continue with similar engagements in other high crime spots in the country, in pursuit of creating a safer and just South Africa for all.



Winners of the Head Office Weight Loss Challenge were also acknowledged for their tenacity and enduring commitment to achieve their goals.

A fit and healthy workforce - the tonic needed to catapult DCS to greater heights

By Tiyani Sambo

The west block wing of the Poyntons building's open hallway was a hive of activity on Friday, 23 February 2024, as healthcare service providers of different specialities set up their stalls to offer their services to correctional officials stationed at the headquarters of the Department of Correctional Services (DCS).

Acutely aware of the famous expression which says, 'If you don't care about your body, where are you going to live?' correctional officials came out in droves and thronged the foyer to undergo a variety of health screenings from different specialists. Also present were financial service providers to coach officials on financial wellness.

Acting Deputy Commissioner: Integrated Employee Health and Wellness, Thabo Mokhele mentioned that plans are at an advanced stage to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Planet Fitness and Virgin Active gyms, which will benefit DCS officials through generous discounts when they sign up with the gyms. He added that the Department, through the Chief Directorate: Integrated Employee Health and Wellness, offers an as-

sortment of tailored services and programmes which are geared toward promoting employee wellness and creating a conducive working environment for employees to thrive.

The Head Office Employee Health and Wellness Day was also combined with the Head Office Weight Loss Challenge official announcement, where the top 3 male and female winners were acknowledged for demonstrating outstanding dedication and achieving remarkable results.

Mokhele recognised the impressive feat of the winners and encouraged all DCS officials to emulate them by signing up for the upcoming Weight Loss Challenge and by participating in various sporting activities. "To each and every participant, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your dedication, perseverance, and unwavering support. You have not only transformed your own

'If you don't care about your body, where are you going to live?'



Acting Deputy Commissioner: Integrated Employee Health and Wellness, Thabo Mokhele undergoing health screening during the Head Office Employee Health and Wellness Day.

lives but have also inspired others to do the same," he said.

The results of the Weight Loss Challenge are as follows:

Position	Males	Position	Females
1st place	Desmond Swart - lost 25kg (14.6%)	1st place	Refilwe Khoza - lost 8.1kg (6.8%)
2nd place	Steven Naidoo - lost 16.2kg (12.1%)	2nd place	Magdaleen Coetzer - lost 5.5kg (6.6%)
3rd place	Sam Mookangwe - lost 8.9kg (6.1%)	3rd place	Maggie Masuku - lost 3.8kg (3.8%)



WORKPLACE BULLYING

What is workplace bullying?

It usually involves acts or verbal comments that could mentally hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. Bullying can be between two individuals or it may involve groups of people. It might be obvious or it might be more subtle. It can include any kind of abuse or violence whether it be physical, social, psychological or verbal. It can occur in written communications, by phone, and/or email not just face-to-face actions.

According to the Health and Safety Authority, workplace bullying is:

“repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual’s right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but as a once off incident is not considered to be bullying”.

Examples of bullying

Bullying includes abuse, physical or verbal violence, humiliation and undermining someone’s confidence. You are probably being bullied if, for example, you are...

- Being constantly picked on such as repeated hurtful remarks or attacks
- Playing mind games, or ganging up on you
- Being shouted at or the target of spontaneous rage
- Being humiliated in front of colleagues
- Your views and opinions being ignored
- Blamed for problems caused by others
- Being set unreasonable/impossible deadlines or unmanageable workloads
- Regularly threatened with losing your job
- Unfairly passed over for promotion or denied training opportunities

How does Bullying affect your Work?

If you are bullied at work you might:

- Be less active or successful

- Be less confident in your work
- Feel scared, stressed, anxious or depressed
- Have your life outside of work affected
- Want to stay away from work
- Feel like you can’t trust your employer or people you work with
- Lack confidence and happiness about yourself and your work
- Have physical signs of stress like headaches, backaches and sleep problems.

It’s important to remember that we are all responsible for creating and maintaining safe and respectful workplaces. Bullying can exist only in environments and cultures that tolerate it. If you see it, say something about it, and remember that preventing and stopping workplace bullying starts with you.

**ISSUED BY: DIRECTORATE
EMPLOYEE WELLNESS: EAP
OFFICE
MRS.L.B. HENDRICKS
(EAP PROGRAM DESIGN &
COUNSELING)**

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WHAT YOU CAN DO TO

STOP BULLYING?

Here are several strategies that you can use as an organizational leader, a manager or supervisor, or any employee to stop bullying in your organization.

Organizational Leaders

- **Review current policies and procedures.** Do your policies and procedures address respecting one another in the workplace? Have you provided clear expectations regarding interactions among co-workers? Is there a clear channel for reporting workplace incivility or bullying?
- **Provide easy access to communication channels and support systems.** Implement a clear method—that doesn't have recourse—for reporting incivility and bullying. Some organizations have toll-free hotlines that employees can call to report instances of incivility or feeling targeted. Also consider implementing employee and customer
- **Process complaints fairly.** Implement a standard investigation process to evaluate every reported incident. Establish a universal disciplinary policy for instigators of bullying. Be cautious in making exceptions for any internal or external customer who has been accused of incivility or bullying, and ensure a thorough evaluation of the information gathered.
- **Implement training.** Provide training for all employees in respectful communication protocols and the consequences of not adhering to them. Many organizations go a step further and train employees in skills to prevent, recognize, and respond to incidents of incivility, aggression, and bullying in their workplaces.

Managers and Supervisors

- **Keep your ear to the ground.** Listen to employee concerns both formally and informally. You are closer to the

employees than the senior level, so be aware of sudden shifts and pattern changes in behaviour.

- **Address concerns and all forms of aggression.** Respectfully attend to employee concerns about incivility and disrespectful verbal aggression whenever it occurs. When necessary, follow through on progressive discipline.
- **Walk the talk.** Treat your employees respectfully, and encourage respectful interactions at all times through all communication channels. Managers and supervisors set the overall tone for workplace behaviour, and your employees are watching you for cues.
- **Arrange, support, and attend training.** Provide ongoing training on respectful workplace interactions. Having employees acknowledge a policy during orientation isn't enough. Employees need to know specific behaviours that are acceptable or unacceptable and be trained in how to handle incivility and bullying when it occurs.

Employees

- **Know that it starts with you.** Take a look at yourself and your current work environment to understand how you're being perceived and/or treated. If you feel you're being treated differently than before, are there any factors or changes that could explain it such as changes in schedule, supervisors, or assignments? Could any of these be contributing to your own sense of dissatisfaction? If you're being treated disrespectfully, have you brought it to the other person's attention and asked them to stop (if it's safe to discuss it with the person)?
- **Model and support ethical, respectful**

behaviour in your everyday interactions. In order to receive respect, you must give it. Are you treating others respectfully throughout all communication channels?

- **Communicate.** If someone does something that you feel is disrespectful, have a conversation with them (if you feel it's safe to do so). We can't jump to the conclusion that an individual is a bully if we have not told them that their behaviour is disrespectful, as we haven't given them the opportunity to understand our perception—and the opportunity to change.
- **If you see something, say something.** While you may not be the target of a bully, if you witness disrespectful or uncivil behaviour, say something—either directly to the person if it's safe to do so or to your supervisor, HR, or leadership team, or contact your Employee Assistance professional for assistance.
- **Attend and participate in training.** Awareness training and skill building is essential for all employees and helps employees translate policies and procedures into everyday workplace behaviours.

It's important to remember that we are all responsible for creating and maintaining safe and respectful workplaces. Bullying can exist only in environments and cultures that tolerate it. If you see it, say something about it, and remember that preventing and stopping workplace bullying starts with you.

**ISSUED BY: DIRECTORATE
EMPLOYEE WELLNESS: EAP
OFFICE
MRS.L.B. HENDRICKS
(EAP PROGRAM DESIGN &
COUNSELING)**

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BEREAVEMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Most people spend a good part of their day at work and as a result the people they work with can become like a close extended family.

When a colleague dies, or when someone in the workplace is grieving a death, the impact on co-workers can significantly affect the workplace.

Each person's experience of loss is unique; however, there are some common responses to loss. These include sadness, anxiety, fear, mistrust, betrayal, irritability, guilt, anger, tension and loss of confidence. Grieving people may also develop physical symptoms, such as headaches, difficulty sleeping, tiredness, changes in appetite, increased drug or alcohol use, restlessness, difficulty in making decisions and poor concentration.

These symptoms of grief can significantly impact a person's ability to function in the workplace and in some work settings, may also impact on their safety. Workers who feel cared for and supported are more likely to experience an improved recovery. Colleagues and employers don't need to be experts in bereavement; however, it is good practice, especially at a management level, to have some understanding of the impact of grief and how to respond appropriately.

Immediately after a bereavement

- Send a clear, simple message to staff, sharing whatever information is appropriate to share.
- Arrange for a safe space for staff to ask questions and to share their feelings.
- Send flowers to the bereaved and a card on behalf of the organisation.
- Call the bereaved, express your sadness for their loss and reassure them that there is no pressure to return to work until they are ready.
- Attend the funeral if appropriate. If you are unsure, ask the bereaved person.
- Assure them that their workload will be taken care of in their absence.
- Call them every couple of days to check in and offer support.
- If other employees or external colleagues are affected by the bereave-

ment, ensure that support is also extended to them.

- Remember to contact staff that are away on leave and let them know about the bereavement.

Bereavement in the Workplace

Providing ongoing support to staff who have experienced a bereavement

- Take the initiative to acknowledge the person's grief and express your sympathy.
- Acknowledge that people respond differently to loss. Be prepared for tears and sadness, they are a normal part of the grieving process.
- Expect to listen to the story from the grieving person again and again.
- Respect the grieving person's desire for privacy.
- Remember to include the person in social plans. Let them decide whether or not to accept.
- Accept that their performance in the workplace may be less than their best for a while

Workplace issues to consider

- Desk and personal belongings – family members or a close work friend may want to handle the task of packing up any personal belongings.
- Change and retrieve voice mail messages – assign this task to one person and prepare a brief statement to assist with enquiries intended for the deceased employee.
- Staff coverage for unfinished or future work – consider a short-term plan until more permanent decisions can be made. Make it clear what is required and who is responsible.
- Try not to make any abrupt moves in regard to office space changes. People need time to grieve the loss of their co-worker and may react badly to sudden changes.

Returning to work

The difficulties

For some people, returning to work after they have experienced a bereavement could be an overwhelming burden in addition to their grief and they may need to take more leave. Once back at work, some workers may experience reduced performance caused by lack of concentration or memory loss, tiredness from emotion or sleepless nights and feelings of depression or anxiety.

The benefits

For others, returning to work can be beneficial. Resuming regular daily routines within a safe work environment surrounded by friendly colleagues can take the person's mind off their loss and feel normal for a while. It can also provide a sense of contribution, increasing self-esteem and confidence.

When to seek further help

Although grief can be very painful, most people gradually find ways to learn to live with their loss, and do not need to seek professional help. Sometimes the circumstances of the death may have been particularly distressing, such as a traumatic or sudden death, or there may be circumstances which may make the grief particularly prolonged or complicated. You could consider suggesting that your colleague seeks professional help like the Employee Assistance Professional if, over time, they seem to be finding it difficult to cope in the workplace.

**ISSUED BY DIRECTORATE
EMPLOYEE WELLNESS:**

EAP OFFICE
Mrs L.B. Hendricks
(EAP Program Design &
Counseling)

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