

BUSINESS AGAINST CRIME SA NEWSLETTER

Edition 2



BACSA COMBATS CRIME AND FORMS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

The second edition of the Business Against Crime SA (BACSA) newsletter highlights some of strides that have been made by BACSA and the Eyes and Ears Initiative (E2).

During quarters two and three, BACSA signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and launched a number of gender-based violence (GBV) facilities. A BACSA member was also appointed to the Rural Safety Task Team that was selected by the Minister of Police.

Capacitating the NPA is one of BLSA's strategic focus areas and the organisation is also dedicated to assisting in the fight against GBV.

Although task teams to help fight the illegal trade of cables have been formed in some provinces, it is evident that this is still a massive problem. In various parts of the country, E2 has been doing its part to combat criminals who are stripping wiring from rail, power, and telecommunication lines, causing severe infrastructural damage including disruptions to the essential services of freight rail and other transport, communications, and energy supply. These cause immeasurable damage to the economy.

The arrests listed below are important victories in the fight against cable theft, while the arrests in other areas including kidnappings, robberies, and hijackings, also support our national efforts to combat crime.

BACSA, a division of BLSA, is committed to making South Africa a good place for business, and make business good for South Africa.

Tebele Luthuli

Managing Director: Business Against Crime SA

E2 INITIATIVE – CONSTANTLY GROWING

The Eyes and Ears Initiative (E2) has not only become a well-established conduit for the sharing of information with the South African Police Service (SAPS), industry bodies and business in general, but it has also become an effective example of best practice beyond sharing of information. It also manages partnerships and collaborations between business, the SAPS and other government departments.

E2 is constantly growing and during July 2022 it recorded approximately 25,000 verified alerts and incidents. All this information was shared with the SAPS. Due to the exponential and unimagined growth of the E2, BACSA and its partners are refining the initiative, with a strategy session planned for the end of September for further enhancements.

Due to E2's success some of its best practices and lessons will be utilised in the collaboration between BLSA and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA).

The effectiveness of E2 has also led it to being identified as a key player that will make a substantial difference in the fight against crime in rural communities.

MOU SIGNED BY BLSA AND NPA



The NPA is ramping up its efforts to respond to the Zondo Commission report and will need specialised skills to support complex corruption cases, such as forensic accountants and data analysts.

With the aim of capacitating prosecutorial and law enforcement authorities to address the scourge of corruption and the legacy of state capture, BLSA and the NPA signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on 5 August 2022.

The MoU enables the prosecuting authority to implement one category of Judge Raymond Zondo's recommendations in his state capture reports – the prosecution of those implicated in corruption.

At the request of the NPA, BLSA will mobilise the best people in the private sector to work for the prosecuting authority to investigate and build cases for successful prosecutions.

The MoU also ensures that the NPA's legal processes are fully impartial and independent.

RURAL SAFETY TASK TEAM ESTABLISHED



On 28 June 2022, at the end of the Rural Safety Summit that was held in Parys in the Free State, the Minister of Police, in consultation with the National Commissioner, established a Ministerial Task Team for Rural Safety. The Executive Program Manager at BLSA, Mr Fouche Burgers, together with 17 other individuals, were appointed to the task team by the minister.

The aim of the task team is to find amicable solutions for long-standing challenges that affect South Africa's rural communities.

From the issues that were presented at the summit, the task team had to identify between six and nine priority areas that it would focus on to enhance rural safety. Some of the priority areas that were identified include tackling stock theft, infrastructure crime, farm murders and gender-based violence (GBV), to name a few.

At the Rural Safety Summit, BLSA together with the SAPS presented the E2 Initiative. E2 was then identified as one of the key interventions that will help tackle the priority area of crime in rural South Africa.

BACSA SUPPORTS SAPS TASK TEAMS



The Deputy Provincial Commissioner for Policing, Major General Phumelele Makoba, officially launched the specialised multi-disciplinary Economic Infrastructure Task Teams (EITTs) in KwaZulu-Natal on 13 June 2022.

The task teams will focus on the following areas to address the scourge of economic infrastructure related crimes:

- non-ferrous metal theft (e.g., copper cable theft);
- essential infrastructure crimes (e.g., tampering, damaging, or destroying infrastructure related to energy, transport, water, sanitation, and communication services);
- critical infrastructure crimes (e.g., pipeline fuel theft);
- extortion at construction and or economic sites; and
- the combating of illegal mining and illicit trafficking.

Three teams were formed that will be dealing with these crimes and they will be based in the eThekwin, uMgungundlovu, and King Cetshwayo districts where these crimes are most prevalent.

"The recent crime statistics painted a grim picture of how crimes that affect business operations have increased significantly. BLSA is extremely excited about these task teams. They will help make South Africa good for business, which will lead to business being good for South Africa," said Ms Luthuli.

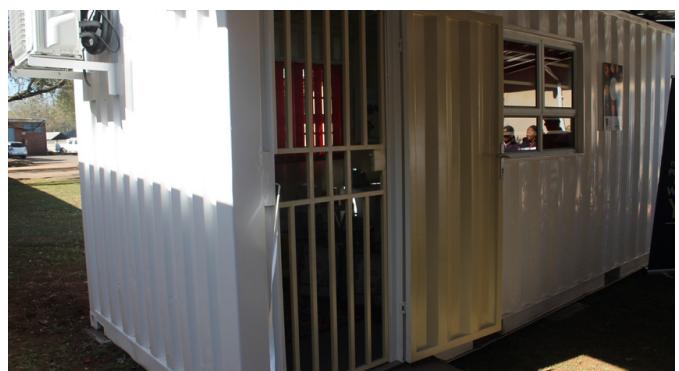
Luthuli said that to date EITTs have been set up in two of the nine provinces — the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal — and BACSA looks forward to supporting the remaining provinces once they have set up their task teams. A national launch hosted by the Minister of Police is planned for 5 September 2022 at Unisa.

The launch of EITTs follows the announcement by President Cyril Ramaphosa in the State of the Nation Address on 10 February 2022 regarding how the ongoing damage to and theft of economic infrastructure has damaged confidence and severely constrained economic growth, investment, and job creation.

President Ramaphosa said that criminal gangs that invade construction sites and other businesses to extort money from companies need to be confronted. This requires a focused and coordinated response.

To date, 61 extortion cases are being monitored at the National Priority Committee of which BACSA is the convenor. At the last meeting of this committee on 17 August 2022, it was reported that the availability of the guidelines regarding management of extortion appear to have made the "business mafia" shift its focus away from business to government departments.

GBV FACILITY LAUNCHED IN SOWETO



On 1 July 2022, BLSA and its subdivision BACSA together with Matla a Bana – an NGO that fights GBV and creates child-friendly reporting facilities – launched a child-friendly reporting facility at the Protea Glen Police Station in Soweto.

The facility, a shipping container with state-of the art audio and visual recording equipment, will assist forensic social workers from the Moroka SAPS Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Unit to collect evidence from victims.

The facility will also service high-priority areas with regards to GBV including Moroka, Jabulani, Naledi, Protea Glen, Lenasia South, Ennerdale, Dobsonville and Doornkop police stations.

BLSA CEO Busisiwe Mavuso, HOD of the Gauteng Department of Community Safety Nontsikelelo Sisulu, Matla a Bana's Lizel van Eeden, and deputy provincial commissioner for crime detection in Gauteng, Major general Khumalo, were the keynote speakers.

Ms Mavuso stated that while doing research for her keynote address, she was shocked at just how bad the GBV issue is in South Africa. She commended the police for trying to contain crime in the country, especially considering how understaffed the SAPS is. Ms Mavuso said that prevention is better than cure and currently South Africa is trying to find a cure for the impact of GBV – perhaps stakeholders should start working together on preventing it from happening. She added that an honest conversation around South Africa's moral decay and what has been broken within the family unit needs to take place – South Africans need to retrace their steps to see where it all went wrong.

If it's difficult for an adult to report abuse one can only imagine how difficult it is for a child to speak up, Ms Sisulu said. With 88% of children not reporting abuse, they enter their adulthood carrying this trauma. She added that the public sector, NGOs, and the private sector need to collaborate in dealing with GBV more effectively to find more impactful solutions.

Ms Van Eeden thanked BLSA for sharing the same vision as Matla a Bana and partnering with them on a matter so close to their hearts.

The event was also attended by high profile SAPS members.

Matla a Bana also trained frontline staff members at the Protea Glen police station on how they should treat and assist victims of GBV and sexual crimes. All children who are victims of sexual abuse who are assisted will receive comfort packs including a small toy and toiletries.

Click [here](#) to watch the launch of the child-friendly reporting facility.

RELAUNCH OF VICTIM FRIENDLY ROOM AT THE LANGA POLICE STATION



On 9 August, through funding provided by BLSA, Business Against Crime Western Cape (BACWC), upgraded and relaunched the Victim Friendly Room (VFR) at the Langa police station in Cape Town. The upgraded VFR will give victims of GBV and general crime the privacy, and safe space they need when making their statements.

The relaunch was attended by numerous Western Cape SAPS management members, which included the deputy provincial commissioner Maj Gen Mpumelelo Manci, Cape Town's Mayoral Committee member for Safety and Security Alderman JP Smith, the clergy of Langa, the community policing forum and the neighbourhood watch.

Maj Gen Manci and the Langa community thanked and commended BACWC and BLSA for the support given in upgrading the VFR. Major General Manci said he is committed to ensuring the correct utilisation of the VFR. He called upon SAPS members to treat victims with fairness and respect, and urged all police officers to inform victims of their rights, which include, but are not limited to:

- the right to be treated with respect and dignity;
- the right to offer information;
- the right to receive information;
- the right to protection;
- the right to assistance; and
- the right to compensation.

Since the launch at Langa police station five more VFRs around the Western Cape were launched. The remainder of the funding provided by BLSA will be used to improve more VFRs that are in dire need of an upgrade.

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITIES



BACSA together with Vumacam and Syntell are helping to fight crime in disadvantaged communities in Gauteng. Vumacam will be installing 100 CCTV and ANPR cameras that will send footage directly to the BACSA Monitoring Centre.

Site visits of the first six camera installations have been conducted. These installations will be done at schools and are expected to improve the general safety and security.

Syntell has also agreed to fit five Gauteng Traffic Police vehicles with ANPR cameras and equipment. Feeds from these vehicles will also feed directly into the BACSA Monitoring Centre.

VICTIM EMPOWERMENT WORKSHOP HOSTED

From 6-8 June, Cape Town Tourism (CTT) hosted a Basic Victim Empowerment and Support workshop, for delegates from the tourism and hospitality industry. The three-day workshop was presented by BACWC.

It focused on the trauma support worker and the victim. Delegates were trained to become first responders, dealing with the trauma of a victim, and assisting victims with their immediate emotions before referring them to a professional service provider.

"First and foremost, thank you to CTT for your continuous support and looking after our wonderful city. This is a wonderful initiative and I trust it will bear very positive results with our guests that visit," said a delegate from Ystravel.com who attended the workshop.

A delegate from Radisson Blu Hotel and Residence who attended the workshop, said that it was practical and straightforward.

SAPS TO RECEIVE DRONE TRAINING FROM FIDELITY



After noting the technology gap within the SAPS, Fidelity Security Group together with business will be providing 15 young Gauteng SAPS members with Fidelity UDS drone pilot candidate training.

The objective of this initiative is to empower young SAPS members between the ages of 25 and 35 with the skills to become drone pilots. Initially 10 members were to be trained, but the number was increased to 15 after receiving approximately 300 internal applications.

To identify the best suited candidates all the applicants underwent a rigorous screening process which consisted of tests, assessments, and simulation tests. The candidates are currently undergoing the Aviation Medical Class 3 Certification, which is in line with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) requirements. Once the medicals are complete official training will commence in the middle of September 2022. The duration of the training will be a month and a half, thereafter the candidates will be licensed drone pilots. A remote pilot licence (RPL) will be issued after the training is complete.

Gauteng Province was identified as the pilot project for this training because it has the highest number of crimes according to crime statistics. The Gauteng Provincial Commissioner will hold a passing out parade for the drone pilots after they receive their licences.



TFG APPRECIATES PARTNERSHIP WITH BACSA AND THE E2

Head of the Foschini Group's (TFG's) Forensics and Security division, Francois Hugo, shared some insight into the division and its longstanding relationship with BACSA.

Mr Hugo stated that TFG's Forensics and Security division has built a formidable reputation for securing the apprehension and conviction of suspects involved in crimes at its stores, as well as the recovery of stock, through collaboration with various partners and agencies. By supporting the police in their investigations, the organisation's skilled and technologically enabled team has ensured that the days when criminals could misappropriate their stock without consequences are long gone.

In KwaZulu-Natal, the franchise relies heavily on the relationship it has built over the years with BACSA. When a TFG store is robbed or burgled in the province, BACSA activates the relevant role players to attend to the crime scene. BACSA is also known to go out of its way to help co-ordinate the tracing and arrest of suspects.

Recently, the division assisted TFG in apprehending suspects and stock was recovered approximately 180km away from a robbery scene. "Thanks to BACSA's help in co-ordinating the chase, the police were able to apprehend the suspects on the same night. Over the past few years, there have been many successful apprehensions and recoveries, thanks to division's assistance," says Mr Hugo.

The sharing of information and operational responses by all the E2 role players has helped TFG fight against robberies and burglaries at its stores.

SOME OF E2'S SUCCESSES FOR THE PAST QUARTER

SHOOTOUT BETWEEN OFFICER AND SUSPECTS

On 15 June, information regarding a robbery at British American Tobacco in Somerset West was received by the POCC. The SAPS and other law enforcement officers were informed. The suspects were then spotted by a traffic officer who went to investigate.

A shootout between the suspects and the officer ensued. The suspects fled the scene in leaving behind a cartridge and ten boxes of cigarettes to the value of R80,000.

ZEERUST MONEY HEIST

On Wednesday 6 April at about 13:20, Rustenburg Highway Patrol officers working on the N4 close to Swartruggens in the North West Province spotted a black Mercedes Benz which was suspected to have been involved in an armed robbery in Zeerust earlier that day.



The suspects allegedly robbed two victims who were inside a bank in Zeerust. The victims were about to deposit money when the suspects allegedly pointed a firearm at them, grabbed their bags containing an undisclosed amount of money before fleeing the scene. Information regarding the suspects was communicated to the police by security officers who managed to identify a get-away vehicle.

Their Mercedes Benz was pulled over and four suspects were arrested after they failed to give account of a firearm and the undisclosed amount of money that was found in their possession. The accused appeared before the Swartruggens Magistrates Court for possession of an unlicensed firearm and suspected stolen cash.

FOUR-WEEK-OLD BABY KIDNAPPED

On 18 July, members of Umhlali Community Service Centre (CSC) received a complaint about a possible kidnapping of a 4-week-old baby by a female at Velani Township in KwaZulu-Natal. Detectives and the Umhlali task team were called in to assist. It was found that the woman left the area using a taxi and no one in the baby's family could obtain her contact information.

The task team began contacting informers in various areas and followed up on every lead they were given. After working tirelessly, on 20 July a breakthrough was made when information was received from a reliable source. The source stated that the alleged kidnapper was at Tugela Ferry.



The task team approached Sudesh Maharaj of Field Security in Greytown for assistance and resources. Upon the arrival of the Umhlali CSC members in Greytown, they linked up with Field Security and proceeded to Tugela Ferry to the house where the child and alleged kidnapper were spotted.

The alleged kidnapper was apprehended and transported to Umhlali SAPS; the baby was taken to the Greytown Hospital for further examination. The child was not harmed and has since been handed over to its mother.

RECOVERY OF STOLEN CABLES

The co-ordination between the private sector and police resulted in the following arrests related to cable theft.

Stolen cables and shootout

After two months of monitoring a suspicious vehicle, on 11 May members of Aliwal North District Operational Command Centre (DOCC) in the Eastern Cape, received an alert that the vehicle was allegedly transporting stolen copper cables. The police members were pursuing the vehicle near the bridge just outside Aliwal North when the suspects began shooting at them. A shootout ensued between the suspects and the SAPS. The driver of the vehicle was fatally shot, two other suspects were arrested on the scene, while one suspect managed to escape.

The two arrested suspects were transported to Rouxville SAPS for detention. The vehicle they were travelling in was searched and stolen copper cables were found.

Copper theft

In targeted operations by law enforcement agencies to address cable theft that is crippling the economy of the country, integrated police deployments descended on three scrap metal companies in Maitland, Cape Town.

On 19 April, two people were arrested after contravening the Second Goods Acts No 6 of 2009 and being found in possession of stolen property.

The first arrest was of a 38-year-old scrap metal company manager who contravened the Second Goods Acts No 6 of 2009 and failed to keep scrap metal items bought for seven days.

The second arrest was that of a 26-year-old man from a different metal company who was found in possession of suspected stolen property, and he had also failed to separate metal bought as prescribed in the Second Goods Act. Part of the cable seized from this operation weighing 2.4 tons, was positively identified as the property of PRASA.

In a third incident a written warning was issued to a third scrap metal company for failure to mark metal items received.

Stolen property and infrastructure tampering

Three suspects were arrested after a high-speed chase with the police and various security companies in the Free State. The chase started on the R34 Road towards Heilbron from Frankfort after Basopa Security Company saw that the occupants of a vehicle were acting in a suspicious manner. The driver suddenly stopped the vehicle and four men jumped out and ran into the maize fields.

The suspects were chased on foot and with the assistance of farmers, three of the suspects were arrested while one escaped. A total of 39 bundles of stolen copper cable poles were found in their vehicle.

Five arrested after stealing copper

On 30 June, four men and a woman were arrested in Petrusburg in the Free State, for being in possession of copper that was stolen in Burgersdorp in the Eastern Cape. The stolen copper was valued at R164,000.

ATTEMPTED KIDNAPPING FOILED

On 8 June, information regarding a possible kidnapping was received by Provincial Operations Command Centre (POCC). The SAPS and other law enforcement officers were informed that two suspects were trying to kidnap children at a Mitchell's Plain primary school. The kidnapping was then foiled, and the suspects were arrested in the taxi they were travelling in.

CAMERAS AT WORK

On 21 July, a licence plate recognition camera was triggered on a vehicle registration that was previously involved in a business robbery in Rondebosch, Cape Town. The Gordons Bay armed response team responded and the POCC was alerted.

The SAPS and other officials were dispatched after the vehicle was spotted opposite a bank in Strand. The vehicle was stopped and searched. Three males were found in the vehicle as well as a replica firearm and a signal jammer. It was later discovered that the vehicle had been stolen.

FURNITURE TRUCK HIJACKED

On 28 July, a Lewis Furniture Store truck was hijacked in Belhar in the Western Cape Province. The SAPS was informed and was on the lookout for the truck. The Harare SAPS hijacking team in conjunction with POPS Security spotted the truck in Walter Sisulu Road. They arrested one suspect and fatally shot another after a high-speed vehicle chase. A Glock firearm with serial number filed off was found lying next to the deceased.

RETAIL STORE ROBBED

On 29 March 2022 street patrollers in Braamfontein noticed an armed group of four men entering Ackermans retail store. The men started robbing staff and customers of their cellphones and handbags.

Several SAPS Units together with Bad Boyz Security responded to the robbery and caught the suspects in the store. Three suspects were arrested and a 9mm Z88 pistol was recovered with several rounds in the magazine.

R1M WORTH OF STOLEN TYRES

On 7 June, tyres to the value of R1m were recovered. This came after the Serious and Violent Crimes unit in the Western Cape and the Provincial Investigation Unit followed up on information received regarding stolen truck tyres that were in a storage facility in McLaren Street, Dunoon.

The goods were linked to a truck hijacking. A suspect has since been arrested for the crime.

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STOLEN MICROWAVES RECOVERED

Microwave ovens from Malaysia valued at R1,500,000 were stolen after the container they were being transported in was hijacked in Montclair, Durban. A multi-disciplinary operation zoomed in on the suspects after the hijacking occurred.

Intelligence led the team to Darnall where two suspects were arrested by the operational team. Both suspects were arrested after being found in possession of two of the suspected stolen microwave ovens.

After further investigations the team was led to Sunbury Store where the rest of the microwave ovens were recovered.

SASSA CARD SYNDICATE BUST



On 3 August a multi-disciplinary task team was alerted about a possible armed robbery of the pension payout point at the KwaMashu Sports Centre in Durban. The task team was deployed accordingly focusing on all the entry and exit points of the centre.

The team received another tip-off regarding a silver vehicle occupied by five unknown males who were heading out of the KwaMashu men's hostel with firearms enroute to the sports centre. With the assistance of the KwaMashu Trio task team the vehicle was stopped, and its occupants fled towards a house in the street. The search for the outstanding suspects resulted in the team discovering various bank cards, SASSA cards, identification documents (both smartcard and green books), death certificates and computer equipment.

The occupants of the house could not furnish any reasonable explanation for these documents being found on the property. One male was found with a bag containing SASSA cards and a search of the vehicle yielded more SASSA cards. Nine suspects were subsequently arrested and R170,000 worth of goods were recovered.

CAMERAS HELP FIGHT CRIME IN RURAL AREAS

Through the SAPIS/Syntell Agri structure, a combined community project by SA Polygraph and Investigations and Syntell, farmers from the North West, Free State and Northern Cape provinces are fighting against crime.

The SAPIS/Syntell Agri structure uses cameras that are part of the agricultural infrastructure, to generate approximately 18 000 000 hits that feeds through to the BACSA Monitoring Centre. Due to the operational capacity of E2, police and private security are notified of significant incidents, which result in the successful recovery of vehicles and the apprehension of cash in transit, stock and cable theft suspects, to name a few.

****Some images are stock photos used for dramatization.***