

SAFETY AND SECURITY



INTRODUCTION

Safety and security are essential pre-conditions for human well-being and are key priorities in the Western Cape. Safety and security are essential to the development of the province and the realisation of the *Ikapa Elihlumayo*. The two main causes of an unsafe environment are human activities (including crime and accidents) and natural disasters, the latter often exacerbated by poor planning. This chapter covers both of these aspects.

The Western Cape has the highest crime rates in the country. IN addition, it is also regarded as a high risk area in terms of disasters and is subject to regular incidences of natural and man-made disasters, including droughts, flooding, oil spills, terrorism, fires in informal settlements and wildfires.

The provincial Department of Community Safety is responsible for the safety of the community and has recently had some success in combating crime and meeting its mission statement "... to promote safety and security through a process of civilian oversight and crime prevention strategies". The focus of disaster management in the province has recently shifted from a reactive to a more proactive approach, where greater financial and human resources are directed towards Hazard Risk Management, i.e. risk prevention/reduction, preparedness, response/relief and recovery/reconstruction. This new approach has contributed to the improved management of disasters in the province.

The priority issues reported on in this theme are:

- Crime levels; and
- Disaster Management.

DRIVERS AND PRESSURES

Some of the driving forces and pressures that influence safety and security in the Western Cape are described below, presented separately for crime and disaster management:

Crime

The underlying causes of crime are largely related to socio-economic and political factors such as poverty, lack of education, unemployment and income inequality (Shaw, 1998 and Department of Community Safety, 2003). Other widespread factors such as poor town planning and inadequate street lighting increase the vulnerability of communities to crime, particularly in the sprawling urban informal settlements and around public transport nodes. There are, however, a number of specific driving forces and pressures causing increased levels of crime in the Western Cape. These include:

Proliferation of firearms – The high rate of violent crimes correlates with the increased number of firearms in the province. The Western Cape has the highest rate of recorded cases of illegal possession of a firearms and ammunition in the country (Leggett, 2004).

Unemployment – Although lower than in the rest of the country, the Western Cape has high unemployment levels.

Alcohol and drugs – The Western Cape has the country's highest rate of arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, as well as the highest rate of recorded drug crimes (NIMSS, 2002). Drug abuse can feed property crime as addicts often steal to pay for their habits.

Police coverage – Although the Western Cape has moved to a more appropriate level of police coverage (i.e. one

policeman to every 343 civilians), many of the new police recruits are inexperienced and their effectiveness in the field is still not adequate. In 2001, the Western Cape had 11 833 police officers. There are currently more than 16 000 officers South African Police Service (SAPS) in our province and the PGWC aims to boost this number to 18 000 by the end of this year – a more than 50% increase in two years (PGWC: Budget Speech, 2004: www.polity.org.za).

Gangs – The Western Cape has an unrivalled history of gang activities, consistently fuelling violent crime. Gang related violence and associated organised crime have found a niche in the Cape Metropolitan Area, but are gradually extending into the rural areas.

Criminal Justice System – In the Western Cape there is a huge backlog of criminal cases, with relatively few cases leading to prosecution. There is a widespread perception that the Criminal Justice System is not an effective deterrent to criminality, leading to citizens sometimes taking the law into their own hands.

Disaster Management

The factors underlying the occurrence of disasters have become increasingly inter-linked, but the leading causes are:

Population growth – Population growth increases the pressure for residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial development, which results in inappropriate development and/or occupation of marginal, high risk and vulnerable land.

Poor Planning – Unplanned or poorly planned urbanisation results in overcrowded and under-serviced settlements and increases environmental, technological and natural risk to inhabitants. Inappropriately located (e.g. in floodplains) and densely-populated informal settlements, compounded by

inadequate drainage systems and poor shack construction, make many communities highly vulnerable to disasters.

Climate change – Global changes to climate are influencing the frequency and intensity of natural disasters.

Local climatic and physical conditions – The Western Cape's climate makes it prone to the occurrence of regular veld fires.

ISSUE: CRIME LEVELS

STATE

The following two indicators are used to depict the state of crime in the Western Cape:

- Comparative provincial crime rates; and
- Crime categories in the Western Cape.

Comparative Provincial Crime Rates

The Western Cape has the worst crime problem in South Africa and, in most of the serious crime categories; also has the fastest-growing crime problem (see Figure 16.1). Intentional injuries (i.e. homicide) accounted for 8.1% of all deaths in the province in 2000, which was the fourth leading cause of death (after heart disease (12%), stroke (8.8%), HIV/AIDS (8.4%)). In males it was the leading cause of death (MRC 2004).

There is a marked disparity between provincial crime levels, with the Western Cape having four and a half times more recorded crime (per 100 000 of the population) than Limpopo. For 17 of the 22 serious crime categories tracked by the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Western and Northern Cape had the worst crime rates in the country in 2002/2003.



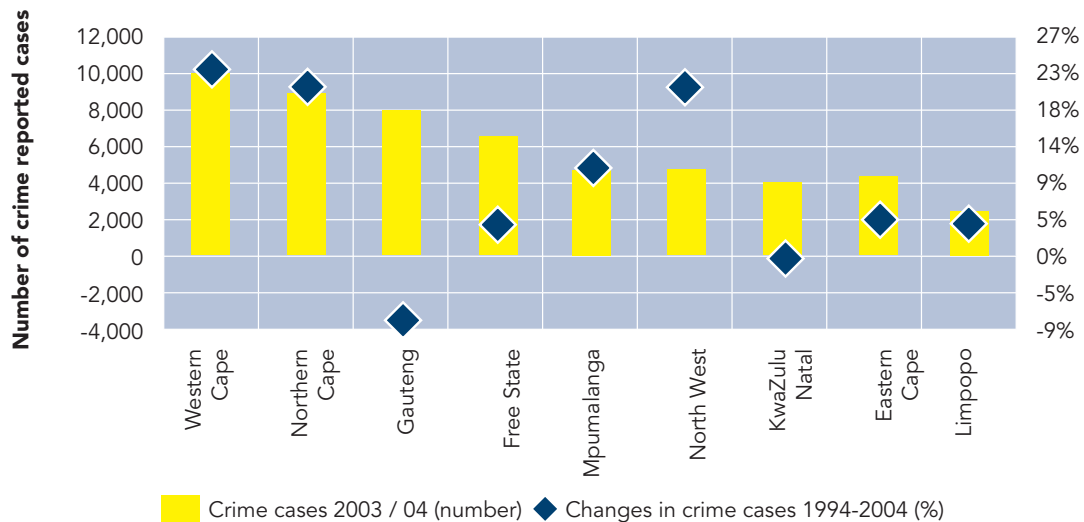


Figure 16.1: Comparative provincial crime rates (CIAC, SAPS)

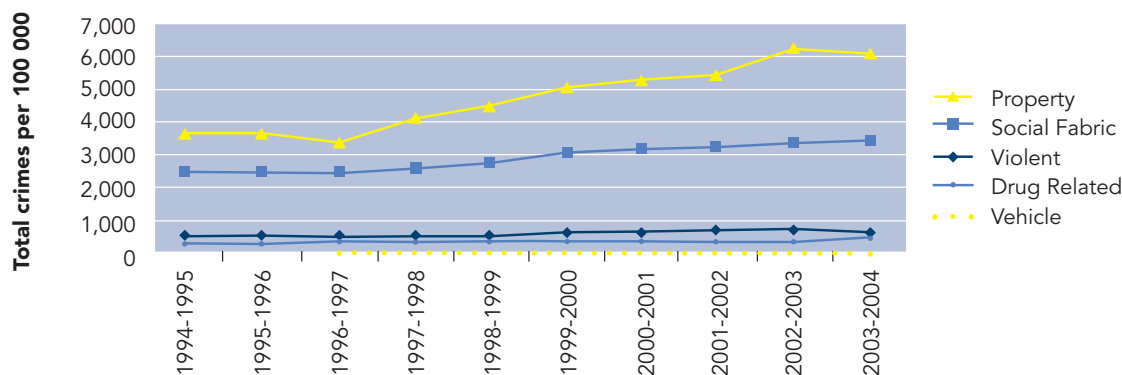


Figure 16.2: Five main categories of crime in the Western Cape (Source: CoCT, 2002-2004)

According to the SAPS, national crime rates have stabilised since 1997/1998. The National Victims of Crime Survey (2003) supports this, showing crime to have dropped slightly (1.6%) between 1998 (when the previous survey was conducted) and 2003. In 2003/2004, the Western Cape experienced an overall decrease in the incidence of crime, compared with a consistent increase since 1997/1998 (SAPS 2005). Figure 16.1 indicates that after increasing initially, crime rates have stabilised over the last four years.

Despite SAPS statistics showing a 36% increase in crime in the Western Cape between 1996 and 2004, 46.3% of people in the Western Cape do not believe crime has increased in the past three years. Conversely, the feeling or perception of personal safety has declined markedly since 1998 and the number of people feeling unsafe when outside at night has more than doubled nationally.

Crime categories in the Western Cape

The main trends in provincial crime levels are depicted in Figure 16.2 and reveal that:

- Violent crime⁴⁴ (including murder, attempted murder, rape⁴⁵, culpable homicide, robbery with aggravating circumstances) increased by 43.3% between 1994/1995 and 2003/2004. It accounts for 5.9% of total crime and shows a recent decrease (compared to the substantial increase depicted in 2002/2003);
- Property related crime (i.e. all forms of burglary and theft) and social fabric crime (including assault with grievous bodily harm, arson, common assault and illegal firearms) comprise 57.1% and 32.7% of all crime respectively;
- Drug related crimes account for 4.2% of total crime in the province and is increasing sharply (44.4%); and
- There has been a 10.6% rise in incidences of vehicle theft.

44. Violent crime may also be referred to as "contact crime".

45. In some studies rape is listed as a social crime and in others as a violent crime. For the purposes of this report it has been categorised as a violent crime.

In 2002/2003, the Western Cape had by far the nation's highest rate of murder; 80 murders per 100,000 citizens. In 2003/2004, the figure dropped to 56 murders per 100 000. By comparison, in 2002/2003, Gauteng (rated second highest) had 59 murders per 100,000, with the national average being 51 (which dropped to 43 in 2003/2004). By comparison the national average in Russia is 15, Namibia 45 and Columbia 63 (www.nationmaster.com).

In addition, for 2002/2003 the Western Cape had the country's highest levels of common and indecent assault, as well as common (but not aggravated) robbery. Aside from violence, the province also suffers from the highest overall rates of property crime, including the highest rates of commercial burglary, residential burglary, theft from vehicles, common theft and malicious damage to property.

IMPACTS

High levels of crime:

- Discourages local and foreign investment, resulting in an increase in the number of unemployed young adults;
- Creates an insecure public with a poorer quality of life;
- Causes human injury and drives people to emigrate;
- Deters tourists, resulting in income loss and fewer jobs being created in this industry; and
- Reduces confidence in the criminal justice system.

ISSUE: DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Recent disasters in the Western Cape involving disaster management teams include the fires in Muizenberg, Hout Bay, Kayamandi and Joe Slovo informal settlement, the Montagu floods, the Sealand Express incident and rail accidents at Cape Town Station and Muldersvlei. Repairing



damage caused by disasters is expensive and, for example, the floods in the Southern Cape region in December 2004 cost the government an estimated R60 million (Carstens, *pers. comm.*).

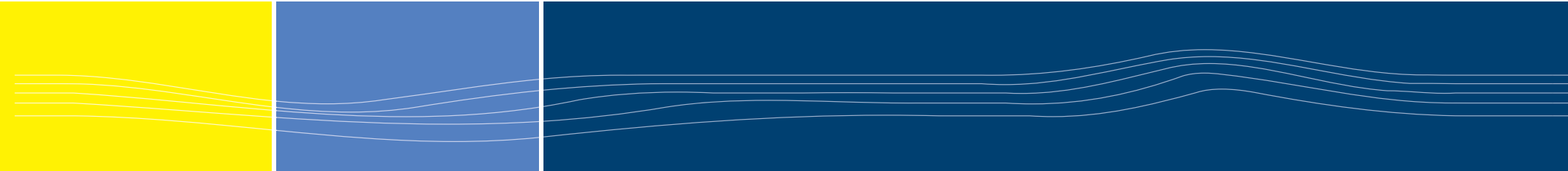
STATE

The provincial government is regarded as an international leader in the management of disasters and is progressing well towards implementing the Disaster Management Act (Act No. 57 of 2002) (DMA), which has a two year implementation plan (Carstens, *pers. comm.*). The province has a Technical Forum and is in the process of establishing an Advisory Forum and Inter Governmental Monitoring Committee. The province has initiated the development of a provincial Disaster Management Framework, which aims to outline the province's approach to Disaster Management and Risk



Reduction. The draft framework has been completed and will be approved after the national framework is enacted.

The Western Cape has started to plan for a Disaster Management Centre. The Disaster Information Management System will be managed from the centre and will immediately alert provincial disaster management teams to incidents. The findings of the Western Cape Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (2002) (RAVA) and satellite and IT connectivity will be key features vital to the success of the centre.



Disaster incidents in the Western Cape

The incidence of disasters in the Western Cape is increasing. Overall, there was an 84.1% increase in the total number of disasters recorded (i.e. 479 to 882) in the province over the 2002/2003 to 2003/2004 financial years. The most prevalent disasters are fires (wildfire and structural fires) and fires and floods in informal settlements.

The number of people and shacks in informal settlements affected by fires and floods is also increasing. In 2002/2003, 7 443 shacks and 23 701 people were affected, compared to 11 783 and 34 721 respectively in 2003/2004 (see Figure below) (CoCT, 2002 -2004).

Although insufficient to determine possible trends, the data shows that the number of incidents in informal settlements is increasing. This may be ascribed to the fact that more people inhabit these areas, but recent changes in the local climate may also be a contributing factor.

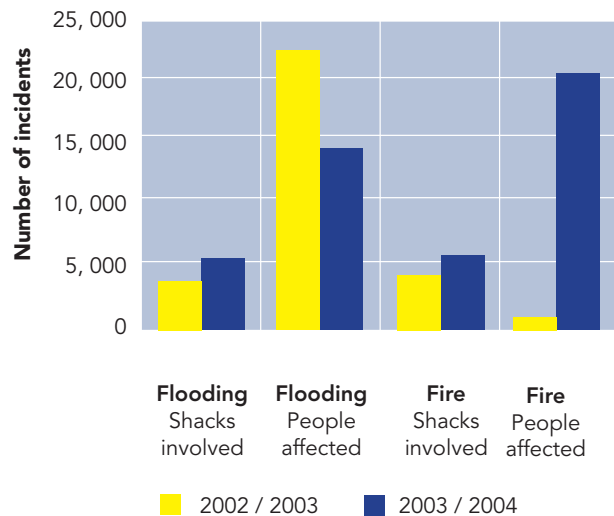


Figure 16.4: Number of disasters in informal settlements (Source: CoCT 2002-2004)

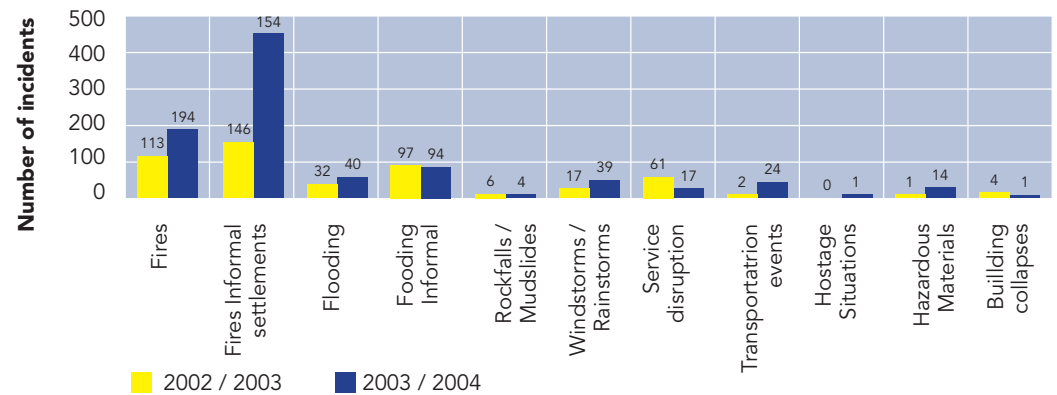


Figure 16.3: Number of disaster Incidents in the Western cape (Source: CoCT 2002-2004)

IMPACTS

- Disasters affect the economic growth of the province by necessitating spending on responses and remediation, rather than on priority sectors such as education and policing.
- The livelihoods, especially of the poorer sections of the population living in rural/high risk areas, are affected

by disasters and poor disaster management.

- Natural disasters cause loss of life and damage to property, which is worsened when disaster management plans are ineffective or poorly implemented.
- Disasters destroy and damage essential services.
- Natural disasters, which are often exacerbated by human influences, result in permanent environmental damage and biodiversity reduction.

Summary and Status of Indicators Used in this Chapter

Safety and Security Indicators	How we are doing?	Comments
Comparative provincial crime rates	☹️☹️	The Western Cape has the highest crime rate in the country.
Crime categories in the Western Cape	☹️	Social (e.g. abuse), vehicular and drug related crime have increased. Violent crime has decreased recently, but is still the highest in the country.
Disaster Incidents in the Western Cape.	☹️	Incidences of disasters in the province are increasing.

Indicators Suggested For Future Monitoring

- Future reports should include an indicator that tracks vulnerability to disaster. This would probably require a composite indicator that takes a number of factors into consideration.

RESPONSES

The table below summarises some of the legislation and other initiatives that have been implemented in response to the crime and disaster management issues discussed above:

Crime

National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Crime Prevention Strategy/ National Crime Combatting Strategy • SAPS' Operation Crackdown • Enactment of Prevention of Organised Crime Act 121 (1998) • Anti-Terrorism Bill drafted • New Domestic Violence Act 116 (1998)
Provincial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministerial Task Team on Community Safety • Provincial Task Team on Taxi Violence • Prevention of Marine Poaching Project • Safer Schools/ Bridge the Fence Programme • Road traffic safety (Arrive Alive operations) • Hands Off Our Children programmes • Safety on Trains • Bambanani Unite Against Crime Campaign • Community Police Forums and Patrol Officers' Schemes • Neighbourhood Watch and Farm Watch volunteers • Cape Renewal Programme • Anti-gang and drug abuse strategy • Chrysalis Academy • The Committee Peace and Safety Project • Truancy Reduction Project • Other SAPS crime operations, e.g. Sethunywa and Tswikila

Disaster Management

National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Veld and Forest Fire Act, 1998 (Act 101 of 1998) • Disaster Management Act (Act no. 57 of 2002) • Interministerial Committee on Disaster Management • Disaster Management Advisory Forum • National Disaster Management Framework • National Disaster Management Centre
Provincial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ukuvuka Campaign • Provincial Disaster Management Centre Disaster Management Teams • Financial contributions to Working for Fire Programme • TEAM campaign (training, education, awareness and marketing in informal settlements) • Risk and Vulnerability Assessment • Satellite and IT connectivity • Increase number of provincial disaster managers
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate fire management, especially in fire prone areas • Appoint Disaster Management Practitioners/Specialists

LINKS

This chapter has the strongest links to:

Economics and Poverty – A person is more likely to become involved in crime depending on their economic status. Additionally, poorer/rural communities are at greater risk as many live in areas that are vulnerable to disaster events.

Tourism – High levels of crime have a negative impact on tourism.

Health – Human health is correlated with living conditions and levels of exposure to crime as well as natural disasters.

Education – Education provides people with greater opportunities and discourages them from becoming involved in crime.

CONCLUSION

The Western Cape has the highest crime levels in the country. However, the crime levels have recently stabilised both nationally and provincially. A promising statistic is the recent significant drop in the provincial murder rate.

The urban areas of the Western Cape continue to register more crime than rural areas, while affluent areas have more property related crime than poor disadvantaged areas more serious violent crime.

The Western Cape is also regarded as a high risk area in terms of disasters and is subject to regular incidences of natural and man-made disasters, including droughts, flooding, oil spills, fires in informal settlements and wildfires. The number of natural and man-made disasters doubled in the province between 2002 and 2003. The recent stabilisation of crime in the Western Cape could be attributable to increased (and more effective) SAPS operations, other crime prevention programmes and community cooperation and partnerships. Sustained efforts are however required to ensure that crime levels continue to decrease. The provincial government is also progressing well towards implementing the Disaster Management Act No. 57 of 2002, and has a two year implementation plan that will help to manage and reduce the Western Cape's vulnerability to disasters.

DATA NOTES

- In terms of tracking the state of disaster management in the Western Cape, there is currently a lack of quality long term data.

