

Good evening, Molweni, Goeienaand, Salaamu-Alaikum, Shalom, Namaste.

It feels good to be back together in person, to celebrate the amazing work that our Directorate does in service of Cape Town on a daily basis.

Tonight, we recognise colleagues who have been nominated in a number of categories, including bravery, outstanding service, team of the year, supervisor of the year, department of the year, departmental officers of the year and directorate officer of the year.

I've seen some of the nominations, and it fills me with incredible pride, to see in black and white, the tales of grit, determination, bravery and all round service delivery excellence. What makes it even more significant, is that these nominations represent just a fraction of the successes that Safety and Security can rightly crow about – and while our performance is illuminated on an all too regular basis through the various platforms like our Portfolio Committee meetings, CIVOC, Council and the many thousands of media articles each year, the individual tales of brilliance that we will hear about tonight just add a layer that is priceless.

Because while we have to applaud the efforts of our Directorate leadership as they steer this ever-growing vessel, we would not be where we are without the contributions of those at the coalface.

It warms my heart when I receive messages of thanks from community members, or Neighbourhood Watches or other spheres of government or industry, commending members of staff for an act of service, courtesy or kindness ... we remain very fortunate in Cape Town to have a Safety and Security Directorate that exemplifies service delivery, especially when rampant corruption and mismanagement are all too often the headlines that cloud the reputation of some of our peers in other parts of the country.

Just the other day, I received a text from someone, expressing their sincere thanks to two of our Law Enforcement officers who responded to a complaint about a neighbour's dangerous dog. The crux of the compliment was how courteous these officers were, and patient in their explanation to the complainant's elderly mother about how the situation could potentially be resolved.

There were no high speed chases, no obvious acts of bravery ... just staff members who, in their interactions with the public, were true ambassadors for the City. And this anecdote proves the importance of making the arrests, and catching the bad guys, but also just making our residents feel heard, and be seen ... and I know that these sorts of examples abound ... but many go untold.

So, while we are here tonight to celebrate and acknowledge a few dozen colleagues who have been nominated for exceptional work, I want to take a moment to acknowledge each and every staff member in our Directorate, and thank you for the dedication ... the commitment and the contribution to the cause of building a safer and more prosperous Cape Town for All.

It's also important to remember that while safety and security is our core business, Events is the other big ticket item ... and they are back with a bang after grappling with the impacts of the pandemic.

To the team, you continue to keep Cape Town on the podium as a leading events destination. The ongoing plaudits that the city receives, are testament to the work that you put into making ours a desirable destination.

Already this month, we have hosted two very successful Events, namely the return of the Festive Lights Switch On event, as well as the Cape Town Sevens – both without a major hitch, and for that, we thank you – it speaks to your professionalism, experience and love for this City.

I wish you well for the rest of the festive season, which of course includes the return of the Minstrel and Cape Malay Choir Events, and in 2023, there are even bigger things to come, including the T20 Women's World Cup in February, the Formula-E Championship thereafter and the Netball World Cup in July 2023.

As these events indicate, there is never a dull moment in Safety and Security, and when I cast my eye over the achievement for this past year, the list is exhaustive ... but allow me to highlight just a few successes:

- We have managed to expand our EPIC team, on the road to further integration of the system amongst our different departments – it is no surprise that we have no less than 6 delegations in the last 2 months wanting to come see how to be the best we can here in Cape Town

- We are making progress with the expansion plans for the Metro Police Training college, and we continue to be a leader in providing training to staff across all of our enforcement services
- And, we have just realised the return of the Shotspotter gunfire detection technology, with the first site to go live in Hanover Park at the beginning of this month
- Law Enforcement has expanded even further this year, with the introduction of, amongst others, 100 officers dedicated to the CBD, the rollout of the Facility Protection Officers initiative early next year and of course the further expansion of LEAP, which has helped us to more than quadruple our arrest rate
- Between Metro Police and Law Enforcement, they removed more than 200 firearms from our streets in the space of a year and in the last 20 months made 674 arrests for firearms and ammunition
- Our Traffic Service recorded more than 2.5 million fines in the last financial year, as well as increases in both vehicle impoundments and arrests
- We also had the very successful launch of the Highway Patrol Unit in November that will no doubt

add to our arsenal as we face the rigours of the peak festive season

- Our Fire Service continues to make significant gains in keeping our residents safe, in spite of very challenging circumstances ... but recently, a series of meetings with the Masiphumelele community saw very positive progress in working together to keep that particular community safe from fires.
- In this year, we also signed a new collective wage agreement with the unions for the Fire Service which settled a decade long dispute we were eager to resolve
- Our Disaster Risk Management Team continues to punch way above its weight – apart from the day to day activities of education and awareness, and fire and flood responses, it has also been exemplary in its facilitation of the Disaster Coordinating Team for load-shedding, but also the recent 75-hour water shutdown in parts of the Cape Flats, which was the biggest undertaking of its kind by our Water and Sanitation Department, and called for creative thinking and leadership
- Our PECC also continues to grow in stature ... it turned 22 earlier this year, and with just 67 call-takers

working on a shift basis, they answered more than half a million calls during a 12-month period. During this period, the Caremonix integration also took place, with the system going live in 2021.

- In this year, PECC has also started playing an integral role in our weekly communications to the public, with very good success, and helping to elevate the service's public profile.
- Our ability to collect and analyse data for the purposes of crime prevention, and resource deployment has been significantly boosted with the introduction and settling in of our Strategic Information Management Service, and the continued work of SSIU – and we are seeing the results, with acknowledgment and reliance from SAPS on this expertise to address some very serious concerns like the kidnapping and extortion crisis we are facing, as well as numerous prominent cases
- And then of course there are the administrative highlights that don't often catch the limelight or the sexy media headlines ... like budget expenditure, compliance with processes and regulations relating to the various municipal and legislative processes, filling of vacancies and ordering uniforms, vehicles

and other resources ... but without which, we would not be able to do the work effectively

Our Directorate is growing, but it remains fast-moving, nimble and able to adapt to the many challenges that come its way. With each passing year comes new expectations and demands, and while it can be challenging, the fact that each and every one of you get up every morning to try again, and try some more, and find a new way to do things, is all that we can really ask for.

My commitment to each and every one of you is to continue fighting for resources to make your jobs easier – we have seen significant increases in budget allocation for Safety and Security in recent years.

We are excited about how we can increasingly introduce technology to act as a force multiplier to our staff on the ground ... we want to remain at the forefront of innovation and progress as a City. Because that is how we will help make a change in the lives of our residents, and our visitors. Safer streets equal economic investment, which in turn equals job creation, and that can mean even lower crime rates.

Every day in Safety and Security, we start where we are, we use what we have and we do what we can. Step by step we have set the bar for what is possible in local government – you have defined the best that enforcement and emergency services can be at local government level and even beyond.

We have a long way to go, but I am convinced that it is doable, and I hope you do to.

Thank you.