

# Environmental Management Inspectors (EMIs) ('Green Scorpions')



## Who are the Environmental Management Inspectors (EMIs) ('Green Scorpions')

EMIs are a network of environmental management and enforcement officials operating across all spheres of government.

These officials are designated by the Minister/MEC in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) (NEMA). EMIs can be easily identified by their uniform. This uniform has a specific logo or it can be an EMI badge.



EMI Inspectors attending to a rhino poaching scene



Air pollution is worse in highly populated cities where more factories emit pollution, which negatively affects the ecosystem.

EMIs are required to monitor, investigate and enforce compliance with the NEMA and the Specific Environmental Management Acts (SEMAs) for which they have been designated.

## SEMAs are the following Acts:

- National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act No. 10 of 2004) (NEMBA)
- National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (NEMPA) (Act No. 57 of 2004)
- National Environmental Management: Waste Act (NEMWA) (Act 59 of 2008)
- National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act (NEMAQA) (Act No. 39 of 2004)
- National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act (NEMAQA) (Act No. 24 of 2008)
- National Water Act (Act No. 36 of 1998)
- Environment Conservation Act (Act No. 73 of 1989)

## Powers and responsibilities of EMIs

### The range of powers given to EMIs to fulfill their mandate include:

- Conducting routine inspections (entering premises to ascertain compliance, seizing evidence of non-compliance;
- Investigating (questioning witnesses; copying documents; removing articles or substances; taking photographs and video recordings; taking samples);
- Enforcement powers (search and seizure establishing road blocks and arrest) and;
- Administrative powers (issuing compliance notices and directives).

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## Offences relating to EMIs

### A person is guilty of an offence if that person:

- Hinders or interferes with an EMIs' duties, or;
- Pretends to be an EMI;
- Gives false or misleading information to an EMI, and/or;
- Fails to comply with the request from an EMI.

### Penalties for environmental crimes

ACT AND SECTIONS	OFFENCE	PENALTY
Section 24 of NEMA	Commencement of an activity without an environmental authorisation	R10 million or 10 years imprisonment or both penalties
Section 57 of NEMBA	Hunting of listed threatened or protected species without a permit, or poaching	R10 million or 10 years imprisonment or both penalties
Section 26 of NEMWA	Unauthorised disposal of waste	R10 million or 10 years imprisonment or both penalties
Section 45 of NEMPA	Unauthorized entry to nature reserves	R 5 million or 10 years imprisonment or both penalties

## Frequently asked questions

### What are environmental crimes?

Environmental crimes are any unauthorised activities which have a direct or indirect negative impact on the environment (air, land and water).

### Examples:

- Illegal dumping of waste;
- Poaching of endangered species;
- Accidental or negligent spillages of hazardous substances and;
- Building or erecting structures on environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, riverbanks and/or ridges.

### Will my name be disclosed after reporting an environmental crime?

The identity of every person who reports a crime is protected and will not be disclosed to any other party.

### Where can I report environmental crimes?

- Provincial Department (GDARD):  
011- 240 3510 or e-mail: Green.Scorpions@gauteng.gov.za
- National Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA): 0800 205 005, e-mail: environment@tip-offs.com
- Local authority (Municipality)
- Nearest SAPS

### What should I do when I witness an environmental crime?

- Gather as much information about the crime and immediately report it as indicated above.

### Such information may include:

- Type of activity
- Photos, if possible
- Registration and make of the vehicle involved in the crime if any. For example, in the case of illegal dumping of waste.



**For further information about environmental crimes contact:**

GDARD Compliance and Enforcement  
Tel: (011) 240 3150  
Physical Address: 56 Eloff Street, Umnotho House,  
Floor 20, Johannesburg  
E-mail: Green.Scorpions@gauteng.gov.za

**Alternatively, you can call:**

Department of Environmental Affairs Environmental  
Crimes and Incidents  
Hotline: 0800 205 005



A permit is required to keep endangered species or wildlife

A permit is required to import or export animals and plants



A permit is required to fish in protected areas



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