

- Media Release -

SAPS CRIME TRENDS AND STATISTICS



Business Against Crime South Africa welcomes the release of the annual crime statistics incorporating trends and statistics for the period 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007

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Business Against Crime South Africa commended the Minister of Safety and Security, the Honourable Mr Charles Ngqakula, and the South African Police Service (SAPS) yesterday for releasing the national crime statistics three months sooner than previously. The release was regarded as a step forward in terms of what business has been asking for over the years. Business Against Crime believes the prompt release of the crime statistics and trends will enable better analysis and response by both civil society and law enforcement.

"Taking into account the unacceptably high crime rates in our country, a quarterly release of crime statistics and crime trends would be ideal," said Siphiwe Nzimande, Chief Executive Officer, Business Against Crime.

The crime statistics released yesterday reflected an overall decrease of 3,4% in contact crimes. On the whole, in most of the other crime categories, the released crime trends largely correspond with information obtained from Business Against Crime's business sector associates.

"We are however concerned with the reversal of the positive gains made in previous years on murder and robberies with aggravating circumstances," said Nzimande.

"It is disappointing to note that this country's crime statistics and trends continue to reflect the prevalence of violence as a strong and growing feature," said Nzimande. "The increase in the murder rates and robbery with aggravating circumstances are particularly concerning. This state of affairs renews our sense of mission and determination to assist Government to successfully combat this scourge."

As previously reported, the partnership between business and Government in the fight against crime has been reinvigorated with the launch of the Anti-Crime Leadership Forum. It has the following four focused integrated work groups:

1. Mobilising society;
2. Reducing violent organized crime;
3. Reviewing the Criminal Justice System; and
4. Performance enhancement initiatives.

These working groups, which are co-chaired by Ministers and / or Deputy Ministers as well as prominent business leaders, have developed plans that have been approved by the forum. The implementation of these plans by Government and business, where necessary, are at different stages.

Business is united in support of Government's fight against crime - reflected by the backing of over 250 CEO's who represent the member companies of the Industry Alignment Forum.

"Government and business acknowledge the magnitude and complexity of these challenges and have sought to come up with plans that are not quick fixes, but which will result in sustainable long term solutions to the crime problem," said Nzimande.

The partnership is starting to make a meaningful impact on violent organized crime, particularly in the three identified priority areas of house robberies, vehicle hijacking and business robberies. This is regarded as an area of great urgency and requires making an immediate difference.

"As one of the examples of incremental and important progress that is being made, the SAPS led so-called flood and flush operations yielded over 5,400 arrests during the month of January to February this year," said Nzimande.

The search for suspects identified from clues at crime scenes have resulted in 298 arrests that are linked to 300 cases. In addition the business sector has completed and adopted the minimum standards to regulate the cash in transit industry going forward.

"With these developments, we are confident that our efforts in partnership and support of Government, and the community at large, will achieve better results in the months to come," said Nzimande. "Evidence from the information collected by the business associates in the first quarter of the next financial year, April to June 2007, confirms our cautious optimism. Sustained work and commitment will be required by all who are dedicated to the anti-crime struggle".



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Notes to the Editors

Business Against Crime South Africa has, since 1996, supported government in its fight against crime in order to make South Africa safe and secure. This it does in partnership with the business sector, and representative associations / organizations which focus on crime matters on behalf of the business sector. These associations include the South African Banking Risk Information Centre (SABRIC), the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA), the South African Insurance Association (SAIA), the South African Petroleum Industry Association (SAPIA), the Security Industry Alliance (SIA), the Casino Association of South Africa (CASA), the South African Council of Shopping Centres (SACSC), Business Unity South Africa (BUSU), the Johannesburg Securities Exchange (JSE), Chambers of Commerce and Industry South Africa, Chamber of Mines, the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (NAAMSA), the Retail Motor Industry (RMI), the South African Chamber of Business (SACOB), the South African Fraud Prevention Service (SAFPS), the Overseas Security Advisory Council, the Life Officer's Association (LOA).