



MEDIA STATEMENT

12 June 2026

Corrections to Comrades, the Ultimate Test of Endurance

The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) is set to make a powerful statement at the 2026 Comrades Marathon as a formidable contingent of 207 officials is ready to tackle the iconic uprun from Durban to Pietermaritzburg on Sunday, 14 June 2026.

Widely regarded as The Ultimate Human Race, the Comrades Marathon demands discipline, endurance and unwavering determination, qualities that Correctional Services officials embody daily in the execution of their duties. The Department's runners will carry these values onto the road as they take on one of the world's most prestigious ultramarathons.

Much like an offender's rehabilitation journey guided by a structured Correctional Sentence Plan, the road to Comrades success is built on commitment, consistency and perseverance. Months of rigorous training, early morning runs, personal sacrifices and mental preparation have culminated in this moment.

The DCS team comprises 182 male and 25 female runners, demonstrating the growing participation of officials in wellness and fitness programmes across the Department. Among the contingent are 41 Green Number holders, runners who have completed ten or more Comrades Marathons and whose achievements continue to inspire the next generation of athletes within Correctional Services.

Leading by example is the Area Commissioner for Rooigrond Management Area, Mr Nduduzo Buthelezi, who boasts an impressive 26 Comrades Marathon finishes. His continued participation serves as a testament to enduring spirit that defines both long-distance runners and correctional officials. The spirit of Correctional Services extends beyond active service. Retired officials continue to proudly represent the Department, proving that the bonds forged in service endure long after retirement. Among them is Mr Vitalis Poli, a retired official who has completed an extraordinary 34 Comrades Marathons and will once again don the DCS colours on race day.

The National Commissioner of Correctional Services, Mr Makgothi Samuel Thobakgale, will host the runners at a special Pasta Evening on Friday, 12 June 2026, at Garden Court South Beach in Durban. The gathering will serve as a final motivational send-off and an opportunity to celebrate the dedication displayed by the team throughout their preparation.

On race day, the runners will be supported by a dedicated team of officials and volunteers strategically positioned along the route to provide refreshments, nutrition and encouragement, ensuring that every participant receives the support necessary to reach the finish line.

Participation in the Comrades Marathon has become a flagship wellness initiative for the Department of Correctional Services. Beyond showcasing athletic excellence, the programme highlights the Department's commitment to the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of its officials. It also reinforces the message that healthy, resilient officials are better positioned to fulfil their responsibilities of ensuring safe and secure correctional centres while contributing positively to society.

As the nation gathers to witness another chapter of Comrades history, the men and women of Correctional Services will once again demonstrate that endurance is not merely about reaching the finish line, but more about remaining focused, disciplined and committed throughout the journey.

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