



**SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE  
COMMUNITY IN BLUE CONCEPT**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

High levels of crime especially violent crimes which often leads to injury, loss of life and possessions, often pose a serious threat to our democracy.

The South African Police Service (SAPS) policing objectives, in accordance with the provisions of section 205 of the Constitution, are to prevent, combat and investigate crime; maintain public order; protect and secure the inhabitants of South Africa and their property; uphold and enforce the law. These are in line with National Development Plan envisaged vision which states that in 2030 people living in South Africa should feel safe and without fear of crime.

In order to realise vision 2030 and operationalization of the SAPS Turn-Around strategy, to intensify police visibility in collaboration with the community and other stakeholders.

The community policing philosophy is an approach that focuses on police establishing partnerships and enhancing working relations with members of the communities. The philosophy requires police to inherit a proactive approach to address public safety concerns. Integrated in the Community Policing Philosophy, is the concept of Sector Policing. Sector Policing is the division of the policing area into smaller manageable sectors. It involves the assignment of police officers to a particular sector which encourages regular patrol and increased contact with members of local communities.

The National Commissioner of the South African Police Service, General KJ Sitole, has emphasised the importance of involving the community in safety and policing related matters, especially the community patrollers, hence the concept "Community in Blue" emerged. The Community in Blue Concept is in line with the implementation of community policing approach and the National Development Plan, 2030 which states that achieving long-term sustainable safety requires an integrated approach focused on tackling fundamental causes of criminality which requires a wider range of resources, active citizenry and co-responsibility.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to —

- (a) standardise the establishment and functioning of Community in Blue patrollers within the SAPS which is inclusive of street committees, neighbourhood watches and community patrollers, and
- (b) encourage more citizens to participate in a structured way in crime prevention.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

In this framework, unless the context indicates otherwise

- (a) ***“community policing”*** means a philosophy or an approach to policing which recognises the interdependence and shared responsibility of the police and the community in ensuring a safe and secure environment for all the people of the country;
- (b) ***“community police forum”*** means a community police forum (CPF) established in terms of the South African Police Service Act, 1995 (Act No.68 of 1995) and SAPS Interim Regulations for Community Police Forums and Boards;
- (c) ***“community safety structures”*** means other community initiated structures such as neighbourhood watches, farm watches, street committees, etc. These structures must have been established by CPF at a particular policing precinct;
- (d) ***“community patroller”*** means any community volunteer, affiliated with a CPF or forum referred to in community-safety structures, who in partnership with the police, (conduct patrols in a specific area using approved attire and equipment);

- (e) **“volunteer”** means a member of the community rendering voluntary services without any expectations to be remunerated or to receive any other benefit or consideration in return for rendering such services in terms of the South African Police Service Act, 1995 (Act No. 68 of 1995); and
- (f) **“reservist”** means a person appointed by the National Commissioner as a members of the Reserve Police Service to render services as a volunteer in support of the Police.

#### 4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Community in Blue concept is informed, *inter alia*, by the following:

- (1) **The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996**  
Section 206(3) (c) emphasises the promotion of good relations between the police and the community.
- (2) **Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act No 51 of 1977)**  
Makes provision for the procedure and related matters in criminal proceedings.
- (3) **Heraldry Act, 1962 (Act 18 of 1962)**  
Makes provision for the registration and protection of coats of arms, badges, other emblems, names and uniforms; and for other matters incidental thereto.
- (4) **National Strategic Intelligence Act, 1994 (Act No. 39 of 1994)**  
Provides for the security screening of persons on request of the SAPS or persons rendering a service to the SAPS.
- (5) **Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, 2004 (Act No. 12 of 2004)**  
Provides for the strengthening of measures to prevent and combat corruption and corrupt activities.

- (6) **Protection of Public Information Act, 2013 (Act No. 4 of 2013)**  
Ensures that institutions and individuals conduct themselves in a responsible manner when collecting, processing, storing and sharing another entity's personal information by holding them accountable should they abuse or compromise information in any way.
- (7) **Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999)**  
Ensure that financial management and internal control established for the department is carried out within the area of responsibility.
- (8) **South African Police Service Act, 1995 (Act No. 68 of 1995)**  
Provides for the establishment of a partnership between the police and the community through establishment of Community Police Forums.
- (9) **The Private Security Industry Regulation Act, (Act No. 56 of 2001)**  
Provides for the establishment of agreements with or obtain the systems of any department or organ of state to conduct or assist it in conducting any investigation or performing any other function in terms of the Act
- (10) **National Development Plan, 2030**  
Emphasises building safety through an integrated approach and community participation in community safety.
- (11) **National Instruction 3 of 2013 (Sector policing)**  
Provides for the implementation of the philosophy of community and partnership policing, by dividing a policing area into smaller manageable sectors to improve community interaction.
- (12) **National Instruction 3 of 2014 (The Reserve Police Service)**  
Provides to strengthen and support the Police in its constitutional responsibility as outlined in section 205 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, *reservists* will be utilized as force

multipliers.

**(13) South African Police Guidelines for the Establishment of Crime Prevention Partnerships**

Provides for effective management of crime prevention partnerships in the Service and to offer guidance to those individuals directly involved in managing crime prevention partnerships.

**(14) White Paper on Policing, 2016**

States that the posture of the service-oriented SAPS is one that embraces a community-oriented approach to policing.

**(15) White Paper on Safety and Security , 2016**

Provides for the active involvement and participation of citizen in crime and violence through development of strategies, implementation of plans and monitoring and evaluation on impact.

## **5. CURRENT STATUS**

There are myriads of social ills that confront South Africa; however, crime remains a pressing issue. Although there have been significant achievements in terms of policing since the advent of democracy in 1994, these achievements continue to be eroded by fluctuating levels of crime. The prevalence of crime in the country continues to undermine growth and development as well as the revitalisation of the economy.

Lack of interaction between different spheres of government, community structures (patrollers) and the police as stated in the Community Policing Strategy, 2018, reduce the effectiveness of community policing initiatives. Various community safety initiatives need to be integrated and orchestrated within the umbrella of the CPF, aligned to SAPS and within the CPF area of responsibilities.



## **6. OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNITY IN BLUE**

The objectives of the community in blue concept are to —

- (a) promote reporting of criminal activities and any suspicious behaviour in the communities;
- (b) increased visibility in order to deter criminal activities; and
- (c) active community participation in crime prevention initiatives.

The community in blue will also assume the objectives of the CPF and Board as stated in section 18(1) of the South African Police Service Act, 1995 (Act No.68 of 1995).

## **7. PRINCIPLES OF VOLUNTEERING AS A COMMUNITY IN BLUE PATROLLER**

(1) Volunteering as a community patroller within a patrol group that accounts to the local CPF is regulated in a way in which a community member can actively participate in the fight against crime without professional qualification or previous experience.

(2) **The following principles should be adhered to—**

- (a) Professionalism;
- (b) Accountability;
- (c) Dedication and commitment;
- (d) Honesty;
- (e) Transparency; and
- (f) Non-discriminatory practices.

## **8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PATROLLERS**

Community in Blue patrollers should get involved in structured community safety initiatives, projects and into a formal police-community partnership and will be utilised in the following capacities:

- (a) Proactive approach to the risk of crime and taking action to protect their own property and that of their neighbours. Such actions may include marking property, reporting suspected activities and improving home security, which reduce opportunities for crime and increase the risk of detection;
- (b) deter any anti-social behaviour through mentorship and shadowing;
- (c) performs a supportive role to social crime prevention actions;
- (d) participate in crime prevention initiatives and projects in the community;
- (e) enhance community based intelligence;
- (f) serving as the "eyes and ears" of the South African Police Service by identifying and reporting any suspicious behaviour, persons or activities and crime in the policing precinct to the South African Police Service (local Police Station);
- (g) account to the local CPF structures;
- (h) encourage community networks to support the identification and exposure of criminals and criminal activities in the community;
- (i) support crime prevention awareness campaigns launched by established community-safety structures, Community Police Forum, South African Police Service;
- (j) support environmental design initiatives with the intent to reduce opportunities for crime; and
- (k) Participate in the activities of the Community Police Forum and/or Sector Forum as part of the committee.

## **9. WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM A COMMUNITY IN BLUE PATROLLER**

- (a) Knowing and understanding the Code of Conduct and adhering to it;
- (b) understanding channels of communication and utilising them appropriately;
- (c) performing duties promptly and reliably;
- (d) keeping records and writing reports on work done as required;

- (e) protecting and utilising allocated resources responsibly;
- (f) always patrol with another registered patroller;
- (g) patrol in approved uniform and insignia; and
- (h) reporting to the CPF, Sector Forum and Sector Commander.

#### 10. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF COMMUNITY IN BLUE PATROLLERS

- (a) The *Department of Community Safety* at a provincial level is responsible for oversight through CPF structures. The process of recruitment at a precinct level will be directly carried out by the established CPF(SAPS and the community elected representatives);
- (b) CPF jointly with SAPS in the targeted precincts will activate processes of recruitment of community;
- (c) SAPS will assist with the process of screening of these volunteers;
- (d) In instances where a volunteer is found to be having a criminal record, SAPS should weigh the offence and jointly with the CPF Executive decide on the matter. A decision taken should be forwarded to the Department of Community Safety in writing. (Government has the responsibility to integrate rehabilitated offenders to their communities). Community Members qualifying to apply for expungement via Department of Constitutional Development and Justice – any person on list of sexual offenders will not be allowed;
- (e) The CPF will keep "Personal Files" (set of fingerprints; registration form; photograph; ID Copy; signed code of conduct; initial request for uniform; skills audit; copies of patroller and other training certificates) of all screened patrollers to be audited by the Department of Community Safety and updated annually;
- (f) All patrollers before commencing with patrolling must be registered with CPF and

- (g) Every patroller must sign the code of conduct for patrollers.

## 11 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- (a) All community in blue patrollers will be inducted by SAPS;
- (b) The CPF will on the basis of the outcome of the induction decide on the suitable period for deployment of patrollers;
- (c) The CPF and the Station Commander must within 30 days after the induction session compile a report and submit to the Cluster and Provincial Community Police Board; and
- (d) patrollers must be trained on Module 2 and 3 of the SAPS Crime Prevention Learning Programme (Community Policing and Sector Policing).

## 12. OPERATIONS OF PATROLLERS

- (a) Community in blue patrollers will be deployed within their own residential areas within a specific sector in a station precinct **unless redeployed on operational needs and availability** with invitation of respective CPF Executive and or by direction of the Station Commander;
- (b) there should be close liaison between the Sector Commander and community patrol groups;
- (c) community patrollers should be guided by the sector commander and designated member from the CPF responsible for patrollers and posted according to intelligence received from the station Crime Intelligence Office;

- (d) community patrollers have no police status and their legal authority is limited to that of an ordinary private individual aligned to the Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (sections 42 and 47);
- (e) On monthly basis, a report regarding the activities, challenges and successes of the patrollers must be submitted to the CPF structure; and
- (f) A patroller may not be deployed with a firearm and may not be in possession of a private firearm while performing such duties.

### **13. IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY IN BLUE**

- (a) Community in blue patrollers must wear an approved attire (e.g. reflector jacket) as prescribed by the CPF; and
- (b) The Community in Blue uniform should be returned to the Police Station when the member no longer serves in the committee.

### **14. MONITORING OF COMMUNITY IN BLUE PATROLLERS**

#### **14.1 Station Level**

It is the responsibility of SAPS through Sector Commanders and the CPF chairperson to ensure close monitoring of patrollers on daily basis. The following must be adhered to in order to ensure effective monitoring:

- (a) Each volunteer reporting for patrol must register on and off duty and the Sector Commander must keep and update daily log sheet;
- (b) patrollers to maintain and record events and incident in a pocket book approved by the patroller coordinator;
- (c) commanders must ensure adherence of patrollers to the developed log sheet and any deviation must be recorded.

The CPF is responsible for the effective running of the patroller programme within the precinct. This level of monitoring must be carried out through the following mechanisms:

- (a) Convening monthly meetings with Sector Commanders and patrollers;
- (b) providing feedback on operations;
- (c) ensuring patrollers concerns, short comings and operational requirements are discussed, minuted, finalised at monthly CPF Executive meetings and feedback provided to all patrollers; and
- (d) ensuring that issues of concern raised are dealt with at station level or immediately elevated to the next level.

#### **14.2 Cluster Level**

The Cluster Board is responsible of supporting and overseeing the effectiveness of the community patrol programme within their areas of jurisdiction. This level of monitoring will be achieved through the following:

- (a) Convening quarterly meetings with CPFs for feedback on the programme;
- (b) intervening timeously on patrollers issues elevated to this level ;
- (c) announced and unannounced visits to patroller operations; and
- (d) receive monthly reports from CPFs.

#### **14.3 Provincial Level**

The province through Provincial Community Police Board, and SAPS Provincial Commissioner are responsible for overseeing the effective running of the programme throughout the province. Monitoring must be carried out through the following:

- (a) Receipt of monthly reports from Cluster Boards;

- (b) announced and unannounced visits to patroller operations; and
- (c) Provincial Commissioners must include the patrollers' programme in the quarterly reports which are forwarded to the Divisional Commissioner: Visible Policing.

#### **14.4 National Level**

The Divisional Commissioner: Visible Policing must —

- (a) monitor implementation of concept through compliance visits;
- (b) assessment on the functionality through reports received from provinces; and
- (c) conduct analysis (through Component Crime Registrar) on crime reported.

#### **15. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Community in Blue patroller structure is accountable to the Community Police Forum of the specific police station.

#### **16. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- (a) Station Visits , Monthly and Quarterly Reports;
- (b) Community in Blue Street concept established – guiding documents;
- (c) Code of conduct drafted and signed;
- (d) Meetings, Minutes, Attendance registers;
- (e) Projects; and
- (f) Impact on crime.

## 17. SAPS' ROLE IN THE PROGRAMME

The South African Police Service must ensure that —

- (a) Crime Prevention activities undertaken by the Community in Blue patrollers are legal and within their constitutional mandate;
- (b) The Sector Commander must inform the patrollers about crime threats and crime pattern in the policing precinct;
- (c) The Sector Commander must explain the limits of the individual's power in administering justice within the patrollers;

**Note:** Although a citizen's arrest is allowed in certain situations, the police are still the *only* designated persons with legal power to perform law enforcement. In carrying out a citizen's arrest, the requirements as set out in sections 42 and 47 of the Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act No 51 of 1977) must be complied with;

- (d) The Sector Commander must ensure that the patrollers training is carried out;
- (e) The Station Commander and the chairperson of CPF to coordinate all patrols or any other activities that may be performed by the Community in Blue prior to the execution thereof; and
- (f) The Station Commander and the chairperson of CPF must ensure that regular meetings are held and the minutes are kept.

## 18. RESIGNATION BY PATROLLER

In an instance where a Patroller decides to resign for reasons known to him or her, a resignation letter will be written and be forwarded to the SAPS Station Commander *via* CPF. The CPF is expected to conduct exit interview with the patroller in question in order to identify real reasons that might have resulted in this decision for the purpose of improvement of systems. The CPF chairperson must ensure that the patroller returns his or her uniform.



## 19. REVIEW

These guidelines must be reviewed within three years of its implementation.

*It must be emphasised that the Community in Blue plays an important role not only in supporting Social Crime Prevention initiative but also in driving it.*