

DA wants plan to tackle SAPS lawsuits



Cape Town - Police Minister **Nathi Mthethwa** must come up with a detailed plan to tackle a surge in lawsuits against the police, the Democratic Alliance said on Tuesday.

MP **Dianne Kohler Barnard** said Mthethwa should be summoned to Parliament to explain his plan.

"While we of course agree with the Minister for saying that tough disciplinary action must be taken and that command and control must be strengthened, it is of course long past the time that he turned his words into action."

Measures to stop the number of civil claims rising even further should include the "full demilitarisation of SAPS".

Mthethwa said earlier in the day he had instructed national police commissioner **Riah Phiyega** to act urgently to "avert and reduce" civil claims against officers under her command.

This came after it emerged that taxpayers had paid state and private lawyers over R300m to deal with civil claims between March 2009 and February 2012.

The minister said: "We need to close this gap by identifying training needs of our police, and, where appropriate, take tough disciplinary action against those who abuse the law."

Kohler Barnard said this was not a new problem, as the money allocated to contingent liabilities (money put aside for unforeseen events, including court cases) had quadrupled over the last six years.

"It has increased from R5.3bn in 2006 to R20.5bn for 2011/2012... The bulk of this figure is made up of civil claims against the police amounting to R14.8bn."

Kohler Barnard said this was directly linked to the militarisation of the police, which had led to increased brutality.

The police have in recent weeks come under scrutiny after the death of taxi driver Mido Macia.

Nine police officers in Gauteng face charges of murder after Macia was handcuffed to the back of a police van and dragged along a street in Daveyton last month. He died hours later in the Daveyton police station's holding cells.

The SA Human Rights Commission said in a statement earlier this year that it noted with concern "the increasing number of reports of excessive use of force by the police



Roland Frost - March 13, 2013 at 02:10

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dianne kohler barnard, as usual, has no idea what she's speaking about. When demilitarisation occurred in Saps a few years ago discipline went for a loop. Ask any of the old hands. I'm one of the many that left the Service as a result of this. The horrendous deeds committed by members result from poor discipline.

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Ramon Allen - March 13, 2013 at 06:42

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Roland ... Is it from poor discipline - or no discipline?

And referring to comments further up. We had a police training system that worked. Why was it changed...incompetent officers being appointed and taking control? These guys are still in control. Get rid of them.

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Samuel Slyme - March 13, 2013 at 07:56

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Got worse when they were remilitarised by the goon with the big black hat and his lazy boss. The root of the problem is the same as in the entire civil service: appointments and promotions not on ability and track record, but on the basis of pigment, gender -- and loyalty to the Party. The police were brutalised under apartheid by racist appointments and promotion. Same thing now -- just the other way round.

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Roy Chambal - March 13, 2013 at 04:05

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All of u Daam Assess are completely missing the point Dam Ass (DA) Party was trying to make u all over each others throat being racist and no comment on actual matter - Plz Black & Whites are both racists here we all

know this and we both affected by Negligent no good for nothing trigger happy useless unreliable unfit Cops so plz lets tackle the Problem here not each others colour or perfect spelling we all make spelling error sometimes

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Stefan Van Der Spuy - March 13, 2013 at 07:48

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Spelling errors if you're a dumbo and didn't go to school.

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Samuel Slyme - March 13, 2013 at 07:42

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Nathi's idea of a Plan is a Plan to use the courts to stop anything resembling a Plan.

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simon.lapping.79 - March 13, 2013 at 08:17

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Remember , the command structure begins at the top. Lead by example , so to put it simple , start disciplining your Station Commanders from where the brutality occurs. Then discipline will start filtering down very quickly as station commanders realise they are answerable for their troops actions

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John Smith - March 13, 2013 at 13:51

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Train the thick thug FORCE to become PEACE OFFICERS who are the SERVANTS of the people. They will then get the cooperation of the people who basically want PEACE and SECURITY, which is their basic RIGHT!

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