

Safety and Security in the Rural Parts of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Area

by

Jabu Dhlamini & Amanda Dissel



Research report written for the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, August 2005.

This Project has been made possible by the generous support of the Royal Danish Embassy.

[Amanda Dissel](#) is Manager of the [Criminal Justice Programme](#) at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

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Introduction

The aim of this report is to provide knowledge about the nature of crime in rural areas of the Ekurhuleni¹ Metropolitan local government so as to enhance the capacity of local authority and the South African Police Service (SAPS) to address rural safety needs. It also aims to explore crime prevention initiatives and the broader role played by community organisations.

This report looks at prevalent crimes, crime prevention and the role played by the security agencies in the areas, and presents an overview of strategies that are employed by both the Metropolitan Police and the SAPS in preventing crime. It also looks at the gaps and prospects that can be utilized by the metro, the SAPS and community structures in reducing the crime in the metropole.

This study is a continuation of the broader community safety work that the Centre for Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV) has engaged in for the past few years in the six metropolitan areas of the country. This earlier work identified that the rural parts of the predominantly urban metropolitan areas were typically the most marginalized when it came to the development of policy and the allocation of the resources of local authorities. As a result, there was little awareness as to the appropriate policies and approaches that should be taken with regards to the specific needs of rural localities. The CSV started the Rural Safety Project which is concerned with enhancing awareness and assisting with the development of crime prevention activities suitable to the rural areas within the urban metropolitan regions. The project aims in particular to explore inequality in resource allocation, particularly along gender lines, and to explore traditional mechanisms for dealing with crime and violence in the rural areas.²

More specifically, the objectives of the project were:

- To assist local authorities to better understand rural safety needs within their boundaries.
- To create awareness among local authorities of the safety and security needs of rural areas.
- To create specific awareness among local authorities and izinduna of the safety and security needs of women.
- To contribute to knowledge about crime in rural areas and to an understanding of the safety concerns of people living in these areas.
- To enhance the capacity of local government to provide rural safety services and therefore to promote equity in service delivery.

This study focuses on Ekurhuleni. Two areas which are regarded as rural or semi-rural were selected for the study. The areas are Nigel and Zonkizizwe. Nigel was selected due to the number of farms and smallholdings in the area. On the other hand, Zonkizizwe was selected as it is an informal settlement area with a few small holdings. The aim was to look at the needs in these very different types of communities, both of which are situated on the periphery of the metro. The research looked at the prevalent crimes in both areas, and at community structures in the community that assist the police and the metro police in combating crime.

Research Methodology

As a qualitative study, the primary methodology used consisted of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with different stakeholders in both the areas of the Metro. To ensure that the research could be of relevance to the primary public service providers of safety and security, initial interviews were conducted with the East Rand Area Level office of the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the head of the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Police Department (EMPD). The objectives of these initial interviews were to establish how they identify and develop strategies to combating priority crimes in the rural localities of the metro. The agencies indicated that they would like the research to identify the gaps that exist in the areas, to evaluate the relationship between the two agencies and to make recommendations as to how policing could be improved in the area.

Interviews were also conducted with the station commissioners of the police stations in both areas and the regional commanders of the EMPD in the two regions. Interviews were also conducted with representatives of community based organisations (CBOs), non governmental organisations (NGO's) and metropolitan counselors. Participants were assured of their anonymity in order to encourage free participation in the interviews.

The interviews for the study were conducted in 2003 and 2004.

Limitations

Some difficulty was experienced in contacting people for the research especially in Zonkizizwe since the police station uses a satellite telephone system, and it was often not working. In both areas we had difficulty obtaining details on other relevant organisations as the police and EMPD seemed to have little knowledge of the resources available in their communities.

Demographic Make-up of Nigel and Zonkizizwe

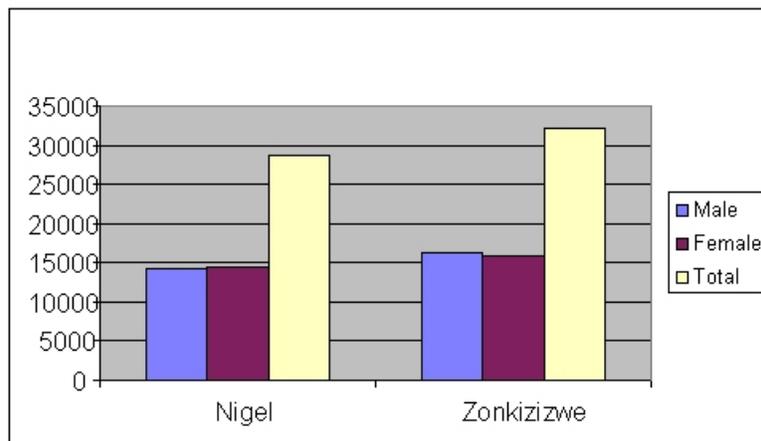
The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (EMM) was formerly known as the East Rand. It is situated in Gauteng and borders the metropolitan areas of Tshwane to the north and Johannesburg to the west. It stretches from Bedfordview in Eastern Johannesburg to the border of Mpumalanga Province. It consists of the following towns: Alberton, Edenvale, Springs, Nigel, Boksburg, Kempton Park Tembisa, Brakpan, Benoni and Germiston. It has a fairly large geographic area of 1,923 square kilometers. Although like other metropolitan areas, it incorporated formerly disadvantaged areas within its borders, it still retains some large industrial and agricultural sectors. Formerly the largest producer of gold it is still one of the country's economic powerhouses and produces 23 percent of Gauteng's gross geographical products. It is home to over 8000 industries (Safer Cities, 2004). Ekurhuleni has a population of 2,480,278,³ almost a quarter of Gauteng's total population. Echoing the national profile, 76 percent of the population are black Africans.

The areas selected for this report have vastly different features. Zonkizizwe, falling under Germiston, is a densely populated area consisting mainly of informal settlements, as well as a few brick houses, four commercial farms and several small holdings. It was established in 1993 but was only proclaimed in 1999. The police station covers the following areas:

Zonkizizwe, Zonkizizwe Ext 1, Zonkizizwe Ext 2, Magagula Heights, Zama Zama, Sunrise View and Sonwabo Park. The area has experienced a radical political shift. Prior to 1994 Zonkizizwe was an Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) stronghold but during the 2004 elections the African National Congress (ANC) won all the wards.

Nigel, on the other hand, is a larger geographical area that encompasses the town centre of Nigel, a number of commercial farms and small holdings, industrial areas, residential areas, townships and informal settlements. Nigel police station covers the commercial centre of Nigel, the suburbs around town, as well as farms and smallholdings.

Figure 1: Population Breakdown in Nigel and Zonkizizwe



Zonkizizwe⁴ has a higher population at 7 031 people⁵ per square kilometer as compared with Nigel which has 206 people per square kilometer. This reflects starkly on the different population and land use make up of the two areas. In total, these areas have a population of 60,771, representing 2% of the population of Ekurhuleni. There are also many immigrants from Mozambique living in Zonkizizwe.

Figure 2: Age Distribution across the Two Areas and the Average for Ekurhuleni

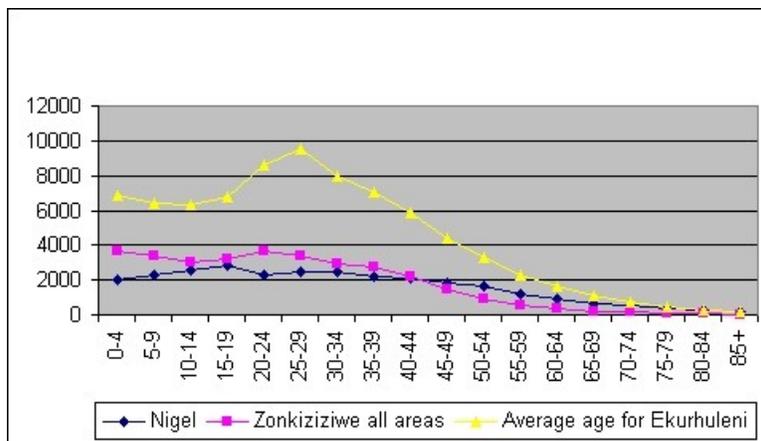
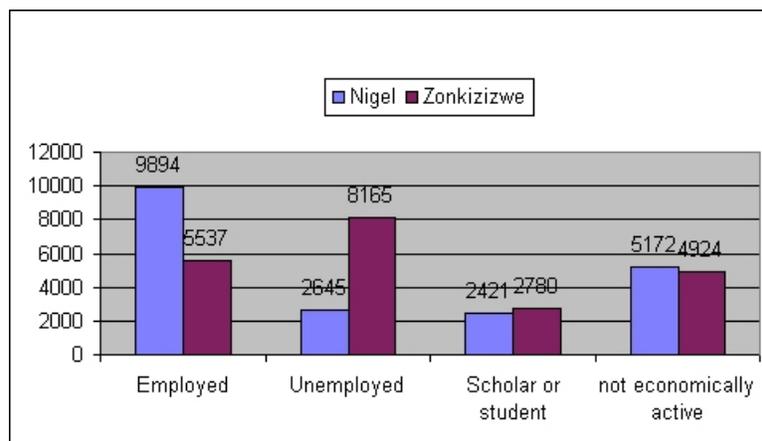


Figure 2 above illustrates that there is a relatively young population in both areas, somewhat reflective of the average age for Ekurhuleni. In Zonkizizwe the population age

peaks between the ages nought to four, dips, and the rises again between the years 20 and 24. In contrast, the population is highest in Nigel between the ages of 15 and 19 years. In both groups, the population tails off from 40 years. The graph illustrates that on average for the metro, the age of the population peaks between 25 and 29 years of age, indicating that the population in the two selected areas is very young. In Nigel 34 percent of the population and 42 percent in Zonkizizwe are below the age of 20 years. This may have particular significance for crime in the areas since a significant portion of all crime is committed by young people, from mid to late adolescence, and tailing off in early adulthood (Newburn, 1997: 626). According to Graham and Bowling, although the rate of offending remains constant for males during this period, the character of crime changes. Expressive property offences (vandalism and arson) are most common in the teens, violent behaviour increases in the teenage years then drops off in the twenties, while property offences are more likely to remain constant throughout the period (cited in Newburn, p. 628).

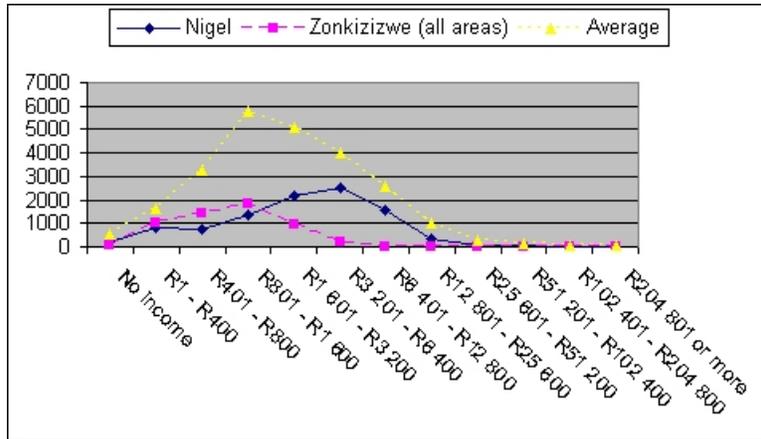
The age demographics are also likely to impact on the education levels and possibly the socio economic well-being of the community. It should also be noted that 52 percent of the population in each area are in the most economically active age groups of 20 to 55 years. However, as illustrated in figure 3 below, only 35 percent of the population in Nigel and 17 percent in Zonkizizwe are economically active.

Figure 3: Levels of Employment in Nigel and Zonkizizwe



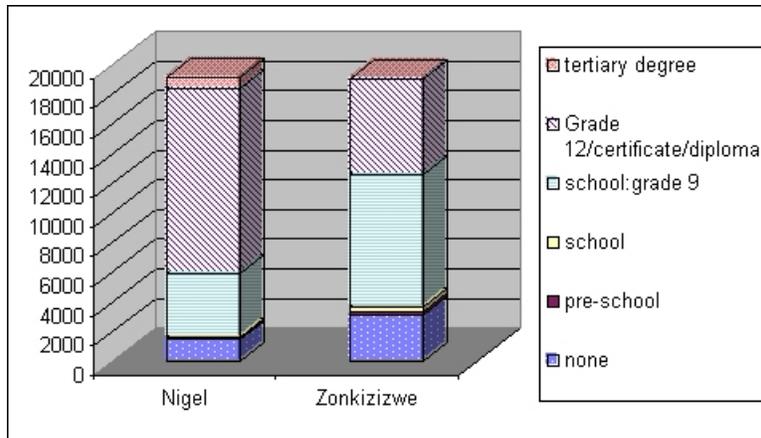
The Census 2001 data includes those who are housewives, disabled, ill, retired, and those who have given up looking for work in the 'not economically active' category, and these, together with the unemployed, make up the bulk of the population in both areas. The non-working sector is larger in Zonkizizwe which is predominantly an informal settlement area, and traditionally made up of the poorest and most disenfranchised sector of the population. However, these figures indicate that a relatively small percentage of the population (the employed) is likely to be responsible for the welfare of a large number of people (the unemployed).

Figure 4: Monthly Income Levels in Zonkizizwe and Nigel Compared to the Ekurhuleni Average



Poverty and socio-economic deprivation has been shown to be a risk factor for offending (Farrington, 1997:392; Young, 1997:488). The majority of the population in Zonkizizwe earns less than R1 600 a month. This reflects their status as a poorer sector of the metro where the majority of the population earns at least R3 201 per month. These who are employed are most likely to work outside of Zonkizizwe in the surrounding towns. In contrast, Nigel is a well constituted town with several businesses and farms which presents greater employment opportunities for its population.

Figure 5: Highest Education Attained for People over the Age of 20 Years in Nigel and Zonkizizwe



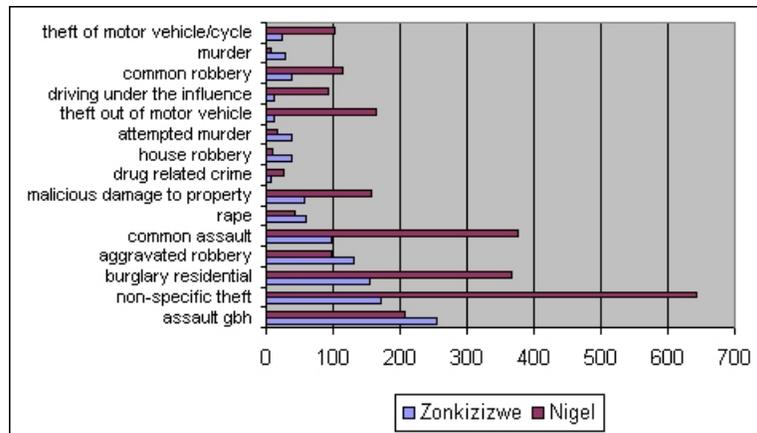
The general standard of education is higher in Nigel than in Zonkizizwe, with a small portion of people without education, and a larger number having completed school up to grade ten, or with the equivalent technical certificate or diploma. According to Census 2001, only 33 people in Zonkizizwe had completed tertiary education, compared with 732 in Nigel. This again reflects the disparity in socio economic status of each of these areas.

The differences in the types of area selected for the study, as well as the socio economic status of the people living and working in them, is likely to have a bearing on their experiences of crime and safety. Their perceived or actual safety requirements are also likely to influence the nature of services rendered to them by the SAPS and metro police.

Safety and Security in the Rural Parts of the Metro

Crimes in Nigel and Zonkizizwe

Figure 6: Most prevalent Crimes in Zonkizizwe and Nigel 2003/2004



Recorded crime in the two areas is high enough as to place them in the SAPS priority crime areas for the metro. Despite the larger population in Zonkizizwe, the total number of criminal incidents reported to the SAPS were less than half those reported at Nigel (CIAC, 2004).⁶ For Zonkizizwe this appears to contradict the social and demographic make up of the community which is often an indicator of high crime. However, as will become apparent later, the reported figure of crime is likely to be lower than the actual crime figure. In addition, it is not clear that the SAPS statistics cover all the areas that fall under the Zonkizizwe policing jurisdiction. According to respondents, many crimes are unreported to the SAPS as they are dealt with through other community structures. The prevalent crimes identified different in each area, and the following is a summary of major crime concerns in each area.

Prevalent Crimes in Zonkizizwe

In Zonkizizwe all respondents, including representatives from SAPS, EMPD and the community, all agreed that social fabric crimes were the most prevalent. Indeed, assault with intention to commit grievous bodily harm and common assault are amongst the most common, but property offences, such as theft, burglary and robbery were among the four most commonly reported crimes. (CIAC, 2004).⁷ The murder rate was also higher than in Nigel (28 recorded in 2003/4).

Causes of Crime

The police attributed the high rate of assault to the large number of shebeens operating in the area and high levels of alcohol abuse. The link between alcohol and crime has frequently been made in research. Mistry, Snyman and van Zyl (2001) found that alcohol and poverty was directly linked to the crime problems experienced in the Northern Cape. The National Injury Mortality Surveillance Studies found that in respect of deaths by unnatural causes, 73 percent of victims of sharp object related homicide and 40 percent of firearm victim homicide had positive blood alcohol concentrations (Medical Research

Council, 2004). The SAPS Crime Information Analysis Centre (CIAC) also suggested that a dependency on alcohol, drugs or even cigarettes may drive a person to commit crime as a means of sustaining their habit (SAPS, 2000). A CIAC docket analysis of murder cases in Western and Northern Cape during 1996 and 1997 found that in most murder cases either (or both) of the victim and perpetrator were under the influence of alcohol (CIAC, 2000: 3).

Alcohol was also found to be a particular problem in rural areas. A study of farm injuries found that 41 percent of injuries on agricultural farms that were not work related were due to violence. The incidence increased to 61 percent in the age category 20 to 39 years. Most of the violent assaults were male on male incidents, but 29 percent of victims were women. Alcohol was found to have played a role in 89 percent of these injuries (MRC, 2004b). The police in Zonkizizwe identified common assault between farm labourers, or theft on the farms as some of the biggest crime challenges in the farming areas.

Another concern raised was that of mob justice/vigilantism. For example, respondents suggested that it was still a practice of izinduna (headmen) in the community to take disciplinary action against offenders in the form of corporal punishment or beatings. Some izinduna play this role in rural areas where crimes of a less serious nature are not handed over to the police ([Palmary, 2004](#)). However, it appears that izinduna operating even in the more urban Zonkizizwe tend to discipline offenders in this way. In a study that was conducted by [Harris \(2001\)](#), respondents presented corporal punishment as an 'indigenous' and fundamentally 'African' practice of justice. Many community respondents to this study did not view vigilante assaults as a crime, but rather saw it as a form of discipline for suspected criminals. They pointed out that because the police do not respond to the problem quickly enough once they had been alerted, the community took the law into their own hands.

The Community Police Forum (CPF) representatives also raised their concerns about this kind of mob justice/ vigilanteism. They said that it was sometimes difficult to tackle this problem because the victims of mob justice seldom reported the matter to the police. There were also cases of vigilanteism that have been reported to the police but where no arrests had been made. The police reported that they only heard of these kinds of assaults from the members of the CPF and they then initiated discussions with the izinduna. The police reported that following discussions with the izinduna the number of these kinds of assaults had reduced, but were unable to provide statistics on the extent of these kinds of assaults.

Housebreakings were said to be seasonal in Zonkizizwe. With the majority of them taking place during the festive season when the schools were closed and young people were on the streets. Industries were also closed at that time, and while many people were at home, others were away on holiday. According to the police, Mozambique immigrants or migrant workers were responsible for some of this crime type. An example was given of an instance where police had recovered stolen goods in the process of being transported to Mozambique, through conducting roadblocks on major exits in Zonkizizwe. However, there was no empirical evidence of the extent of foreigner involvement in crime in this area.

Another contributing factor to the levels of crime in Zonkizizwe is the number of open fields in the area. It was reported that majority of residents have to pass through these open fields to get transport to and from work, and they often become victims of crimes such as robbery, assault, or even rape. Pensioners, people living with HIV and AIDS and disabled

people who are receiving government grants, are particularly vulnerable targets. School children are especially vulnerable as they walk long distances to and from school and this contributes to the high number of rapes of school children. Rape was identified as a priority crime, with the police indicating that the perpetrators were often known to the victim, with a high number of rapes occurred in private homes. It was reported that elderly women are also the victims of rape.

According to the police, some of the assault cases could be classified as domestic violence. Since there is no crime as domestic violence, they are recorded as common assault, assault GBH or malicious damage to property.

Prevalent Crimes in Nigel

The respondents in Nigel identified different crimes as being prevalent according to which constituency they were representing. The SAPS and the EMPD mentioned crimes which are priority crimes in both the urban and rural areas of Nigel. The CPF only mentioned crimes occurring in town and surrounding suburbs, while the agricultural unions, the civil defense and the Commandos prioritized crimes in the rural areas. Crimes tended also to differ in each area. Around town and the Nigel suburbs theft of motor vehicles and theft out of motor vehicles was identified as more prevalent. Whereas, housebreaking and stock theft were identified as prevalent crimes in the rural areas. The most prevalent reported crimes were assault (common and with intention to commit grievous bodily harm), and burglary at residential premises and theft (CIAC, 2004).

The respondents mentioned that firearms, money and electrical appliances are usually stolen during housebreakings in the rural areas. Burglaries and theft tended to occur when no-one is at home, but aggravated or violent burglary and assault occurs when the perpetrator encounters people at home. Although there have apparently been no recent murders as a consequence of burglaries, respondents perceive this as problem (Mistry and Dhlamini, 2001). When violence is perpetrated during the housebreaking in farming areas then the case is classified as a farm attack. A farm attack is defined as an attack on farms and smallholdings aimed at the person(s) of residents, workers and visitors to farms and smallholdings whether with the intent to murder, rape, rob or inflict bodily harm (National Operational Coordinating Committee (NOCOC), 1999).

Relationship and Cooperation between the SAPS and the EMPD

In order to understand crime and the effectiveness of the strategies that are developed to deal with crime in the two areas it is important to understand the relationship between the different law-enforcement agencies operating in the area namely the SAPS and the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Police Department (EMPD). The South African Police Service, have a broad mandate as set out in section 205 (3) of the Constitution which outlines their role in the prevention, combating and investigation of crime, maintaining public order, and the protection of inhabitants of South Africa and their property. Their role is one of upholding and enforcing the law nationally.

The Metro Police have three statutory functions:⁸ municipal by-law enforcement; traffic law enforcement and crime prevention. While they also have powers of arrest and of search

and seizure within their area of jurisdiction, they may not investigate crimes and are required to hand arrested suspects over to the SAPS immediately. Furthermore, the metro police department may not develop a crime intelligence capacity.

The EMPD was established in January 2002, and its jurisdiction is restricted to the Ekurhuleni Metro municipal boundaries. According to the Chief of the Metro Police, the mission of the EMPD is to enhance the quality of life in the community of the Metropolitan area, by working in a partnership with the community. It aims to serve the community within the framework of the Constitution of South Africa and to enforce the laws to promote a safe environment and to reduce the fear of crime.

The formation of the EMPD was seen as a way of contributing towards the fight against crime together with the SAPS and the community. Respondents in this study felt that the EMPD could play an important role in bringing down the levels of crime. The EMPD is currently grappling with a wide perception that it is still only responsible for traffic violations, and has embarked on a series of awareness campaigns to heighten community awareness of their crime prevention role. Some respondents saw the EMPD only as 'speed cops'. In confirmation of this perception, the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality website lists EMPD contact numbers only as 'traffic' emergency numbers (EMM, 2005). The EMPD generally receives a large number of complaints about traffic related offences, such as traffic violations, and illegal drag racing, as well as complaints of illegal dumping, car thefts and chop shops, and gangsterism.

A challenge facing the EMPD is that they do not work from police stations within their community as do the SAPS, and are therefore not as conveniently available to those wishing to lay a complaint. The EMPD is intending to create precinct stations to solve this problem. According to one senior EMPD member, another problem is that the community is not aware of the call centre number that they can use to make complaints:

We have a control centre number which is not known to the community. Which is not advertised. Which is not publicized. And I don't think the community is aware of the crisis control centre that you can phone for emergency services, for traffic related matters, policing matters and water...the operator answers and gives attention to your problem...otherwise they [the community] can go to the nearest precinct and report their problems there.

The EMPD is in the process of advertising and creating awareness of the complaint's number. Other respondents felt that the community prefers to report complaints to the EMPD rather than the SAPS due to what they see as better service. However, the EMPD was not able to provide statistics of all the complaints laid at the precinct stations and mentioned a difficulty in recording complaints:

...at the moment our precinct stations are not fully manned. The whole idea is that there should be a person at the precinct on a daily basis to take complaints, and an occurrence book...but currently, because shortage of manpower, we won't be able to do it because they just report to anyone that they come across.

There are six EMPD precincts⁹ in the Southern Region of the Metro namely; Alberton,

Germiston, Boksburg, Katlehong, Tokoza and Vosloorus. The Eastern Region is made out of seven precincts namely; Spings, Duduza, Nigel, Kwathema, Brakpan, Daveyton and Benoni. Complainants can lodge complaints in the precincts.

According to the EMPD, it has the capacity to respond immediately to complaints about crimes or violations in progress. They are also able to conduct preliminary investigations on crime trends (such as a large number of different cars arriving at a neighbour's house), after which a docket is opened and the matter handed over to the SAPS.

Some community-based respondents indicated that they called the EMPD when they did not receive any response from the SAPS. They were however not aware that crime prevention is part of the EMPD responsibility. One of the representatives from the izinduna's forum mentioned that:

On a number of occasions we noticed cars coming in at some house in the neighborhood but never saw the cars leaving. We were concerned about the activities that were going on at that particular house because only young unemployed boys were staying in the house. We then decided to inform the SAPS about the issue and requested them to take action about the issue. The SAPS kept on promising to take action but nothing ever happened until we decided to request the EMPD to intervene. The EMPD responded very quickly and were able to recover four stolen vehicles, car parts and a lot of stolen goods from that house.

For policing to be effective in these areas it is important for these agencies to coordinate their policing strategies. In acknowledgement of this, weekly cluster¹⁰ meetings are held to discuss joint issues, and to plan joint operations and strategies. The EMPD have divided the metro into three regions. Zonkizizwe falls in the Southern Region of the Metro and is one of the seven police stations that fall under the Katlehong cluster. Nigel is located in the Eastern Region of the Metro and it falls under the Springs SAPS cluster. Police stations are represented in the cluster by the station commissioners, heads of crime intelligence, heads of crime prevention, heads of detective branches, the crime combating unit (formerly known as public order police), highway patrol, flying squad and the representatives of EMPD. In the cluster meetings, the heads of intelligence present statistics of priority crimes and crime trends in each area. The impact of the strategies that were used during that week is evaluated and new ones developed. However, while this may be effective for coordinating strategies at the regional level, respondents indicated that there was little joint planning of operations at station level. The difficulty with planning at a sector level is that priority crimes in Katlehong may be different from the ones in Zonkizizwe and the strategies developed may then be ineffective in Zonkizizwe. If planning is done at station level it could more effectively address local priorities.

This senior level coordination appears to be important for building relationships between the agencies. Respondents from both the SAPS and the EMPD indicated that they had good working relationships and that they did cooperate with one another. A respondent from SAPS in Zonkizizwe said that 'Ekurhuleni Metro police do work with us, they are very cooperative. You see them working in the area. If they are not working inside Zonkizizwe you see them at the outskirts. They are working well with the police'.

In Nigel police informed us that they had only recently established working relations with the EMPD. For instance, they conduct crime prevention operations together. For big operations like conducting road blocks, monitoring sports events and doing crime awareness campaigns they plan jointly. However, day-to-day activities are not planned jointly. The SAPS have their own management meetings attended by the station commissioner, the head of intelligence and head of detectives where they evaluate the previous day's statistics and then plan for the day. According to SAPS they do contact the EMPD after their meetings to supply them with statistics and information about crime flash points so that the EMPD can use to determine where and when to patrol. The EMPD also hold their meetings on daily basis.

Despite this level of cooperation, some respondents felt that the relationship was not always fully cooperative. For instance, one member of the EMPD from the Eastern Region felt that the relationship that they have with the SAPS was not a healthy one. He mentioned that although they had previously raised their concerns that SAPS do not always provide the necessary back-up, this has not been addressed. For example, when the EMPD arrive at a scene of illegal car racing to apprehend law breakers and are confronted by members of the community, they request SAPS back-up which often does not arrive, or arrives very late.

Another example was cited in relation to the response to motor vehicle accidents. Both the SAPS and the EMPD have the responsibility of safeguarding the scene of an accident, recording particulars of the people involved in the accident, drawing up the sketch plan of the scene and opening a docket if there is a need. However, an EMPD representative in the Eastern Region raised a concern that members of the SAPS appear to be reluctant to attend such complaints. He indicated that, if the SAPS are the first to arrive at a scene of an accident, they leave as soon as the EMPD arrive on the scene without proper handover or communication. Since traffic enforcement is one of the metro police's primary functions, it makes sense for them to bear primary responsibility for dealing with accidents. However, ideally, both agencies should cooperate fully – the SAPS providing the EMPD with a full briefing and information that they had gathered from being first on the scene.

Another issue of concern with this relationship was that the EMPD has more vehicles than the SAPS and they are therefore more visible than the SAPS. It was also suggested that they could police a greater area if there was proper coordination and strategising. If the work were better coordinated, then potentially their collective resources could be better utilised to achieve joint objectives.

The Background and the Role of the SANDF Commando System

In many rural parts of the country there still exists the South African National Defence Force commando system. This consists of voluntary or part time members of SANDF who are responsible for safeguarding and protecting communities. Members of the commando's are appointed to serve in specific areas but do not have military commitments outside of these. They are responsible for the safety and security of their own communities. They conduct patrols and roadblocks in their areas. They do not have policing powers, but they can arrest suspects and hand them over to the police. They must therefore work in close cooperation with the police or inform the police when conducting an operation in an area. In instances where they patrol the area on their own they inform the police first of their intentions and advise them of the areas and the times during which they will be conducting

the operation.

The role of the commando's has been a controversial one. In response to an increase in attacks on farms and smallholdings during the late 1990s, Agricultural Unions in 1997 requested government to take steps to deal with the problem (Schönteich and Steinberg, 2000). This resulted in the development of a rural protection plan which was implemented in October 1997. The plan sought to encourage rural communities to work together in a co-ordinated manner, and to engage in joint planning, action and monitoring to combat crime in the country's rural areas coming up with strategies to reduce crime in their areas. The government responded by appointing a task team consisting of members of the SAPS and SANDF (which included the commandos), organised agriculture, provincial and local government, as well as interested individuals and organisations (Ibid).

Although the document is referred to as the Rural Protection Plan there is greater emphasis on attacks on commercial farms and small holdings than on other types of rural crime and violence. The plan sought to coordinate the operational activities of all role players effectively within the priority committees for rural protection, which were established as part of the national operational coordinating mechanism at national, provincial, area and ground levels. The priority committees were to look at rural protection, gang violence, taxi violence and political violence (Schönteich, et al., 2000). One way of ensuring that efforts were coordinated was through strengthening of the commando structure.

According to Schönteich and Steinberg, at the beginning of 2000, there were 186 commando units (officially called the 'Territorial Reserve Force System') in South Africa. Commando groups fall under regional SANDF army groups. There are three different types of commandos which members of the public could belong to:

- Area-bound reaction force commando members: staffed by people who live in the towns and cities. In an emergency, the local commando to which they belong, can call them up for commando duty. After being called for duty they are issued with a rifle and uniform which they have to return when they are booked off duty. These commando members are paid for the hours they work. They are also trained jointly with the police reservists to conduct patrols, roadblocks, follow-up operations, cordon and search operations and farm visits.
- Home and hearth protection reaction force commando members: staffed by farmers and smallholders and their workers. Members of this type of commando are responsible for assisting other farmers and smallholders in their district only if a farm or smallholding attack has occurred. They set up roadblocks and conduct searches until the area-bound reaction force commando members arrive on the scene and takes over from them.
- House and hearth protection commando members: These are staffed by the farmers, smallholders and their workers. Members of this type of a commando are not called up, but are responsible for protecting themselves and their own farm or small holding if under attack. They are only issued with a military rifle only if they do not possess their own rifle (Schönteich and Steinberg, 2000).

By the end of 2003 there were 183 commandos, or Army Territorial reserves, of which 26 were in Gauteng, and 4,950 members were still operational in Gauteng. Despite their long history, the commandos are expected to soon be phased out in terms of the Phoenix Project (PMG, 18 November 2003). In his State of the Nation Address in 2003, President Mbeki stated that:

Measures will be taken to ensure that the structures meant to support the security agencies, such as the SANDF commandos and police reservists are properly regulated to do what they were set up for. In this regard, in order to ensure security for all in the rural areas including the farmers, government will start in the near future to phase out SANDF commandos, at the same time as we create in their place, a new system whose composition and ethos accord with the requirements of all rural communities. (Mbeki 2003)

Support that was provided by SANDF to SAPS at the time of the research will be withdrawn. Once the Commandos are closed, the reservists will fall under the SAPS, where they may become involved in Area Crime Combating Units.

At the time of the research the Commando's were still operational in Nigel, and it was envisaged that the phasing out process would be finalised in 2009. Respondents from the EMPD and the SAPS observed that the Commando's provided support to both the agencies through area protection. They were perceived to be effective. This approach allowed for the sub-division of a specific community into smaller and more manageable sections or cells. Each cell comprised of a number of households whose members were in contact with each other by means of telephone or a radio system. Since it involved the whole community, even non-commandos could participate in the scheme and enjoy the protection the system offered.

Crime Prevention Strategies

The SAPS White Paper on Safety and Security (1998) defines crime prevention as 'all activities which reduce, deter or prevent the occurrence of specific crimes firstly, by altering the environment in which they occur, secondly by changing the conditions which are thought to cause them, and thirdly by providing a strong deterrent in the form of an effective Justice System' (1998:14). The White Paper envisages crime prevention occurring through two approaches: through effective criminal justice, and through social crime prevention. The former relates to activities traditionally performed by the criminal justice system, including law enforcement, rehabilitation, visible policing and investigations. Social crime prevention, on the other hand, refers to those activities intended to intervene in the social and economic factors that lead to crime; breaking the cycle of violence, and promoting social cohesion (Department of Safety and Security, 1998: 4).

According to the SAPS Guardian Committee for Crime Prevention, the operational definition of crime prevention from the proactive policing point of view includes 'all policing and community activities aimed at preventing or reducing precipitating and predisposing factors leading to crime' (SAPS training division, 2001). The Committee identified joint intervention initiatives or techniques between the community and the police as an important part of crime prevention. For the SAPS and the EMPD to develop effective and efficient strategies for combating and reducing crime, it is important that there is a clear

understanding of what crime prevention is, and what activities it involves.

The SAPS training manual on crime prevention highlights the importance of understanding crime, the role players in crime and other factors contributing to crime, in order to develop effective crime prevention strategies (South African Police Services, 2000). It also highlights the need to involve the community in identifying priority crimes in an area. In both the stations forming part of this study, it was clear that the SAPS relied on the statistics gathered by their intelligence division to develop crime prevention strategies. While this may be necessary and useful, it does not include an analysis of crimes that are not reported to the police. For these, other sources can be consulted such as, CPF's, the formal and informal business sector, local authorities and community groups. It is important for the police to make the process a consultative and inclusive one.

The SAPS policing priorities are established by the National office but Area level and police stations also establish their own policing priorities and develop local crime prevention strategies in response to local crime trends. For the period 2003 to 2005 the key National operational priorities were the following:

- Organised crime
- Serious and violent crime
- Crimes against women and children
- Service delivery (Strategic Direction of the SAPS, 2003).

The SAPS in Ekurhuleni tended to view crime prevention in terms of the law enforcement approach and if asked to provide examples of their crime prevention work, they would mention a proactive policing strategy. For example, if after analysis the daily crime statistics they identified that armed robbery was a problem between 18h00 and 20h00 at a particular spot, they could step up their patrols during those times.

Some of the primary strategies identified by the SAPS were preventative patrols and directed patrols. After identifying crime trends the police strengthen their patrols and roadblocks in one area. The potential of this approach is limited as crime may be displaced to other areas as soon as the would-be criminals are alerted to the patrols. Although the respondents acknowledged this problem they reported that it was difficult to develop proactive crime prevention strategies due to the lack of manpower.

Asked to clarify their understanding of crime prevention, the police representatives mentioned visible policing; ways and means that are developed by the police to reduce crime; and strategies that are developed in response to crime. Some of the strategies that the SAPS use to reduce crimes or discourage the would-be criminals are; conducting road blocks, stopping cars and searching them, patrolling and stopping and searching individuals walking on the roads. Another strategy mentioned was the 'broken windows'¹¹ approach where an operation is organised and people are arrested for petty offences, such as being drunk in public. In areas where there is a lot of housebreakings and theft of and out of motor vehicles, the SAPS conduct visible policing, which entails regular vehicle and foot patrols. Another strategy is that of posting members at flash points, which are usually the entrances and exits to the area, to search incoming and outgoing vehicles in the area. The purpose of those searches is to prevent stolen goods from entering or leaving an area. They

also search for people in possession of illegal firearms and ammunition, stolen vehicles, as well as for illegal immigrants and people in possession of drugs.

The SAPS social crime prevention officer is tasked with community awareness campaigns such as speaking at schools.

In terms of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for Ekurhuleni (2002/2006), a number of activities are highlighted to 'render an effective and efficient crime prevention service with all role players' (IDP, 2002: C6-80). These include law enforcement functions such as the establishment of stations in formerly disadvantaged areas, establishing an accredited training academy, and a management information system. But it also talks of implementing social crime prevention programmes.

However, in practice the EMPD also tends to focus on the law enforcement approach to crime prevention. Its activities are very similar to the SAPS, and include roadblocks, searches of people and cars, and policing through regular patrols. Although the metro police have no legislated investigative function, the EMPD does conduct a preliminary investigation if they have information about a particular crime. After gathering and verifying the information they hand it over to the police to do a full scale investigation. The police and metro police believed that their strategies were successful and had reduced crime in the area.

As an example of a more proactive approach to dealing with some crime, the Nigel EMPD mentioned that since they have the illegal drag-racing problem, they have decided to engage the people who organise the races in discussions, and have referred them to areas specially demarcated for racing. Following this information sharing, they have indicated that in future they will arrest those responsible should they be found holding illegal races again, and charged with an offence.

The Ekurhuleni Metro emphasized the issue of co-operative partnerships with the community in their application for the establishment of a Metropolitan Police Service.

The Commandos also have a limited role in crime prevention in the area. They were established to assist the police in their operations but due to the lack of manpower on the side of the police they did sometimes work on their own, informing the local SAPS of their presence, the area they wished to cover. They were also provided with a radio channel. Like the SAPS and the EMPD, they conducted roadblocks, as well as foot and vehicle patrols. Information uncovered concerning allegations of drug smuggling, housebreakings, thefts, illegal immigrants and car syndicates were handed over to the SAPS for further investigation. The role of the commandos was restricted to preventative policing.

Community Structures and their Role in Crime Prevention

Representatives of community structures that have an interest in safety and security issues in the community were interviewed, with the aim of identifying their attitudes, perceptions and fears in relation to crime as well as to identify their role in crime prevention.

The Role of Community Police Forums in Crime Prevention

Prior to the first democratic elections in South Africa members of the community had a poor relationship with the police, and many regarded police officers as instruments of the apartheid government. The attitudes and the perceptions at the time were formed by the fact that the police were perceived to be brutalizing the community instead of protecting them. The community did not know what was happening behind the walls of the police stations, nor were they informed when or why police did not respond to their complaints. There was a lack of understanding of the workings of the criminal justice system and why suspects were released pending their trials. In 1993 the SAPS adopted community policing as an operational strategy to meet the safety and security needs of all the people, as well as to rebuild relations between community and police. Since the establishment of the CPFs, the attitudes and perceptions of the community begun to change and improvements in the relationship have been reported ([Pelser, 1999](#)). Although there has been relatively little impact at the level of reducing crimes, community policing has provided the opportunity for holding the police accountable and advising them on local policing priorities.

In both the stations interviewed the SAPS conveyed their dissatisfaction with the existing CPF. The Zonkizizwe police felt that the members of the CPF were not committed to their role. It was said that they did not take any initiatives or come up with ideas to improve relations between the police and the community. From their responses it was clear that both CPF's are still struggling with identifying their role. On the other hand, in Zonkizizwe, the CPF blamed the police for their ineffectiveness. They complained that the police failed to give them support. It appeared that they had unrealistic expectations of their role, and indicated that they expected to be given a vehicle so that they could be able patrol and trace suspects. They also wanted to be directly involved in operations. Their emphasis appeared to be more focused on improving safety and security through assisting and collaborating with the police.

Another problem identified with the Zonkizizwe CPF was that it was not representative of all the organisations in the community, but that the members tended all to belong to one political organisation. This is problematic as the political representatives are more likely to support their party's political agendas than to address the real crime needs of the community ([Mistry, 1997](#)). Another problem raised by the police was that the CPF has had the same chairperson for the past ten years, inhibiting the CPF's progress. The station commissioner was of the opinion that the traditional leader's forum was more effective than the CPF because, even though the izinduna were from the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), they addressed problems relevant to the whole community and not only IFP supporters. The representatives of the izinduna themselves believed the CPF was redundant and ineffective and was one of the factors leading them to take their own initiative of fighting crime in their area. The EMPD, which was also represented on the CPF, also expressed concern with the CPF and indicated that they were in the process, together with the station commander, of re-establishing the forum. The EMPD thought that in its current form, the CPF was not effective because of its 'police-bashing' nature.

In Nigel, the SAPS also indicated that the CPF was not functional and they were in the process of re-establishing it. This may be as a result of the new leadership at the station. Unlike in Zonkizizwe, there was community representation in the Nigel CPF, including members of the neighborhood watch, civil defense, commandos, rate payers association,

churches, schools and interested individuals. The EMPD in the area also mentioned that they were involved in the re-establishment of the Nigel forum where their interest was to improve its effectiveness. On the other hand, the CPF representative who was interviewed felt that the CPF was effective because of the wide spread of organisations that were represented in the CPF as well as the good co-operation from the SAPS and the EMPD.

Izinduna (Traditional Leaders) and their Role in Crime Prevention

The izinduna that were interviewed in Zonkizizwe had mixed feelings about the SAPS and the EMPD. On the one hand they understood that both agencies were under resourced and understaffed, but they were also of the view that if they could work together and coordinate their efforts, they would be able to reduce the high levels of crime.

Part of Zonkizizwe (extension 1 to extension 4) is an IFP stronghold where the majority of people originate from KwaZulu-Natal. The four extensions were under the leadership of izinduna. This system derives from the history of when men from KwaZulu-Natal came to Gauteng to work in the mines; their Chief in KwaZulu-Natal would appoint an Induna (headman) to look after his subjects in Gauteng. However, nowadays the people who are under the command of izinduna in Zonkizizwe are not only men who are working in mines but also their families. The izinduna also preside over people who are neither from KwaZulu-Natal nor who are IFP aligned, but who fall under their jurisdiction by the virtue of their residence in one of the four extensions.

As mentioned before, Zonkizizwe is dominated by informal settlements. In response to the increasing levels of crime in the area in 2001, the izinduna called upon the community of Zonkizizwe (extension 1, 2, 3 and 4) to unite in their fight against crime. This call followed a spate of housebreakings, rapes, robberies and car thefts in the area. A community meeting was held to discuss problems about the increasing crime rate. A structure called *Zonke Hlanganani* (meaning 'Zonke Unite') was formed to address the problems.

A committee was elected to gather information about crime trends and information about goods that were stolen from people's houses. They found that people who left for work early in the morning and came back late in the evening were targets for robbery in the open fields. They also realised that houses were broken into during the day when their occupants were at work and children at school. The police intelligence also provided information that most housebreakings were committed during the festive season. The committee recommended that a group of men should be elected to escort people who walk through the open fields to get transport early in the morning and late in the afternoon. They also agreed that there should be patrols on certain days of the week. Unemployed people in the community were requested to keep an eye on their neighbours' properties during the day. According to respondents, the intervention produced positive results in that the number of people who were robbed of their possessions whilst walking through the open fields was drastically reduced. The number of housebreakings also went down and a lot of stolen property was recovered.

The community responded to the call of the izinduna and came forward with information about people who were seen selling suspected stolen property - electrical appliances and clothing. The izinduna raided the houses where stolen property was kept. During the raid a number of fridges, television sets, video machines, DVDs, kettles, irons and other valuables

were recovered. This particular form of 'community policing' is unlawful, but the respondents claimed that they had called the police after recovering the goods and before the goods were handed over to the owners, but the police never arrived. As a result, the izinduna returned the goods to the complainants. The izinduna informed us that on one occasion after apprehending criminals and recovering stolen goods they called the police from the local station but the police never arrived. Then they called another police station closer to their area, and they were informed that the other police station was not allowed to attend to complaints from Zonkizizwe since the area was not their area of jurisdiction. They then tried the EMPD which came and was helpful. These informal approaches to the policing of crime could partially explain the low crime statistics in Zonkizizwe.

The izinduna mentioned that they did not keep statistics of the goods recovered. While this community initiative seems to have been very effective, it is problematic in that they have taken on policing activities themselves. The police also indicated that some of the vigilante activity had resulted in unlawful assaults on suspects.

The izinduna also raised their concerns about policing in the area. They complained that 'the investigating officers don't inform complainants and witnesses when to appear in court. People only hear afterwards that the suspect was released'. They gave an example of an old woman who was shot at her house. The izinduna apprehended the perpetrator, who was allegedly a well known hit-man, and handed him over to the police. The police took the suspect into custody and obtained statements from the victim and the witnesses. However, after giving the statement to the police the victim never heard from the police again, nor did she received any subpoena to appear in court. After some months the victim heard from neighbors that the suspect was seen in town and he told people that charges against him were withdrawn in court. The victim had not been directly informed of this. These concerns are not unique to this area. Another problem raised was that in many instances the trials are held on Heidelberg, and many witnesses or victims are unable to attend due to the cost of traveling to court.

The izinduna were also concerned that sometimes they had given the SAPS information about the whereabouts of suspects, but they apparently did not act on that information. They also complained that the police did not search for stolen good in places identified by the izinduna.

We have on a number of occasions given the police sensitive information about crime syndicates and the whereabouts of wanted criminals... Instead of the police acting on that information, they inform the suspects which puts us in danger of being attacked by those suspects.

There were also allegations of corruption made by the representatives of the community against the police.

There appeared to be no other community crime prevention activities in other parts of Zonkizizwe, and indeed a paucity of community organisation in the area.

The Role of the Farming Community

Security on farms and smallholdings has been a matter of concern for some time, and a

committee was appointed by the Commissioner of Safety and Security to inquire into these attacks and to identify motives and factors behind them. There was an increase in attacks on farms and smallholdings between the period 1991 to 2001. Murder committed during these attacks also increased over this period (Farm Attacks Committee, 2003: part 2).¹² The belief amongst the farming community was that farm attacks were politically or racially inspired and that crimes stemming from them were more violent than other comparable crimes spurred a number of farmers to sell their farms and move to the urban areas. However, the Farm Attacks Committee found that the majority of attacks were motivated by a desire to rob or steal, and that few were motivated by political overtones (Ibid: 445). The committee did find that although it was difficult to establish comparative figures on the degree of violence involved in farm attacks compared with other serious crimes, that there was a greater likelihood of victims of house robberies being injured on farms than in urban areas (Ibid: 446).

The Rural Protection Plan, drawn up as a response to the issue, suggests that one of the contributing factors to the high crime rate in the rural areas is the lack of security around the farms. The Plan encouraged farmers to improve security in their residences and farm, by erecting security fences, installing security doors, burglar proofs, security lights, communication systems and an alternate power supply (Boshoff, 1997).

In addition to the role that was played by the commandos in crime prevention in Nigel, the community established a 'farm watch' system. The farm watch system is similar to the system that was adopted by the community in Zonkizizwe. It involved both farmers and farm workers, who were encouraged to be eyes and ears of the commandos and the police. They were urged to be on the alert to any strangers asking questions about the farm, strangers sitting along the verges and of any suspicious cars driving around the farm area. Whereas in Zonkizizwe the community reported suspicious circumstances to *Zonke Hlanganani*, in Nigel they were encouraged to report directly to the commandos and the police. According to respondents, this system had effectively reduced crime in the area, and there had been no farm attacks since early 2003.

Despite this, the Nigel farming community raised their concerns in the interviews about the escalating crime even though official statistics indicated a drop in crime rates,¹³ and no farm attack had been reported in a year. The farmers' fear was that should high crime rates continue they might be forced to leave their farms.

The farming community also raised their concerns about the police not taking their complaints seriously. They mentioned instances where they had reported cases to the police, and had been told by the SAPS that they were attending to more serious cases elsewhere. In some cases, they said, that the police had responded to calls relating to life threatening situations only hours after their initial call. They were advised that this was due to insufficient vehicles but respondents believed that with proper planning the available vehicles could be utilized more efficiently. They highlighted that station management was issued with state vehicles which they used to come to work, attend meetings and go back home. When not attending meetings, they complained that cars were parked at the police station the whole day.

On the other hand, one respondent observed that the police did drive through the farming

area during the day, and that farmers would often offer them coffee to build community-police relations. However, he thought that it would be useful for these visits and patrols to take place at night as well. Some respondents suggested that the police should stop people they meet on the farm roads and question them, as a discouragement to would-be criminals. However, the implementation of some of these proposals could have serious consequences for the liberty and rights of other individuals living and working in the area. It is also not clear whether they would have the intended result.

Non Governmental Organisations

Zonkizizwe

There were very few NGOs working in Zonkizizwe. The National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO) was in the process of establishing a satellite office to deal with issues affecting the community, such as domestic violence and the issue of diversion, but their progress was hampered by an indication that the Gauteng Department of Community Safety intended to open a victim empowerment centre at the police station. Developers were sent by the Department to the station in April 2004 to take measurements and start with the preparations for building the victim empowerment centre. However, no further steps had been taken and the SAPS were later informed that the services of the first developer had been terminated and they were in the process of identifying a new developer. As a result of the impending establishment the station could not allow NICRO to operate from the station until the position of the Department's initiative was known. NICRO then consulted with the community with the view of setting up an office within the community, but was met with little enthusiasm as they reported that community members were only interested in projects that would benefit them financially.

The researchers also spoke to the Youth Management Forum (YMF), a youth organisation that has been operational in Zonkizizwe from 1997. The organisation was involved in arts, sports and recreation projects that were aimed at discouraging young people from being involved in criminal activities, and many other initiatives contributing to crime prevention in the community. Each year since the organisation was established, it organised an annual sports day which was sponsored by Volkswagen South Africa and the Ekurhuleni Metro Council. The sports days included competitive sporting events and cultural activities. YMF also offered youth skills development projects, such as brick-laying, sewing, and painting; and ran a victim empowerment programme, offering counseling for victims of violence and referral to relevant organisations for counseling. YMF also ran a food security programme, where orphans, HIV positive people and their families were given food parcels once a month. In addition, they recently started a vegetable garden project where they were teaching the recipients of the food parcels to plant crops in order to reduce dependency on hand outs. They also facilitated a bereavement project funded by the council, aiming to assist those who cannot afford funeral expenses. Although its members are predominantly from the ANC, the organisation was reported to reach out to all youth in Zonkizizwe. Although they were not able to provide statistics they were of the view that crime had decreased, particularly among the youth.

For three years YMF was part of the Zonkizizwe CPF, but later withdrew because they felt that their views as young people were not taken into consideration. They were of the opinion that the CPF leadership was dominated by one political organisation, and thus

politicised and ineffective in dealing with crime. They indicated that they would be willing to participate under new leadership. When YMF was still part of the CPF they had been actively involved in organising crime prevention campaigns - focused on discouraging the youth from being involved in crime and attending schools instead.

Another organisation active in Zonkizizwe is Silethithemba ('We are bringing Hope').¹⁴ The organisation offers a range of services. Firstly, they assist victims of domestic violence and refer them to other organisations in Katlehong which offer counseling and help abused women to obtain protection orders. Silethithemba also operates a crèche for orphans and the children of HIV positive women, and provides home based care for HIV positive people. They were not sure under which police station their area falls, as sometimes they are referred to Zonkizizwe police and at other times to Katlehong police station.

Nigel

Nigel, being a better established area had several NGO's servicing different communities. These included the Nigel Justice Centre, NICRO, Child and Family Welfare, and SANCA. Representatives from the National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO) and the Justice Centre in Nigel were interviewed. NICRO opened a satellite office in Nigel in November 2003. At the time of the research they were focusing on two main projects; a diversion programme for young offenders and a community victim support programme. In addition to the two programmes they are conducting a study in the area in order to better understand its problems, and to help them develop effective programmes for the community. Nationally, NICRO was in the process of reviewing their programmes to become more proactive. One of the intended programmes is crime awareness campaigns to be introduced at surrounding schools. They mentioned that during Child Protection Week they conducted a similar campaign in Nigel together with the EMPD, and Social Services. The SAPS participated in a similar campaign in Duduza. NICRO reported that they had good working relations with the court officials, and that they were called in to mediate in petty offences, and in cases involving neighbours or families.

The Nigel Justice Centre (NJC) offers legal advice, mediation, alternative dispute resolution training, victim empowerment, and community advice. It also conducts awareness campaigns on issues relating to child abuse and domestic violence. Previously the NJC had funding for a project advising farm workers regarding their rights, as well as representing them in cases of evictions and labour disputes. Like NICRO, they also had a good relationship with the courts. They have trained police officers on mediation and how to handle complainants. The courts refer to them family cases that could be settled out of court. The NJC meets regularly with magistrates and prosecutors from the Nigel courts but they did not have a similar relationship with the SAPS and the CPF. They indicated that although the SAPS send people to the Centre to be assisted with applications for protection orders, the police were reluctant to assist these people by the serving the required protection orders. At the time of the interview, they were in the process of meeting with the police to clarify roles for all the stakeholders. The NJC had not had any dealings with the EMPD.

Although some of the NGOs had positive relationships and experiences of the police, there were also some concerns raised. One organisation was concerned that police often referred the community to lodge their complaints with izinduna, instead of recording complaints and investigating them:

When you go to the station to open a case the police will ask you if you have reported to the izinduna. Who is running the station then? Is it the izinduna or the police? Even the station commander consults the izinduna first before doing anything.

This was echoed by an induna who said,

The station commander calls us if there is a suspect and asks if we know the suspect. If it's somebody we know he hands them over to us to speak to them and warn them about the consequences of being involved in crime.

There was a perception among some of the NGOs in Zonkizizwe that police were aligned to the IFP and were controlled by the izinduna, and that police responded more readily to complaints from the IFP than to supporters of other political parties. They also expressed reservations about being referred to the izinduna instead of their complaints being recorded and investigated by the police. Similar concerns were also raised in respect of the CPF which was also perceived to be 'serving the IFP aligned people and the police.' Another organisation withdrew from the CPF due to its lack of direction.

The Role of the Metropolitan Council

Prior to the 2004 elections there were two ward councilors in Zonkizizwe; one from the IFP and another one from the ANC. During the 2004 elections the ANC won Zonkizizwe with an overwhelming majority, leaving only one councilor in the area. The ward councilor responsible for Zonkizizwe and Magagula was interviewed. This ward is made up of Zonkizizwe proper, Zonkizizwe extensions one to four, and Magagula Heights. As indicated previously, Zonkizizwe incorporates some rural areas where there is some small scale farming. Eighty percent of the population in Magagula is rural. The majority of the population in Zonkizizwe originates from KwaZulu-Natal and came Gauteng between 1995 and 1997.

For a number of years after the establishment of the area, Zonkizizwe remained an IFP strong hold. However, the ANC progressively gained more popularity until it became the majority in 2004. The councilor in the area mentioned that because of the political differences in the past, the area had been engulfed with political violence more than criminal violence. However, according to him, this situation has now been reversed.

The councilor raised concerns about the functioning of the police and the CPF. He reiterated the concern raised by the other respondents that the police were not responsive and that there were allegations of harassment of members of the community by the police. Concerns were also raised about the lack of police visibility in the area.

Like other community representatives the councilor was concerned about the perceived lack of direction and productivity on the side of the CPF. He was also of the view that the CPF was serving the interests of the police and one political party in the area (the IFP). Concerns were also raised about the leadership of the CPF that has been in power for the past ten years. There were suggestions that something needed to be done to change the status quo of the CPF. However, his lack of faith in the CPF also reflects political differences in the area.

The metropolitan council had not been actively involved in crime prevention activities, but there were plans to become more so. The council had intentions to organise the community and involve them in poverty alleviation projects. In July 2004 the Councilor, under the banner of the ANC, organised an information sharing campaign with the aim of educating the community on issues that affect them. According to the councilor the campaign was a great success. Among the issues that were discussed was the issue of robbery of people collecting welfare grants, robberies in the open areas and house-break-in's.

The councilor indicated that poor infra-structure in the area was a problem and that it hampered the police from working efficiently. However, he believed that it was more important to look at social crime prevention initiatives, than at infrastructure development. In keeping with this approach, he indicated that the council would soon be embarking on a brick-making project, as well as other skills development projects for the benefit of the community.

Reflecting the viewpoint of the ANC the councilor reported that there was a lack of co-operation between the council and the izinduna. The council's view was that izinduna are elected by a chief to look after his subjects, and since Zonkizizwe is not a traditional authority, there should no chief. This view perhaps reflects the tension between the more traditionalist IFP, and the ANC. However, this position is problematic given the role the izinduna play in responding to crime in the area. It would be more useful to acknowledge their role and to try and work together with these structures, than to ignore them.

Problems in Policing the Selected Areas

Rural areas and informal settlement areas are difficult to access due to lack of infrastructure. Many roads are not tarred so it is difficult to access the areas with ordinary vehicles, especially when it rains. There was also a reported lack of road markings, street numbers, house numbers and street lighting. This caused much difficulty for both the SAPS and EMPD when responding to complaints, especially at night. They reported that they have often driven around for hours in informal settlements looking for addresses and streets, without any success.

This problem was especially pronounced in Zonkizizwe where the shacks are closely packed together, and where there is only one main tarred road passing through the area. Other, rough gravel roads often turned slippery in the rain. The SAPS explained that in poor conditions, night time complaints could only be responded to in the morning when visibility had improved. Delays in response time added to the difficulty in tracing suspects and witnesses or victims. Both the SAPS and metro police complained that they are not equipped with vehicles that could drive in these conditions.

On the other hand, the commandos in Nigel were well equipped with cross-terrain vehicles. They also had a helicopter at their disposal. The farm roads are better marked with some farms and smallholdings having street markings visible from the air. Despite the fact that the roads were sand roads the SAPS indicated that they didn't experience any problems in accessing the farms.

Comparing resources, it is apparent that in the better resourced areas, such as Nigel, the

response capacity was improved.

Conclusions

As previously mentioned, the study was conducted in two vastly different areas. One which is dominated by farms and small holdings, and the other was an area dominated by informal settlements. Because of the demographics, activities, age group and employment activities in the two areas the crime trends and policing issues were also found to be very different.

Effective crime prevention strategies are most often collaborative multi-agency partnerships. Such approaches should include:

- Stakeholder consultation about the nature of crime problem and potential solutions.
- Further analysis of crime in the particular area – through police statistics or a victim survey.
- A partnership with various role-players to act on an agreed set of crime problems, and
- And agency nominated to coordinate the activities of the role players ([Pelser and Louw, 2002](#)).

However, it was apparent that the police and metro relied primarily on police statistics to inform their crime prevention strategies. The community was rarely consulted, and the partnership forum involving the CPF was dysfunctional. There was also limited coordinated planning around social crime prevention with the EMPD.

Generally the relationship between the SAPS and metro police seems to be a good one but it could still be improved by getting the two agencies coordinating their efforts of fighting crime. It appears that the SAPS' role in crime prevention in the area was mainly limited to visible policing activities, with a small role in social crime prevention, and then, mainly through awareness campaigns. It should be recognised that the SAPS and EMPD have limited ability to prevent crime, and perhaps they should not be expected to take the lead in crime prevention initiatives. Alternatively, given the large number of community structures and organisations that have taken initiatives in the areas included in this study, they should engage in greater dialogue, partnerships and joint planning around these activities.

From our interviews there appears to be a weakness in the structure and functioning of the CPFs in both areas. Problems of community representation, participation, and lack of focus and direction, were the most often mentioned concerns. While the CPFs may be one avenue for joint participation, it should not be considered the only vehicle for partnership.

Another concern was that the community organisations were not aware of the role and mandate of the EMPD, believing it to be solely responsible for traffic law enforcement. The community was not aware of its crime prevention mandate, or of where and how they could approach the EMPD for assistance with crime issues.

There is also a need to improve infrastructure in both the areas. The police mentioned the difficulties they have in tracing suspects due to the fact that there are no street lights, street names and house numbers. The farming community raised their concerns about similar

issues and the fact that the roads are never graded.

Recommendations

All the stakeholders agreed that there should be more coordination of all crime prevention efforts. We therefore make the following recommendations:

- There is a need to involve community organisations in identifying priority crimes, developing crime prevention strategies and implementing the strategies.
- There is a need for joint planning between the SAPS, EMPD and community groups on crime prevention measures.
- Regular meetings should occur between SAPS and EMPD at station level to jointly coordinate crime prevention strategies.
- Provide training for CPF members, SAPS and EMPD on community policing.
- Regular visits to farms and smallholdings should occur by both the SAPS and EMPD.
- The EMPD should organise public awareness campaigns to raise awareness about the functions of the EMPD.
- The rural safety plan need to be popularized and made available to all stakeholders.
- Visible policing from both the SAPS and EMPD needs to be strengthened.
- Infrastructure, such as roads, lights, street names and house numbers, needs to be upgraded. The EMPD should work with other structures, such as City Parks, and City Power to improve these conditions. There is also a need to address broader issues of environmental design. This should be done in a holistic way in consultation with relevant departments.

Notes:

¹ Meaning the 'place of peace'.

² See also the following reports Ingrid Palmary and Kindisa Ngubeni (2003). *"We are Living in a Forgotten Place": Safety in the Cross-Border Parts of the City of Tswane*. Johannesburg: CSV; and Ingrid Palmary (2004) *Traditional Leaders in the eThekweni Metropolitan Region: their role in crime prevention and safety promotion*, Johannesburg: CSV, and Curran, E., and Bonthuys, E. (2004) *Customary Law and Domestic Violence in Rural South African Communities*. Johannesburg: CSV.

³ These figures were taken from the National Census 2001.

⁴ These figures include Zonkizizwe, Zonkizizwe Extension, and Zonkizizwe Ext 2.

⁵ There is a population of 32 065 in the three Zonkizizwe areas, covering an area of 4.56 square kilometers. Nigel has a population of 28 706 in an area of 139.25 square kilometers.

⁶ In 2003/2004 Zonkizizwe recorded a total number of 1286 crimes, while Nigel recorded 2834 (CIAC, 2004).

⁷ Interestingly the figure for aggravated robbery is higher in Zonkizizwe (130) than in Nigel (98), while the figures for common robbery are inverted (114 in Nigel and 39 in Zonkizizwe) (CIAC, 2004).

⁸ Chapter 12 of the SAPS, Act No. 68 of 1995.

⁹ A geographically defined area against which specific policing resources are distributed.

¹⁰ A meeting of all station commanders, heads of different SAPS units and the EMPD representatives in the Eastern and Southern Regions of the Metro, normally held on Fridays.

¹¹ 'Broken windows' is an approach to crime prevention which focuses on the physical or social environment. The idea is that if the physical or social environment is neglected (e.g. if there is a building with broken windows) this will convey to people a feeling that 'no one cares' about what happens in that environment and that you can get away with anything. This in turn will lead to crime. Examples of application of the 'broken windows' theory are:

- 'zero tolerance' policing – enforcement of the law against petty offenders (e.g. people urinating or drinking in public, prostitutes, etc);
- improving environmental management in inner city areas.

¹² The Committee found that the number of farm attacks had increased from 327 in 1991 to 1011 in 2001. Attacks in Gauteng increased over this period (Farm Attacks Committee, 2003:part 2).

¹³ According to the SAPS crime statistics, the reported numbers of crime had increased between 2003 and 2004 in Devon in relation to assault (common and aggravated), robbery with aggravating circumstances, indecent assault, culpable homicide, truck hi-jacking and bank robbery. In Nigel there were increases in reported rape, assault GBH, common assault, indecent assault, abduction, neglect and ill-treatment of children and culpable homicide, truck hi-jacking and house robbery. Murders had decreased in both areas (CIAC, 2004).

¹⁴ The organisation was formerly called Kwaze Kwasa meaning 'It's now Dawn'.

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Appendix 1: List of respondents

The following people were interviewed for this research. Names have been kept anonymous:

- Two representatives from the SAPS East Rand area office
- Two SAPS Station Commissioners
- Chief of the EMPD
- Representatives of Crime Prevention units in both stations
- A representative of Crime intelligence in one of the stations
- Head of the Eastern Region of the EMPD
- Head of the Southern Region of the EMPD
- Three representatives from the Southern Region of the EMPD
- Five Izinduna
- Four Representatives of the farming community
- A representative of the Commandos
- Two representatives of the CPF
- Representatives of the NGO's: NICRO, Nigel Justice Forum
- Representatives of the CBO's: Youth Management Forum, Silethithemba
- Councilor for Zonkizizwe