



correctional services

Department:
Correctional Services
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

17 July 2025

National Commissioner Thobakgale Leads a High-Impact Search Operation at Pollsmoor Correctional Facility

In a continued effort to ensure safe and secure correctional facilities, the National Commissioner of the Department of Correctional Services, Mr Makgothi Samuel Thobakgale, led yet another successful multidisciplinary search operation, this time at the Pollsmoor Correctional Facility in the Western Cape on Wednesday, 16 July 2025.

The evening operation focused on the Remand Section of the facility and involved an intensive search of remand detainees and sentenced offenders working in the kitchen area. Over 800 inmates were searched in a carefully coordinated intervention designed to rid the facility of illegal contraband and restore institutional discipline.

The sweeping operation resulted in the seizure of a significant quantity of prohibited items, demonstrating the ongoing challenges posed by illicit activities within correctional centres. Among the items confiscated were:

- 119 x cellphones
- 74 x cellphone chargers
- 50 x cable chargers
- 41 x cellphone batteries
- 34 x sim cards
- 81 x sharp objects
- 37 x dagga pipes
- 305 x packets of dagga (totaling 854.80 grams)
- 36 x mandrax tablets (approximately 50 grams)
- Tik packets (34.00 grams)
- Cash amounting to R363.60
- Various other contraband items

The operation was executed with precision and professionalism by a combined team of 124 Emergency Support Team (EST) members from Correctional Services, supported by 23 officials from the South African Police Service (SAPS) and seven officers from the Metro Police. The collaborative nature of this initiative affirms the Department's commitment to working closely with law enforcement partners to combat the smuggling and possession of contraband inside correctional centres.

National Commissioner Thobakgale emphasised the strategic importance of sustained search operations, particularly in high-risk areas such as the Remand Section. “These operations are not only necessary but vital. They reinforce our resolve to run safe, secure, and rehabilitative correctional environments where the environment is conducive for correction, development, and reformation.” he said.

He further reiterated that contraband not only undermines institutional security but also compromises the rehabilitation process of inmates. The Department continues to strengthen its internal security measures and deploy targeted interventions in identified hotspots across the country.

The success of the Pollsmoor operation sends a clear message that contraband has no place in our correctional centres, and the Department will continue to act decisively to protect the integrity of the correctional system.

ENDS

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