



'By the Grace of God'

Staffing Correctional Centres

Amanda Dissel



HIV/AIDS • GENDER EQUALITY • HUMAN RIGHTS



Johannesburg Office:

62 Juta Street, 3rd Floor
Braamfontein, 2017
PO Box 31166,
Braamfontein 2017
T: +27 11 339 3589
F: +27 11 339 6503

Cape Town Office:

Westminster House, 4th Floor
122 Longmarket Street
Cape Town 8001
T: +27 21 423 7088
F: +27 21 424 5645
Agincourt Health Centre

Bushbuckridge Office:

Agincourt Health Centre
Bushbuckridge Local Municipality
Mpumalanga, South Africa
T: +27 (0) 13 795 5076

Email address:

info@genderjustice.org.za

Web:

www.genderjustice.org.za

Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/SonkeGenderJusticeNGO>

Twitter

@SonkeTogether

MenEngage Alliance

www.menengage.org

2016



Acknowledgements

The research was facilitated through Mr Hlongwane, the internal guide from the Department of Correctional Services (DCS). He assisted in gathering the data necessary for the research and facilitating contact with the correctional centres. I am also indebted to the staff of the DCS Policy Coordination and Research unit for facilitating the research permission.

Thanks should go to all the research participants who gave generously of their time and who willingly shared their views and experiences with us.

I would like to thank Emily Keehn, formerly of Sonke Gender Justice (Sonke), for initiating this research project and for her support, particularly during the initial phases of the research. From Sonke, special thanks are due to Nomonde Nyembe and Katy Hindle, who attended each research meeting and field visit, and who valuably assisted in the collection of data and commenting on the final report. I would also like to thank Marlise Richter for facilitating the final phase of the research report.

The research was made possible with the support of the MAC AIDS Foundation, Open Society Foundation for South Africa, and the Finnish Embassy of Pretoria.



Acronyms used

DCS	Department of Correctional Services, now the Department of Justice and Correctional Services
EAP	Employee Assistant Programme
EST	Emergency Support Teams
GPSSBC	General Public Service Sectoral Bargaining Council
ICCV	Independent Correctional Centre Visitors
JICS	Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services
OSD	Occupational Specific Dispensation
POPCRU	Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union
PSA	Public Servants Association
PSCBC	Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council

¹Amanda Dissel was an independent consultant at the time of conducting the research.

Contents

Acknowledgements	03
Acronyms used	03
Executive summary	06
1. Introduction	09
2. Methodology	12
3. Background	16
3.1. The 7-Day Establishment and New Shift System	16
3.2. Staff numbers	19
3.2.1. International norms	19
3.2.2. Staffing trends in South Africa	20
3.2.3. Approved staff establishment in the DCS	23
4. Findings at the Correctional Centres	27
4.1. Witbank	27
4.1.1. Shift patterns	28
4.1.2. Daily programme	30
4.1.3. Short staffing	31
4.1.4. Staffing of the units	34
4.2. Johannesburg Management Area	35
4.2.1. Johannesburg Female Centre	36
4.2.2. Johannesburg Medium A (Remand Centre)	42
4.3. Groenpunt	50
4.3.1. Maximum Security Centre	51
4.3.2. Groenpunt Youth Centre	51





5. General Concerns Emanating from the Centres	62
5.1. Shift pattern	62
5.2. Challenges posed by short-staffing	63
5.3. Impact of short-staffing on inmates	64
5.4. Emergencies and standby staff	68
5.5. Security	71
5.6. Unit Management	71
5.7. Absenteeism and leave	72
5.8. Staff recruitment and retention	73
5.9. Staff morale	74
5.10. Employee Assistance Programme	74
5.11. Gender Balance	75
5.12. Centre based vs non-centre based	77
6. Recommendations	78
7.1. Increase staffing levels	78
7.2. Revising the shift pattern	78
7.3. Night shift	78
7.4. Assess the deployment of women in male correctional facilities	79
7.5. Improve communication mechanisms between shifts and divisions or teams	79
7.6. Inmates need to be actively engaged for a full working day	79
7. Conclusion	81

Executive summary



On 1 July 2009, the staffing of correctional centres was shifted from a 5-Day Establishment (correctional staff provide a full-service five days a week, Monday to Friday) to a 7-Day Establishment (correctional staff provide a full-service seven days a week). Sonke Gender Justice commissioned this report to try and understand how the new establishment was being implemented, and the impact it was having on the daily lives of inmates. Of particular concern was the potential impact that this system had on the safety of inmates in correctional centres, especially when they were in their cells after lock-up.

Three Management Areas were examined, namely: Witbank Management Area, Johannesburg Management Area (including the Johannesburg Female Centre and Medium A Remand Centre), and Groenpunt Management Area (including the Maximum Security Centre and Juvenile Centre). The research showed that there were severe staff shortages at all three of the Management Areas. Many of the staff felt that, due to short-staffing, they were able to run a relatively trouble-free centre only 'by the grace of God'.

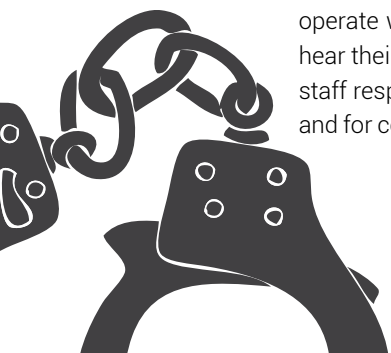
The research has shown how profoundly shift patterns impact on staff numbers (a full staff complement is not available each day) and on staff morale, and how, as a result of low staff morale, many staff members were leaving for 'greener pastures'. In turn, staff numbers had a serious impact on staff and inmate safety, and on inmates' living conditions. The impact on inmates' living conditions included the amount of time they spent locked up in their cells, whether they were allowed their legally required hour of exercise daily, the number of meals they received per day, and their access to developmental, rehabilitative and healthcare services. In other words, staff numbers, of both in security officials and professionals such as nurses, doctors and psychologists, profoundly affected the ability of correctional centres to fulfil their constitutional and legislative obligations.



There is therefore a need for inmates to be able to sound an alarm if something happens, and for correctional officials to be able to respond without jeopardising their safety or that of the centre



There are many concerns related to low staff numbers. For example, research has shown that sexual violence is more likely to occur during lock-up, when correctional centres also generally operate with only a skeleton staff complement, who are unable to assist inmates even if they hear their calls for help. Most often, it is only when an inmate is 'bleeding or dying' that security staff respond. There is a need for inmates to be able to sound an alarm if something happens, and for correctional officials to be able to respond without jeopardising their safety or that of the





centre. This cannot and does not happen if there is not a full staff complement. Communication and continuity of services between shifts is also of concern, as sometimes, information (such as an inmate needing to see a doctor) is not communicated to the next staff member coming on duty. This results in long delays in inmates' access to services.

A number of concerns were raised by the DCS staff members interviewed: some staff members felt that there were no, or few, promotion opportunities; others articulated grievances over not being paid to work overtime; and staff members expressed general exhaustion from working long shifts and being overworked because of insufficient staff to carry out all necessary duties. All of this contributed to poor work morale. It was felt that this was exacerbated by absenteeism and leave taken, particularly unscheduled leave, which often resulted in an additional burden on those staff members who did come to work. In male correctional facilities, male staff members reported feeling that they had to carry the workload of female staff members because of concerns over the safety of female staff members and inmates' privacy concerns.

The research showed that there were issues with the filling of vacant posts, which need to be addressed. Staff numbers need to be increased urgently. Because of staff shortages, case management staff were being utilised as security staff. Since case management officers are responsible for monitoring and tracking inmates' rehabilitative progress, their utilisation as security staff meant that they had little or no time for case management and this was of grave concern.

On the basis of this research, it would appear that the 7-Day Establishment is little different from the 5-Day Establishment in respect of its effect on inmates. This report therefore makes the following recommendations:

- ▶ Staff numbers should be increased (particularly security officials and case officers), entailing the shortening of the turnaround time for appointing new staff.
- ▶ DCS should revert to the 5-Day Establishment, with a full complement of staff working Monday to Friday, and a reduced staff complement on weekends, with staff being paid overtime pay on weekends and public holidays.
- ▶ With regard to night shifts, the first night shift should have a bigger staff complement, to allow inmates to be unlocked for longer periods of time. There should also be adequate staff on the night shift to allow staff to respond adequately in an emergency.
- ▶ The deployment of female staff in male correctional facilities should be reassessed. Inmates need to be actively engaged for a full working day. Currently, inmates spend most of their day locked up. This contributes to frustration and anger among inmates, which can erupt into violence or aggression. Therefore there is a need for more facilities for programmes and staff to run them.



Introduction



On 1 July 2009, the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) (now referred to as the Department of Justice and Correctional Services) moved from a 5-Day Establishment to a 7-Day Establishment.² This meant that no more would it operate a full service only five days a week – Monday to Friday – but that all of its services would be available seven days a week. The 7-Day Establishment was introduced partially in order to facilitate the implementation of the aims of the 2005 White Paper on Correctional Services;³ to render a 365 day service to inmates. This included fulfilling the legislative requirement that inmates are served three meals a day, and the implementation of the Inmate Rehabilitation Path.

Perhaps more pragmatically, the new dispensation was an essential cost-cutting measure to reduce the costs of paying staff members extra to work on weekends. According to the then Correctional Services Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, the 7-Day Establishment would 'go a long way in curbing over expenditure that saw us beginning this financial year with a R500 million deficit mainly caused by weekend overtime claims.'⁴

In 2007, the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council reached an agreement, Resolution 1 of 2007 (Resolution 2007, or Resolution 1), regarding the Occupation Specific Dispensation of Public Officials (OSD), specifying that public officials would no longer be paid overtime to work weekends. It specified additional payment for work on Sundays, public holidays and at night.⁵

While intended as a cost-saving measure, the 7-Day Establishment came with its own costs. In 2009, the DCS settled an agreement with the unions regarding the implementation of Resolution 2007. In terms of GPSSBC Resolution 2 of 2009 (Resolution 2), the DCS established two streams of employees – that of the 'centre based correctional official' and the 'non-centre based correctional official'. Centre based correctional officials are required to work for 45 hours a week, whereas non-centre based officials work for 40 hours a week. An Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD) was introduced to provide for the salary structure, differentiated salary scales, career-pathing, pay progression and grade progression for centre based and non-centre based staff.⁶ The DCS also undertook to pay a once-off amount to all staff in recognition of the overtime payment they had not received.⁷ Additional costs were expended in moving people to new notches in accordance with the new OSD, and in salary increments based on a recognition of prior working experience.⁸

² Speech by Correctional Services Minister, the Honourable Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, during the Department's budget vote 18, National Assembly, Cape Town, 30 June 2009. Available on <http://www.gov.za/speeches/view.php?sid=1001>, accessed 10 July 2014. However, it should also be noted that discussions around the 7-Day establishment occurred much earlier, and the DCS 2005/2006 Annual report states that the DCS moved to the 7-Day establishment on 1 April 2005. (DCS (2006). Annual Report for 2005/2006, p 15.)

³ Department of Correctional Services. (February 2005). White Paper on Corrections in South Africa.

⁴ Speech by Correctional Services Minister, the Honourable Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, during the Department's budget vote 18, National Assembly, Cape Town, 30 June 2009. Available on <http://www.gov.za/speeches/view.php?sid=1001>, accessed 10 July 2014.

⁵ Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council, PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2007. Available online on <http://www.pscbc.org.za/documents/Agreements/2007/Resolution%201%20of%202007.pdf>, accessed on 10 June 2014.⁶ Paragraph 3.1. of Resolution 2/2009.

⁷ General Public Service Sectoral Bargaining Council. GPSSBC Resolution 2/2009, para 14. The once-off payment of R7500 to 38,546 officials cost the Department R284 million. See Department of Correctional Services Progress Report on the Implementation of OSD and 7 Day Establishment. Presented to the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services on 17 November 2009. Available on <http://pmg.org.za/report/20091118-meeting-department-correctional-service-dcs-office-auditor-general-dc>, accessed on 10 July 2014.

⁸ The cost was R693 million and R2,9 million respectively. Mokoena, T. (4 September 2012). Presentation to the Portfolio Committee on OSD and 7 Days Establishment, p. 17. Available online on <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20120904-follow-interaction-executive-and-senior-management-department-correct>, accessed 10 July 2014.

In order to deal with the deficit in funds, the Department imposed a moratorium on the filling of certain posts,⁹ which was implemented on 1 August 2008.¹⁰ In 2009, it also received a 595 million rand funding injection from the National Treasury.¹¹

The 7-Day Establishment might save on overtime payment, but its critics argue that its effective implementation requires a greater number of staff.¹² According to the DCS, its current staffing structure was approved in 2003/2004, which required 60 000 posts.¹³ At the time of the implementation of the 7-Day Establishment in 2009, the number of approved posts was 46 306, of which only 41 343 were filled.¹⁴ As a result of the DCS being unable to fill a large number of posts, National Treasury suspended the funds needed to fill these posts until DCS could demonstrate an ability to fill them.¹⁵ Treasury also insisted that the DCS reduce the number of posts reflected on its Persal system to that reflected in its strategic plans.¹⁶ Posts were thus reduced to 41 500. The DCS has never been able to meet the required number of 60 000. By March 2013, the approved establishment had increased from the 2009 number to 43 862 posts of which 42 057 were filled – still far short of the 60 000 ideal.¹⁷

Sonke Gender Justice Network (Sonke) is a non-governmental organisation, which works towards the advancement of human rights and democratic governance. It is concerned with the prevention of gender-based violence and the spread of HIV/AIDS. Sonke is also concerned with the safety of inmates in correctional centres and aims to prevent sexual violence and abuse of inmates.

Despite the cost, there appears to be no turning back from the 7-Day Establishment. Sonke is interested in examining the 7-Day Establishment, in order to understand how it is being implemented, and what its impact is on the lives of inmates. Sonke is particularly interested in the potential impact that the 7-Day Establishment could have on increasing the amount of time that inmates are unlocked in a correctional centre, and whether this could enhance inmates' safety, particularly in cells after lock-up.

In Sonke's experience, inmates are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse and other forms of violence when locked up in communal cells.¹⁸ One of its assumptions is that inmate safety in correctional centres could be better protected through having inmates engaged in useful activities for the greater part of the day, and through reducing the amount of time inmates are locked up in their communal cells.¹⁹ In order for this to happen, correctional institutions need to have both the physical infrastructure as well as a sufficient number of suitably qualified and trained staff to keep inmates active and busy, and to ensure their safety and well-being, both while they are out of their cells, as well as when they are in them. A second assumption is that once inmates are locked in their cells, whether this be during the day or after official lock-up periods, effective monitoring and response times could reduce the violence that occurs in cells.²⁰

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Department of Correctional Services. Annual Report for the 2008/2009 financial year, p. 47.

¹¹ Department of Correctional Services (DCS) Quarterly Report, 7-day Establishment & Occupation Specific Dispensation & Healthcare issues progress reports, 17 November 2009. Available on <http://pmg.org.za/report/20091118-meeting-department-correctional-service-dcs-office-auditor-general-dc>, accessed on 10 July 2014.¹² See for instance The Public Servants Association, Presentation to the Parliament Portfolio Committee on the DCS Budget and Strategic Plans for 2013/2014, 5 March 2013.

¹³ Department of Correctional Services. (2011). Annual Report for the 2010/2011 year, p. 23.

¹⁴ Department of Correctional Services. Annual Report for the 2008/2009 financial year, p. 154.

¹⁵ Department of Correctional Services. (2011). Annual Report for the 2010/2011 year, p. 23.

¹⁶ Letter from Chief Director: Justice and Protection Services, National Treasury to the National Commissioner, Department of Correctional Services, 9 December 2012.

¹⁷ Department of Correctional Services. (2013). Annual Report for the 2012/2013 year, p. 94.

¹⁸ See for example, Gear, S and Ngubeni, K. (2002). Daai Ding: Sex, Sexual Violence and Coercion in Men's Prisons. Johannesburg: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

¹⁹ See for instance, Gear, S. (2015) In Their Boots: Staff Perspectives on Violence Behind Bars in Johannesburg, Johannesburg: Just Detention International – South Africa (JDI-SA)

²⁰ See Gear, S. (2015) In Their Boots: Staff Perspectives on Violence Behind Bars in Johannesburg, Johannesburg: Just Detention International – South Africa (JDI-SA)





Sonke commissioned this research to understand how the 7-Day Establishment, and overall number of the staff establishment, affects the daily experience in correctional centres. It wanted to understand whether the 7-Day Establishment, combined with the number of staff employed across the country, as well as in individual centres, contributes to the fulfillment of the legislative and policy objectives of the Department of Correctional Services, and its impact on inmate safety.

The study sought to do this through understanding the staffing establishment at selected correctional centres, looking at how these overall staffing numbers are distributed through the correctional institution and in the units accommodating inmates. It sought to understand the impact of the 7-Day Establishment, and of short-staffing at the centres, on the way that centres operate and how they manage the daily lives of inmates. It sought to understand what impact the 7-Day Establishment had, and the impact that short-staffing at the centres has on the way that centres operated and how they managed the daily lives of inmates.



Sonke commissioned this research to understand how the 7-Day Establishment, and overall number of the staff establishment, affects the daily experience in correctional centres.



2

Methodology



This study utilised a combination of methodologies, including a desktop study and key informant interviews. The key aspect of the research involved key informant interviews with staff at five correctional centres, and a review of information on the staff establishment at each centre. The researcher obtained permission from the Research Directorate of the Department of Correctional Services to undertake this study. Permission was granted on the basis that the researcher would not interview inmates, and would not visit the units accommodating inmates. The study thus relies on the perspective of the DCS (Department of Correctional Services) and its staff.

Desktop study

A brief desktop study was conducted of the key legislative and policy documents informing the human resource requirements of the DCS. This included a review of Annual Reports of the DCS and Judicial Inspectorate of Correctional Services. A brief review of international literature on staff-to-inmate ratios and the staffing requirements of penal institutions was also undertaken.

Key informant interviews


An interview was held with the Director of Human Resource Management at the DCS national office, who was also appointed as the internal research guide for this study. We also intended to interview senior officials from relevant employee representative bodies. Despite many requests to the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU), which represents the majority of officials in the DCS, we were unable to secure an interview. However, we did interview the Chief Negotiator for the DCS from the Public Servants Association (PSA). Interviews were also held with senior officials from the management area responsible for the five correctional centres visited.

Correctional centres

The research was initially intended to sample three correctional centres situated in Gauteng and the Western Cape. It was intended that the centres should be representative of different types of correctional centres, housing different inmate population groups. Instead, the DCS suggested that the study be conducted in as many of its regions as possible. This was so that a diverse group of institutions could be selected. Ultimately, in order to meet the requirements, five correctional centres were selected in three regions, in consultation with the DCS:

- Gauteng region: Johannesburg Female Centre and Johannesburg Medium A for un-sentenced male inmates. Both of these are situated in the Johannesburg Management Area. The Johannesburg Female Centre was visited on 2 and 3 October 2013, and Medium A was visited on 23 and 24 October 2013.
- Mpumalanga, Limpopo and North West region (MLM): Witbank Correctional Centre. Witbank Correctional Centre for male inmates was visited on 25 and 26 September 2013.



- 
- Free State and Northern Cape region: Groenpunt Correctional Centre – the Maximum Centre and Juvenile Centre were selected. Both accommodate male inmates. The Juvenile Centre was visited on 7 and 8 October 2013, and the Maximum Centre on 8 and 10 October 2013.

The research was conducted at each correctional centre over a period of one to two days. The researcher was assisted by two researchers from Sonke Gender Justice (Sonke): Nomonde Nyembe and Katy Hindle.

Interviews:

At each correctional centre, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants using an interview guide. Interviews were hand recorded, and where permission was given by research informants, these were also digitally recorded. Interviews were requested with the following group of officials, though the researchers were unable to meet with all of them at all of the centres visited.

1. Area Commissioner, Human Resource Manager/Manager Corporate Services
2. Head of Correctional Centre
3. Human Resource Manager at each correctional centre – Centre Coordinator Operations or staff support
4. Centre Coordinator Corrections
5. Head of Security at each correctional centre
6. Focus group with custodial staff/security officials at each correctional centre (3 - 5 members)
7. Focus group with unit managers (3 - 5 members)
8. Focus group/interviews with professional staff (social workers/psychologists/educationalists)
9. Interview with shop stewards/ union officials (PSA and POPCRU)
10. Independent Correctional Centre Visitors (ICCVs)

Researchers were not able to meet with all the respondents at each centre, but did meet with representatives of most of the stakeholder groups. In total, interviews were held with more than 80 respondents.

For reasons of confidentiality, the names of the respondents have not been cited in this report.

Documents:

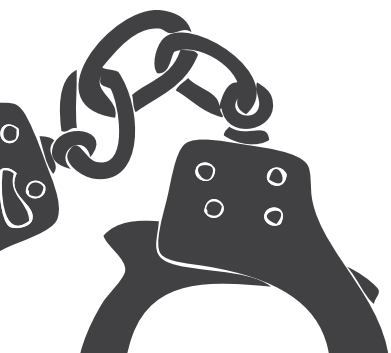
Each correctional centre was requested to provide the researchers with copies of the following documents or information:

1. Approved, funded and filled staff numbers or establishment, per staff category, for the 2012/2013 year;
2. Shift patterns in use at each correctional centre;
3. Duty lists for the 2012/2013 year. However, this was too cumbersome a process, and the centres were instead asked to provide their duty lists for the months of July and December 2012;

4. Daily records of leave and absenteeism at the selected correctional centres, and the reasons given therefor, in the most recent financial year (2012/2013, if available), for the relevant correctional centres (Z 168 register). However, this proved to be too cumbersome a method, and the centres were instead asked to provide their 'primary measurements' for setting out the number of members taking leave and the number of leave days taken for each month in the financial year. However, these were not collected in a consistent manner across correctional centres, making comparisons difficult;
5. Records of staff absenteeism due to disciplinary reasons, in the most recent financial year (2012/2013, if available), for the relevant correctional centres. This is contained in the primary measurements document for each centre;
6. Statistics on assaults on inmates, deaths of inmates and any riots or security incidents at each correctional centre for the 2012/2013 financial year, and what time of day/night these occurred (G 365 register).



The key aspect of the research involved key informant interviews with staff at five correctional centres, and a review of information on the staff establishment at each centre. The researcher obtained permission from the Research Directorate of the Department of Correctional Services to undertake this study







3.1. The 7-Day Establishment and New Shift System

Under the previous 5-Day Establishment, staff worked a five day week, Monday to Friday. Because prisons are an institution where people require 24 hour attention, seven days a week, provision was made for a skeleton staff to work after hours at night and over the weekend. They were paid to work overtime on these days. Services were kept to a minimum due to minimal staff numbers. The 7-Day Establishment requires a full staff complement during each day, and a skeleton staff at night after the inmates have been locked up. Saturdays and Sundays become normal working days, though officials are paid an additional rate for working on Sundays and public holidays.²¹ However, professional staff (educationalists, social workers, and medical staff) work a five-day week. Medical staff are paid for overtime work.

Initially, the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) proposed a two 12-hour shift system (12 x 2) for each 24-hour period, and this was agreed upon by unions and management.²² Essentially, this would entail one staff shift working for 12 hours in the day, and another shift working 12 hours at night (from 06h00 to 17h59, and 18h00 to 05h59).²³ Over the course of two weeks, centre based staff would work 96 hours by working on shift for four days and three days off.²⁴ By October 2009, the DCS reported that 56 percent of centres had adopted this system.²⁵ This system was later challenged by the unions and became the subject of industrial action, and was abandoned as a mandatory shift pattern.²⁶

According to the DCS, there were advantages for staff in this system. They would have more time off to spend with their families and to rest, which should contribute to a reduction in absenteeism and sick leave. It envisaged that officials would save on transport costs and that their shifts would start and end when public transport was more likely to be available.²⁷

Inmates would benefit, as there would be more time in the day to comply with the implementation of programmes and work opportunities. The structured day programme, setting out daily activities, could be implemented. Legislative requirements around the serving of meals would be fulfilled.²⁸ According to the Correctional Services Act (111 of 1998), food must be served at intervals of not less than four and a half hours, and not more than six and a half hours, except between the evening meal and breakfast when there may be an interval of not more than 14 hours.²⁹

²¹ According to Resolution 1 of 2007, an official who ordinarily works on a Sunday gets paid 1.5 of his or her basic salary (para 9.6), and 2 times the basic salary for work on a public holiday (para 9.7).

²² Mokoena, T. (4 September 2012). Presentation to the Portfolio Committee on OSD and 7 Days Establishment, p. 17. Available online on <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20120904-follow-interaction-executive-and-senior-management-department-correct>, accessed 10 July 2014, p. 13.²³ Resolution 1 of 2007 states that depending on an agreement between the parties and relevant bargaining council, night work can be considered as from 19h00 to 07h00 or from 18h00 to 06h00 (para 9.9.1).

²⁴ Department of Correctional Services Progress Report on the Implementation of OSD and 7 Day Establishment. Presented to the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services on 17 November 2009. Available on <http://pmg.org.za/report/20091118-meeting-department-correctional-service-dcs-office-auditor-general-dc>, accessed on 10 July 2014, p 19.²⁵ Department of Correctional Services Progress Report on the Implementation of OSD and 7 Day Establishment. Presented to the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services on 17 November 2009. Available on <http://pmg.org.za/report/20091118-meeting-department-correctional-service-dcs-office-auditor-general-dc>, accessed on 10 July 2014, p 16.²⁶ Mokoena, T. (4 September 2012). Presentation to the Portfolio Committee on OSD and 7 Days Establishment, p. 17. Available online on <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20120904-follow-interaction-executive-and-senior-management-department-correct>, accessed 10 July 2014, p 13.²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 20.

²⁹ S 8(6) of the Correctional Services Act, Act 111 of 1998.





This provision was intended to change the practice of serving two meals daily – one in the early morning after un-lock and the second in the early afternoon before lock-up. This was typically between 13h00 and 14h30.

The implementation of the 7-Day Establishment resulted in a number of challenges for management. Key among them was that there were insufficient staff members to implement the 7-Day Establishment, which will be discussed below. It also resulted in an increase in staff leave over weekends in order to extend the number of days off, and the shift system was not being uniformly applied.³⁰

One of the biggest challenges was that the full staff complement was not available each day. According to one senior staff member, only 25 percent of the staff were present during the work week, which reduced their capacity to react to security issues.³¹ Other concerns were that staff sometimes moonlighted for other jobs and were not available to the DCS.

Because of these challenges, in 2011, the DCS requested its various regions to utilise a shift system that best suited their respective circumstances, rather than the shift system that was initially proposed in the 7-Day Establishment system, as long as the system was in line with the principles contained in the Resolution reached at the Bargaining Council and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.³² Consequently, different correctional centres adopted different shift systems while attempting to operate within the 7-Day Establishment.

In 2011, the DCS made further proposals for the implementation of a shift system.³³ The proposed shift patterns were: '40-hour and 45-hour work weeks; 10-hours over a five day period in a seven day cycle; the 12 days on and two days off in a 14 day cycle; and the 10 days on and four days off in a 14 day cycle'.³⁴ These appear to be options that are still open for discussion.

A draft agreement between the DCS and unions, in 2012, proposed that in an 'ideal shift model':

- ▶ Centre based staff would work a 5 x 2 shift (five days on and two days off), where a person works 45 hours a week. This would be a 10-hour shift with lunch included.
- ▶ Non-centre based staff would work a 40 hour week – working eight hours per day, Monday to Friday.³⁵

³⁰ Department of Correctional Services Progress Report on the Implementation of OSD and 7 Day Establishment. Presented to the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services on 17 November 2009. Available on <http://pmg.org.za/report/20091118-meeting-department-correctional-service-dcs-office-auditor-general-dc>, accessed on 10 July 2014, p.17.³¹ Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services (12 May 2010). Security and related issues, available online on <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20100512-update-ms-wilson-matter-preliminary-inputs-portfolio-committee-member>, accessed 19 March 2011.

³² Submission by the Public Servants' Association to the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services: Department of Correctional Services 2011/12 Strategic Plan and Budget, 16 March 2011, available online on <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20110315-department-correctional-services-201112-strategic-plan-budget>, accessed on 18 March 2011.³³ Department of Correctional Services. (2011). Annual Report for the 2010/2011 year, p. 31.

³⁴ Department of Correctional Services. (2012). Annual Performance Plan 2012/2013, p. 20.

³⁵ Department of Correctional Services. (undated). Draft agreement on the implementation of 45 hour week and a 7-day establishment for the Department of Correctional Services.

In February 2012, the DCS proposed an interim shift model as follows:³⁶

Table 1: The 5 x 2 Shift Pattern

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W
A	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	W
B	O	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W

- Employees will work 45 hours per seven days and will only work Mondays to Fridays. These are for components that are centre based, but their services are not needed during weekends, e.g. the Case Management Committee and others.³⁷

Table 2: The 2/3/2 Shift Pattern

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W
A	O	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	O	O	O	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	O	O	O	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	O	O	O
B	W	O	O	W	W	O	O	O	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	O	O	O	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	O	O	O	W	W	W

- Employees will work 12-hour shifts starting from 06h00 in the morning to 18h00 in the evening, and from 18h00 in the evening to 06h00 in the morning.³⁸ According to this system, staff would work alternative shifts of two days on and two days off, or three days on and three days off.

The staff component is divided into two teams or divisions – Division A and Division B. This is so that the off-duty shifts of staff are staggered. As can be seen in the 2/3/2 shift pattern above, Division A is off-duty (O) while Division B is working (W). The arrangement for the 5 x 2 shift pattern seems to be to stagger the Saturday and Sunday shifts so that there is always one division on duty, at least one of the days. However, it also means that for three days of each week, only one division is on duty.

The shift system has still not been agreed upon by management and the unions.³⁹ The major stumbling block to reaching an agreement has been the failure by the DCS to pay employees an outstanding amount of R1.7 billion in overtime pay.⁴⁰

In order for these two shifts systems to work, it was also estimated that the DCS needed 18 430 additional posts, which would cost approximately R4.8 billion to implement.⁴¹

³⁶ Department of Correctional Services. (29 February 2012). 7 Day establishment: And Occupation specific Dispensation various Occupational Categories. Presentation to the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services, available on <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20120229-interaction-department-correctional-services-and-labour-unions-progre>, accessed 10 June 2014, p. 10-11.³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Email Correspondence with senior official (IR78), Public Servants Association, Chief Negotiator with DCS, 6 June 2014.

⁴⁰ Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services. (4 September 2012). Implementation of Occupational Specific Dispensation & 7-day Establishment: interaction with Department & labour unions. Available online on <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20120904-follow-interaction-executive-and-senior-management-department-correct>, accessed on 10 July 2014.

⁴¹ Department of Correctional Services. (29 February 2012). 7 Day establishment: And Occupation specific Dispensation various Occupational Categories. Presentation to the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services, available on <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20120229-interaction-department-correctional-services-and-labour-unions-progre>, accessed 10 June 2014, p.12.





3.2. Staff numbers

3.2.1. International norms

There seems to be no international norm regarding how many personnel should be employed to staff a prison, or what an 'appropriate' staff-to-inmate ratio would be. The more staff employed, the lower the staff-to-inmate ratio. Looking at international trends, the staff-to-inmate ratio varies considerably. In 2009, in the United States, the staff-to-inmate ratio in federal prisons was 1:4.9,⁴² though Congressman Cardoza indicated that the ratio was 1:5 in June 2012.⁴³ This seems to be slightly better in England and Wales, which reported that in 2010 there was a ratio of one officer to 3.03 inmates in the public sector, and one officer to 3.78 inmates in private prisons.⁴⁴ The ratio was slightly lower at youth inmate institutions, at 1:2.1, than at adult institutions (1:3.3), for 2011.⁴⁵ Staff-to-inmate ratios are similarly low in Australia, though figures were not available for all the states. In 2009, it was reported that there was one custodial staff member to every 2.1 inmates in Tasmania. In 14 adult jails in Victoria, the front-line staff ratio was 1:2.3, and in Western Australia it was reported that the average inmate-to-officer ratio is 2.1:1.⁴⁸

In 2011, the Council of Europe undertook a study looking at staff numbers, percentage of staff working inside penal institutions and staff-inmate ratios among all of its member countries.⁴⁹ The study very usefully broke down the ratio per inmate according to different categories of staff – custodial officials; medical and paramedical staff; staff responsible for assessments; staff responsible for educational activities; those responsible for vocational training; and other staff.⁵⁰ There was no overall staff-to-inmate ratio. The ratio of custodial official to inmate varied considerably across the member states. The average custodial official-to-inmate ratio was 1:4.2, with Azerbaijan the highest with one custodial official to 27.4 inmates, and the lowest was San Marino with one official to 0.3 inmates. In this case, however, there were only two inmates and seven officials, which does not make for a very useful comparison. Ukraine and Turkey were more useful comparators.⁵¹ Ukraine has a similar prison population to South Africa, at 158 532, with 13 231 custodial staff, and a custodial-to-inmate ratio of 1:12. Turkey had a staff-to-inmate ratio of 1:4.6. The United Kingdom, England and Wales, had a ratio of 1:2.8.

Although not much information is available, inmate-to-staff ratios are much higher in Africa than in parts of the developed world. In 2010, Uganda reported that its staff-to-inmate ratio was 1:9,⁵² and in Zambia, in 2011, there was a similar approximate staff-inmate ratio of 1:8.⁵³

⁴² American Federation of Government Employees, Statement to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security House Judiciary Committee on

Federal Bureau of Prisons at 3-4 available at <http://judiciary.house.gov/hearings/pdf/Glover090721.pdf> and Department of Justice, Statement to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security House Judiciary Committee on Federal Bureau of Prisons at 1, available at <http://judiciary.house.gov/hearings/pdf/Lappin090721.pdf>. This information is derived from a report Nyembe, N. (2012). Correctional Facilities staffing levels: a Global Study. Sonke Gender Justice.

⁴³ Congressman Dennis Cardoza, Congressman Cardoza Lauds Bureau of Prisons for Instituting Pepper Spray Pilot Program available at <http://cardoza.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=87&itemid=836>, cited in Nyembe, N. (2012). Correctional Facilities staffing levels: a Global Study. Sonke Gender Justice.

⁴⁴ Prison Reform Trust, Private Prisons – Way Forward or Costly Mistake available at <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/PressPolicy/News/vw/1/ItemID/124>, cited in Nyembe, N. (2012). Correctional Facilities staffing levels: a Global Study. Sonke Gender Justice.

⁴⁵ House of Commons Debates Hansard Written Answers for 17 Oct 2011 (pt 0004), Prisons Manpower available at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111017/text/111017w0004.htm>, cited in Nyembe, N. (2012). Correctional Facilities staffing levels: a Global Study. Sonke Gender Justice.

⁴⁶ Minister of Corrections and Consumer, Legislative Council Estimates Committee 24 June 2009 available at <http://www.kerryfinch.com/budget-qa-speeches/20090624a.html>, cited in Nyembe, N. (2012). Correctional Facilities staffing levels: a Global Study. Sonke Gender Justice.

⁴⁷ Sexton R, Prison Staff Level Cited on Rioting, available at <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/prison-staff-level-cited-on-rioting-20120216-1tbn9.html>, cited in Nyembe, N. (2012). Correctional Facilities staffing levels: a Global Study. Sonke Gender Justice.

⁴⁸ Western Australia Legislative Assembly, Questions to the Minister of Corrective Services 19 June 2008 available at [http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard%5Chansard.nsf/0/c10feac56b0e0cbac8257570000f9220/\\$FILE/A37%20S1%2020080619%20p4260b-4261a.pdf](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard%5Chansard.nsf/0/c10feac56b0e0cbac8257570000f9220/$FILE/A37%20S1%2020080619%20p4260b-4261a.pdf), cited in Nyembe, N. (2012). Correctional Facilities staffing levels: a Global Study. Sonke Gender Justice.

⁴⁹ Aebi, M.F., and Delgrande, N. (2013). Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics – SPACE I – 2011. University of Lausanne and Council of Europe.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 162.

⁵¹ There were no figures available for the Russian Federation which has the highest number of inmates in the Council at 780 100 inmates.

⁵² Ugandan Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, National Report for the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 at 24 available at <http://www.un.org/special-rep/ohrls/ldc/MTR/Uganda.pdf>, cited in Nyembe, N. (2012). Correctional Facilities staffing levels: a Global Study. Sonke Gender Justice.

⁵³ Interview by Amanda Dissel with Commissioner Percy Chato, of the Zambia Prison Service, 10 August 2011.

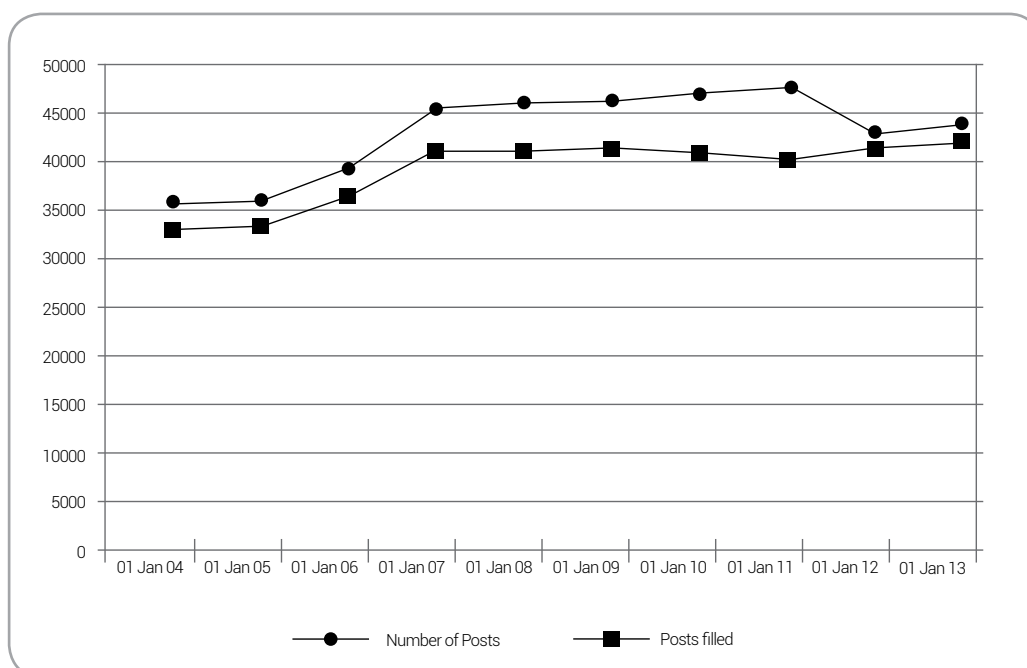
These figures generally do not indicate whether the total number of staff in the prison service is included in the calculation, or whether it is based on the number of prison-based staff only.

3.2.2. Staffing trends in South Africa

The number of staff employed by the DCS has steadily increased by 28 percent over the last 10 years. In March 2013, there were 42 057 staff employed. The number of approved posts has similarly increased, but saw a much larger increase up to 2011, when the number of posts available was at its highest at 47 446, 23 percent more than it was in 2004. However, given the financial constraints, and the cutting of posts by Treasury, the number of posts was reduced to 42 513 in 2012, and increased again to 43 862 in March 2013.

The vacancy rate in the DCS hovered between eight and nine percent until 2007, when it grew to 15.3 percent in 2011. It was this discrepancy, which again led to a reduction in posts. In 2013, the vacancy rate was reduced to 4.1 percent. This has largely been reduced because the number of approved posts has been reduced to a more affordable level.

Figure 1: DCS - Number of Posts Approved and Filled: 2004-2013⁵⁴



At the end of March 2013, the DCS was accommodating 150 608 inmates in its 242 correctional facilities.⁵⁵ Of this, 104 787 (or 70 percent) of inmates were sentenced, and 45 730 were unsentenced. Over 97 percent of inmates were male.⁵⁶ As can be seen from Figure 2 below, the inmate population has remained relatively stable after it dropped from a high of 187 640 in March 2004, to its lowest number in March 2013, while staff numbers have increased over the same period.

⁵⁴ Figures are taken from Department of Correctional Services' tables on employment and vacancies by programme in its Annual Reports – 2003/4 to 2012/2013.

⁵⁵ Department of Correctional Services. Annual Report for the 2012/2013 year, p. 32.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

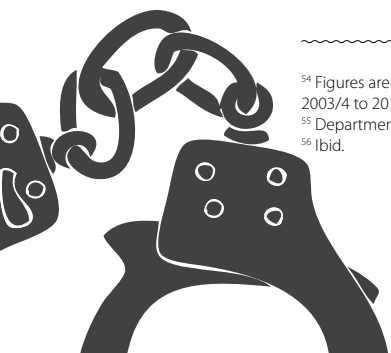
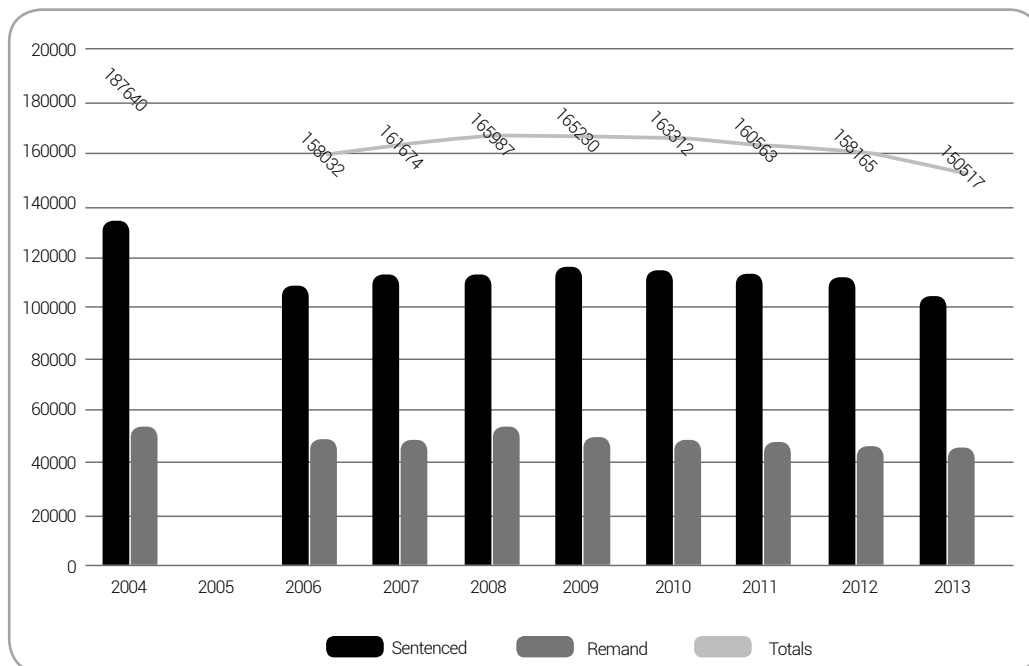




Figure 2: Occupation Totals as at 31 March 2004 to 2013⁵⁷



A traditional way of ascertaining the appropriate number of staff to employ in correctional centres is to look at the staff-to-inmate ratio. Overall, the staff-to-inmate ratio in South Africa is 1:3.58. At one staff member for every three and a half inmates, this appears to be a very healthy figure. This number may increase or decrease slightly, depending on the fluctuations in both staff and inmate numbers over time. However, many officials work in an administrative or managerial capacity, so this overall ratio does not give us an indication of the number of personnel working with inmates in correctional services – or the custodial officer-to-inmate ratio. This study sought to try and determine this number, and requested national information from the DCS to try and establish this. The questions asked of the DCS were based on a study conducted by the Council of Europe in 2011, with prison administrations in its 47 state parties.⁵⁸



The study very usefully broke down the ratio per inmate according to different categories of staff – custodial officials; medical and paramedical staff; staff responsible for assessments; staff responsible for educational activities; those responsible for vocational training; and other staff



⁵⁷ Figures for 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 are taken from the annual reports of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services. The figures for 2013 are taken from the DCS annual report for 2012/2013. It should be noted that the totals provided by the DCS and the JICS often differ. The totals for 2005 were unavailable.

⁵⁸ Aebi, M.F., and Delgrande, N. (2013). Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics – SPACE I – 2011. University of Lausanne and Council of Europe.

Based on information provided by the DCS, the staff complement can be broken down as follows:

Table 3: Staff Employed in the Department of Correctional Services: June 2013⁵⁹

	No. of staff	No. of staff in penal institution	% staff working inside penal institution	% of total number of staff	Council of Europe Mean percentage⁶⁰
Total number of staff	40 131 ⁶¹				
Staff at national correctional services administration	1 104			2.75%	2.9%
Staff at regional administration offices	579			1.44%	3.6%
DCS staff who work outside of penal institutions – in community corrections	1 825			4.5%	5%
Staff working in penal institutions	36 623			90.5%	92.1%
▸ Managers of penal institutions		464	1.2%	1.15%	2.7%
▸ Custodial staff, excluding managers		32 995	90%	82.22%	66.9%
▸ Nurses and medical doctors		920	2.5%	2.29%	4.4%
▸ Psychologists and social workers		578	1.57%	1.44%	1.6%
▸ Staff responsible for educational activities		465	1.3%	1.15%	3.9%
▸ Artisans		616	1.7%	1.53%	5%
▸ Chaplains		8	0.02%	0.019%	
▸ Others (not specified)		585	1.6%	1.45%	17.7%

According to the DCS, 90.5 percent of staff members work inside correctional institutions. This includes managers, custodial staff, medical staff, psychologists, educationalists, artisans and chaplains. Essentially, this includes everyone who is not based in the national or regional offices or working in community corrections.

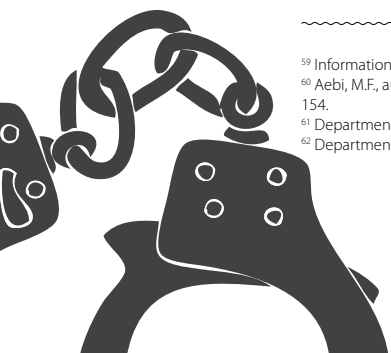
Compared with the figures produced by the Council of Europe, South Africa falls slightly below the average of 92.1 percent of officials who work inside penal institutions in the Council of Europe.⁶² It is also likely, however, that the South African figures do not accurately delineate those who work in prison administration as opposed to working inside the prison institution.

⁵⁹ Information provided on request, by Mr D Van Schalkwyk, Department of Correctional Services, June 2013.

⁶⁰ Aebi, M.F., and Delgrande, N. (2013). Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics – SPACE I – 2011. University of Lausanne and Council of Europe, p. 154.

⁶¹ Department of Correctional Services. Annual Report for the 2008/2009 year, p. 154.

⁶² Department of Correctional Services. Annual Report for the 2012/2013 year, p. 95.





According to information provided by the DCS, 90 percent of staff members working inside the penal institution are custodial staff. Comparing this with information from the Council of Europe, South Africa has more custodial staff than in Europe, where the average was 66.9 percent of staff who are custodial staff. However, Council of Europe countries average a 4.4 percent higher medical staff, compared with South Africa's 2.29 percent. They also have higher percentages of other professional staff: 1.6 percent of staff responsible for assessments and psychologists; 3.9 percent working with educational activities; and 5 percent working on vocational activities.

Calculating the staff-to-inmate ratio on figures provided for by the DCS for staff working inside penal institutions, suggests that there is one staff member working inside institutions for every four and a half inmates. The ratio for security and custodial staff to inmates is 1:4.56. However, there are a large number of administrative staff members working in correctional centres and at management areas, who are not represented in this table.

An important issue to look at is the changes in staffing numbers for different categories. The people who have the most daily interaction with inmates, and who are responsible for taking care of their daily needs and security, are the custodial staff. In later years, people who work with inmates are referred to as custodial staff and security staff. In 2009, the DCS reported that there were 38 585 custodial personnel.⁶³ However, by 2013, using the new staff categories, there were 2 348 custodial personnel and 31 814 security officials – a combined number of 34 162.⁶⁴ This amounts to a reduction of 11.46 percent over the four-year period.

3.2.3. Approved staff establishment in the DCS

The DCS has an approved staff establishment for every category of staff. The figure is based on the number of staff per inmate, or the number of contacts or duration of contact for the staff per inmate. A staff establishment was approved in 2003, and then updated in October 2010, taking into account the 7-Day Establishment.⁶⁵ Units of inmates are established at 240 inmates per unit. There should be one unit manager per 240 inmates, and one case management supervisor per 120 inmates (or two per unit).

In 2010, the staff establishment for case officers during the day shift was increased from the 2003 figure of one for every 30 inmates, to one for every 20 inmates in order to cater for the 12 x 2 shift system that had been officially adopted at the time. It was recognised that double the number of staff members were required. However, this figure is calculated according to the number of inmates left in the unit after inmates have left to attend Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and their work spans. The ratio at medium security centres is 1:30 inmates.⁶⁶ The approved establishment for security officials is 1:60 for minimum security centres; 1:40 for medium security centres; and 1:30 for maximum security and remand detainees.⁶⁷ There should be one member for every ten inmates held in single cell accommodation during the day.⁶⁸

In terms of night duty, there should be one member per unit of 240 inmates per night shift.⁶⁹

⁶³ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, revised 1 October 2010.

⁶⁴ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.19.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.21.

⁶⁷ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.23.

⁶⁸ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.20.

⁶⁹ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.5.

When inmates are taken out on work teams, the establishment was amended in October 2010 so as to cater for one member for every 20 inmates for medium security inmates who are A group (the highest privilege group) and monitors; 1:8 for general medium security inmates; and 2:10 for maximum security inmates.⁷⁰ When inmates are escorted to court or for external medical treatment, there should be one member per low-risk inmate, and two members per high-risk inmate.⁷¹

There is also an approved establishment for professional staff. There should be one medical doctor per parole board region,⁷² and one nurse or senior or chief per unit of 240 inmates.⁷³ In terms of psychosocial services, there should be one clinical or counselling psychologist per 900 sentenced inmates, and one psychological counsellor per 240 inmates.⁷⁴ There should be a minimum of two social workers per correctional centre, but beyond that, there should be one social worker per unit of 240 sentenced inmates; one social worker per 100 sentenced youth; and one social worker per 100 sentenced female inmates.⁷⁵

It should also be noted that the approved staff establishment is based on the approved inmate accommodation. This is an inaccurate measure since correctional centres have been overcrowded for decades, and all the centres visited as part of the research were accommodating more inmates than they were approved to hold.

⁷⁰ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.20.

⁷¹ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.5.

⁷² DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.41.

⁷³ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.42.

⁷⁴ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.45.

⁷⁵ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.46.

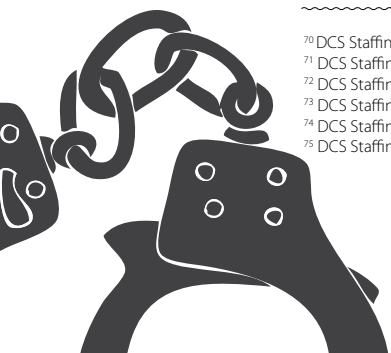


Table 4: Staff Employed at Correctional Centres

Centre	Inmate population at time of research	Total staff establishment	Financed posts	Total filled posts	Total staff working inside centre	Total manager ⁷⁶	Managers working inside centre	Custodial/security staff	Staff in the units	Medical and para-medical staff	Social workers & psychologists	Educationalists	Workshops & vocational training	Others including artisans and chaplains
Witbank Correctional Centre	1 605	626	425	419	337	24	10	396	272 ⁷⁷	10	5 social workers	3	32	142
Johannesburg Female Centre	885	211			211	15	15	198 ⁷⁸		9	1 psychologist 2 social workers	2	5	
Johannesburg Centre A	4 645	441			261	33	261	261		16	1 social worker			
Groenpunt Maximum	1 593	307	307	287	176	18	7	176		7 nurses	4 social workers	1	4	
Groenpunt Youth Centre	156	98	89	88	36	16	5	40		2 nurses	2 social workers	7	6	

⁷⁶ This includes Head of Correctional Centre, Centre Coordinators, Division Heads, Section Heads, Unit Managers.

⁷⁷ This includes case officers and security officials in the reception, Case Management Committee, Records, Money Office, Discipline, Hospitals and the accommodation units. This excludes the unit managers and case management supervisors.

⁷⁸ Figures provided by the staff at Female Correctional Centre indicated that there were 198 custodial or security staff. The figures provided by the Area management for March 2013 indicate that there were 179 case officers and security officials.





4

Findings at the Correctional Centres



4.1. Witbank

- ▶ Approved accommodation: 1 278
- ▶ Number of inmates: 1 605 (125% capacity)
- ▶ Approved staff establishment: 626
- ▶ Financed posts: 425
- ▶ Post filled: 419
- ▶ Shift pattern:
 - 12 x 2 (two days in and two days off)
 - 10 x 4 (ten days in and four days off)

Witbank Correctional Centre forms part of the Witbank Management Area.⁷⁹ The Correctional Centre, situated about 15 minutes outside the town, has capacity for 1 278 inmates. At the time of the visit,⁸⁰ there were 955 sentenced inmates, and 650 unsentenced inmates accommodated there. The total, at 1 605, meant that the Centre was 125 percent occupied.

There are two separate centres at Witbank – the 'old centre', which is an open camp housing mainly inmates working in the factories; and the 'new centre', which is the larger part, accommodating the majority of inmates, including unsentenced inmates. There are nine sections in the Centre (A – J), but there are six unit managers. Thus, unit managers are assigned to more than one section. Sections A, B, G and H are considered as one unit, and there are two unit managers assigned to this unit.

Sections D and E, which are in the old centre, have one unit manager each. Section J has one unit manager. Section C is the remand centre with 550 inmates.

Witbank had an approved staff establishment of 479, of which 425 posts were financed, and only 419 were filled at the time of the visit. It was thus operating at 87 percent of its approved establishment (see Table 4). There were six vacancies. However, there were additional

⁷⁹ This consists of Belfast Correctional Centre, Carolina Correctional Centre, Middelberg Correctional Centre and Witbank.

⁸⁰ The visit took place on 25 and 26 September 2013.

staff members working at the factories in Witbank who were accounted for under the Area Management establishment, and who did not appear on the Witbank staff establishment.

According to figures provided by a senior official working with human resource management, while there was an approved establishment of 49 managers, there were only 24 financed and filled posts. Ten of the managers were working in the correctional centre. Management consisted of the Centre Coordinator Operations, Centre Coordinator Corrections, Centre Coordinator Staff Support, and the Head of Correctional Centre. The Centre coordinators and Head of Correctional Centre (HCC) formed the executive of the Centre. The Divisional Head Personnel fell under the Correctional Centre Staff Support, and the Senior Correctional Officer. Nutrition fell under the Correctional Centre Operations. There was also a Divisional Head for Security, who was in charge of both internal and external security. The six unit managers fell under the Correctional Centre Corrections. The other managers were working in the factories, logistics and in other capacities.

There were 396 people categorised as centre based staff, which was more than had been approved (339). During the transition to the 7-Day Establishment, some of the staff working in the logistics section opted to become centre based staff. However, there was insufficient space for all of them in the Centre, so not all of them actually worked in the Centre. About six of them did not work with inmates or in the Centre at all.

4.1.1. Shift patterns

Like other centres, Witbank worked according to the 7-Day Establishment where only those working on Sundays and public holidays were paid overtime.

There were several different shift patterns operating at the Centre.

- ▶ The 12 x 2 shift. This means that staff work two days in and two days off (see Table 5 below). If they work in or out over a weekend, then they work for three days or are off for three days. They work for 12 hours a day, with a half hour off for lunch. Most of the security personnel work this shift pattern. Their hours are from 06h00 to 18h00, and from 18h00 to 06h00. However, to facilitate a smooth handover between one shift and the next, there is also a system of staggering the start and finish times during the day.
- ▶ The 10 x 4 shift pattern: These personnel work ten days continuously, and then have a four-day break. The break takes place from Friday to Monday. Staff working this shift pattern work nine hours a day. This includes some of the security and custodial officials, and case management committee (CMC) members. (See Table 6).
- ▶ Monday to Friday shift pattern: These are the office personnel, social workers, educationalists, nurses, factory staff, and those working in logistics. They work an eight-hour day. Nursing staff are paid overtime for work over weekends, but are expected to work standby shifts in the evening for no extra pay.
- ▶ The 12 days on and two days off shift pattern: The HCC at Witbank works on a 12 days on and two days off shift pattern – effectively having only alternative weekends off. To compensate for his many days, he works seven and a half hour days - or 45 hours a week.

All custodial and security staff were organised into two teams or 'divisions' – A and B. For staff working the 12 x 2 pattern, members of the A and B division never worked at the same time. Members of staff were divided roughly equally between the A and B division.



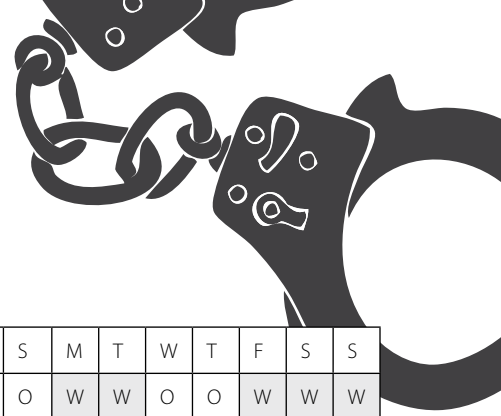


Table 5: The 12 x 2 Shift Pattern

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
A	O	O	W	W	O	O	O	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	O	O	O	W	W	O	O	W	W	W
B	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	O	O	O	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	O	O	O

Table 6: The 10 x 4 Shift Pattern

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
A	O	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	O
B	W	W	W	W	O	O	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	W

Staff working on the 10 x 4 pattern overlap for three days a week in every working cycle.

The 12 x 2 shift pattern essentially meant that only half of the establishment was on duty at any one time, so that one half of the staff component would never work together with the other half, except for those few on the 10 x 4 shift pattern. When the divisional heads were off, then a unit manager would stand in for them. A unit manager would therefore have to do his or her own job, as well as fulfilling the responsibilities of the divisional head.

The Centre sought to deal with some of the challenges posed by the shift system by ensuring that some of the security staff were working the 12 x 2 pattern (the majority), and some were working the 10 x 4 pattern. In addition, the staff working the 10 x 4 pattern staggered their starting and ending times each day so as to ensure that there were more staff available for crucial centre functions, such as lock-up and un-lock, and for the serving of meals.

In addition to the complicated shift patterns, centre based staff were working for 45 hours per week, whereas non-centre based staff were working for 40 hours per week (Monday to Friday only). For those working on the 12 x 2 shift pattern, their 45 hours were spread over a ten-day cycle.

Day shift and night shift

The staff component must be further broken down into a day shift and a night shift. The night shift needs to be much smaller than the day shift, as inmates do not have activities at night, and are locked up. Still, there must be sufficient security personnel to staff each unit or section, and one for each of the key gates.

Security staff working on night shift, who work 12-hour shifts, reported that because they worked on a skeleton staff they never had time to take a meal break during that shift.⁸¹ They could not leave their section unsupervised. If one security official did not arrive for their shift, then the Centre had to make do without them. A member would then be responsible for patrolling more than one section.

⁸¹ Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

Concerns with the shift system at Witbank

One of the difficulties with the 12 x 2 shift system at Witbank was that staff were never on duty for more than two or three days at a time. There was often a breakdown in the continuity of their services. If an inmate informed an official that they needed to go to the doctor or to see a social worker, and the security official was off duty the following day, that information would often not be properly communicated, or communicated at all, to the on-coming shift, with the result that there would be a disruption in the inmate's access to services. Staff also felt that inmates sometimes manipulated this system. If they knew that a member on one shift would be more lenient, they would wait until that member was on duty.

Generally, staff seemed satisfied working on the shift pattern, as it meant that those working on the 12 x 2 shift were off on every second to third day, and were able to spend more time with their families. However, they all acknowledged that it did create a shortage of staff by dividing the overall complement into two, and contributed towards a greater shortage in staff. All staff felt aggrieved that they had lost their overtime payment.

The different shift systems operating in the Centre could be challenging at times, although most of the staff and management appeared to have become used to it over time. Unit managers found it difficult to hold meetings that all staff could attend. Unit managers were working the 10 x 4 shift, and so were on duty more days than most other staff. However, almost half the staff were never on duty at the same time, and so could not be brought together for a joint meeting. Instead, they needed to hold separate meetings with each division. This made it difficult for people to reach a shared understanding or consensus.⁸² They also found it difficult for members of one division to hand over to the next division, since there was often a reluctance to take over another person's or shift's responsibility. This contributed towards ill feeling between the two groups.⁸³

4.1.2. Daily programme

The Centre had a 'structured day programme', which was meant to determine the daily activities for both inmates and staff. The 12 x 2 shift pattern allowed for the Centre to run with extended 'un-lock' times. Officially, the inmates were unlocked at around 5:45 AM and locked again at 6 PM. However, this did not mean that the inmates were allowed to wander around freely between 6 AM and 6 PM. Sentenced inmates, who work or attend vocational or educational programmes, would be escorted during the day to their various activities. Some of the sentenced inmates were allowed out of their units for most of the day. Those who were awaiting further charges, and maximum-security inmates, remained in their cells during the day except for the exercise period, meals and activities.

Unsentenced inmates remained locked up in their cells except for their one hour of exercise per day, the serving of meals, and any other activity (such as visiting the hospital section, etc.). This was mainly due to the shortage of personnel, which will be discussed below.

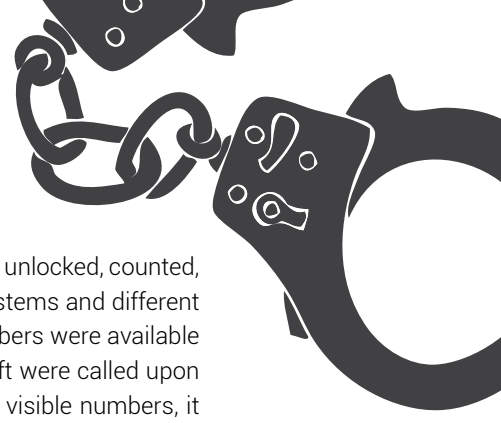
Meals were served at 06h00, from 12h00 to 13h00, and at 17h00. The units were opened section by section in order to feed the inmates. Inmates were allowed to collect their food in the dining hall and then take it to eat in their cells, where they would be locked up. Previously, inmates ate in the dining hall, but as a result of frequent fights, this system was changed. Inmates were not given cutlery or a spoon, which they might use to fashion weapons, but were allowed to have their own plastic spoons brought into the Centre for them.⁸⁴

⁸² Interview with unit managers, Witbank. 26 September 2013.

⁸³ Interview with unit managers, Witbank. 26 September 2013.

⁸⁴ Interview with Head of Correctional Centre, Witbank.





The busiest period of the day was from 06h00 to 08h00, when inmates were unlocked, counted, moved to their work spans, and escorted to courts. The staggered shift systems and different starting times of staff members, aimed to ensure that sufficient staff members were available at these times. Also, staff members who worked the Monday to Friday shift were called upon to assist. Still, staff members were concerned that though this might add visible numbers, it did not necessarily help to ensure the smooth running of the activities.⁸⁵ The bigger challenge was in the afternoons during lock-up and dinnertime, when there were fewer staff members available.

Witbank had the longest un-lock times of all of the centres reviewed, and staff members felt that they were only able to do this due to their 12 x 2 shift pattern, where the majority of security personnel were on duty for 12 hours a day. Despite this, the majority of inmates were not unlocked in the real sense that they could spend time in the courtyard. If Witbank were to extend its un-lock times, senior correctional officials believed that it would require additional staff in order to properly supervise the unlocked inmates. Like the other centres, staff members at Witbank were of the view that the majority of fights occurred in the courtyard during un-lock times, and thus, the way to deal with this problem was to reduce the time inmates spend in the courtyards.

4.1.3. Short staffing

As indicated in Table 4 above, there were 60 fewer staff working at Witbank than their approved establishment. The bulk of the staff members were centre based, of whom we were advised, 337 worked in the actual Centre. Ten of the managers work in the centres as well (six unit managers and four others).

Security staff

Although looking at the numbers there appeared to be more security personnel than their approved establishment (396 employed versus a 339 establishment), staff in the centres felt that they were short-staffed.

We were unable to obtain a clear figure on the number of 'security' personnel at the Centre. The security staff members were divided into 'internal security' who operated inside the centres, and 'external security' who worked outside the centres. Internal security staff the gates. An inmate can only pass through an internal gate if escorted by a member of the security staff. They also check the un-lock and lock-up totals, and lock and unlock the inmates. The external security provide security to the external gates, access control, and escort inmates to their different destinations, such as to court and hospitals. A senior security official estimated that there were around 50 internal security staff and 50 external security staff. Because of staff shortages, security staff were often shuffled around to where they are most needed – irrespective of whether they were 'external' or 'internal'. Spread over the A and B divisions, this means that there were only 25 internal and 25 external security staff per division, and they had to be allocated to the day and night shift. Any absenteeism or leave taken would necessarily impact on the number of staff available per shift.

The ratio of security staff to inmates in the sections is meant to be 1:30.⁸⁶ The greatest challenge for security staff lies in the escorting of inmates. One official can escort five medium category inmates. The requirement is that two officials must escort every maximum category

⁸⁵ Interview with unit managers, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

⁸⁶ Senior security official (IR4), Witbank, 25 September 2013. According to the DCS Staffing Guidelines, there are meant to be 1 security official for 60 every minimum risk inmate, 1:40 for medium risk, and 1:30 for maximum and awaiting trial inmates – para 1.11.19.

inmate to court or for external medical treatment. Security officials must also guard inmates staying in external hospitals. Security officials often had to be drawn from the sections to fulfil the escorting need, or they were drawn from those that were supposed to be on night duty. As a result, what would often happen was that there would be insufficient security officials at night, and one security official responsible for two or three units, contrary to the DCS Staffing Guidelines.⁸⁷

If there were insufficient numbers of staff working at the gates inside the centres during the daytime, then there would also often be no one to escort an inmate to where he needed to be – such as to a social work programme, education, or even to see a nurse.

During periods when many staff members were on leave, the security officials were particularly challenged. Where there should have been three members to a section, there was only one or two. The inmates were kept locked up, and were only unlocked to serve meals. One official was, contrary to staffing guidelines, left alone in the section to keep an eye on things. In order to facilitate meal times, officials were drawn from other sections and rotated around, so that they could manage with larger numbers of inmates.

Professional staff

The greatest visible shortages of staff were among the professional staff. Among the medical staff, there were 13 approved posts for nurses, yet only eight were employed. One of the nurses was an operational manager. Nurses catered to all categories of inmates, including unsentenced inmates. Nurses conducted a health status determination on every inmate within 24 hours of admission, and screened them for contagious diseases.⁸⁸ They also staffed a hospital section, and provided medical services and treatment. Nurses were expected to carry a workload of 250 inmates each. However, inmates frequently sought services on a recurring basis, pushing up the workload on individual nurses. There was one hospital section and four consulting clinics in the Centre that needed to be staffed by these nurses.

One general practitioner post was approved, but not financed nor employed. Consequently, a medical doctor would visit the Centre twice a week for consultations with inmates. There was one pharmacist post and two assistant pharmacist posts approved, but not financed and not employed. One 'community pharmacist' was financed. A community pharmacist is someone who has completed their training, but who is obliged to serve their community service before they are fully qualified. According to respondents, there had been community pharmacists, but they did not serve for a full year and there were often months without one.

The nurses complained that there was no dietician at the Centre to ensure that prescribed diets were available to inmates.

The approved establishment allowed for the employment of two psychologists, but there were no psychologists for the Centre at all, nor any in the Area. When psychologists were needed, either for treatment or for a pre-parole board assessment, the Centre was obliged to pay for the services of a private psychologist. Social workers were likewise understaffed. Whereas the approved establishment allows for seven, there were only five social workers employed.

Social workers are expected to manage a caseload of 240 inmates per social worker, which works out to about 20 inmates per month. Since there were five social workers to 955 sentenced inmates, they should have been managing a caseload of 191 inmates each. Social work services

⁸⁷ Senior security official (IR4), Witbank, 25 September 2014.

⁸⁸ S 6(5)(b) of the Correctional Services Act, read with Regulation 2(3).





and psychological services are generally only available to sentenced inmates. Social workers are responsible for the assessment and design of a development plan, or programme aimed at achieving the objective of enabling an inmate to lead a socially responsible and crime-free life in the future.⁸⁹ They are also responsible for rendering many developmental programmes as well. The rendering of social work programmes was constrained by the fact that there was only one conference room to be shared by all the social workers, as well as such external service providers as visit the Centre.

The approved, financed and staffed numbers for educationalists was three, which, according to our respondents, had been reduced from eight educationalists in 2009. The educationalists are responsible for skills training, formal education and technical training. They are also responsible for the Sports and Recreation facilities. In terms of their numbers, they should see 300 inmates quarterly, but their statistics indicate that they were only able to assist 140 inmates. In terms of the Department of Education Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), there should be a ratio of one teacher for every 25 inmates. There should also be a remedial teacher.⁹⁰ At the time of the visit, however, there was only one teacher for 45 inmates in formal education, and one to 73 inmates for business study.⁹¹

Perhaps one of the biggest shortfalls lay in the staffing of the workshop and agricultural division. Witbank is intended as a factory centre where inmates work in the factories and on the farm. The approved staff establishment for the workshop is 78. However, they had a financed establishment of 30 and only 28 employed staff. There was an approved, financed and staffed establishment of four agricultural staff. As a result of the reduction of numbers, many of the work spans had been closed, with the result that there were fewer work opportunities for inmates. One respondent working in this section also said that, because there were so few factory staff members in a shift, it often happened that the factory workers would be stationed at the gate, instead of a security official.

The number of inmates working in the factories was also influenced by the number of inmates who want to work, and respondents indicated that often inmates did not want to work on a particular day, or at all. The number of inmates working had fallen from around 250 per day, to around 110 per day.⁹² The staff members working in the factories collected the inmates for the spans at the Centre and escorted them to the factories at around 07h15, where they remained until about 15h15. Meals would be served in the factory. The staff expressed concern at the high levels of dust caused by fabric particles, which they thought contributed to the health problems among staff and inmates.

Although professional staff did not work shifts across two divisions like centre based personnel, they also suffered the effects of short-staffing. They felt that short-staffing affected the number of inmates they were able to provide services for, as well as the quality of services. More concerning was that inmates often could not access these services if there were not sufficient security personnel to escort them. Sometimes inmates did not make it to appointments, or the progress of programmes was delayed. Nurses said that, although inmates should be escorted at all times, due to short-staffing, they sometimes made their own way to the clinic, which might compromise the security of the nursing staff. Security officials working the 12 x 2 shift pattern did not always write down or communicate a follow-up appointment for an inmate to see a nurse. The inmate then did not get brought for his scheduled appointment, and he then had to wait two to three days for the security official to be back on shift to bring him.

⁸⁹ See s 37(1) of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 as amended.

⁹⁰ Interview with educationalist, Witbank, 25 September 2013.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Interview with union officials, Witbank, 25 September 2013.

One educationalist said that he had personally escorted inmates to write exams when no officials were available.

Respondents spoke about the delay in recruiting new staff to the Centre. The Centre does not have the authority to recruit its own personnel, but must do so through head office. The regional and national offices do the recruitment, a process which can take months.

Many of the respondents reported that there had been a few resignations and retirements in the last few years, which has further reduced staff numbers.

4.1.4. Staffing of the units

The research aimed to ascertain what impact the allocation of staff and staff shortages have on the actual numbers of staff available to work in the units.

Staff personnel were allocated to each unit or section for both the A and B division. For example, at Witbank, the A and B unit together accommodates 277 sentenced inmates. There were eight staff in the A Division and 10 staff in the B Division, who were a mix of security officers and case officers. There was also a case management supervisor and a unit manager. Two of the officials from each division were female. Two security personnel were taken from each division for the night shift, leaving between six and eight people to staff the day shift. If an inmate needed to be escorted to the internal hospital then it was these staff members who had to do it. If an inmate needed to go to an outside hospital, then they had to escort him. They would also have to guard him there. Because of the movement in and out of the units during the day, there were always less than six officials in the unit at any one time. If anyone was absent or on leave during that time, then the section needed to manage without them. On a good day, when all staff members were present, there was a staff-to-inmate ratio of 1:17 in Unit A, and 1:21 in Unit B. In these units, most of the inmates were working or were busy with programmes during the day, and the others spent most of the day unlocked in their respective sections.⁹³

Units D and E together were holding 401 inmates in the old centre (208 in D Unit and 193 in E Unit). Many of the inmates had been sentenced to long-term or life sentences, but after serving a portion of their sentence they could be reclassified as medium security category inmates. There were 47 officials for the two divisions (26 and 21 in each respectively), of whom 38 percent were female.⁹⁴ There should have been an overall, comfortable ratio of 1:8.5 members to inmates. However, on the day of the interview, the Unit Manager of D Unit indicated that there were 14 people allocated to that unit per division, including the night shift. Only six officials had reported for duty.⁹⁵ This meant that there was only one staff member for every 34.6 inmates during the day shift. A security official working in E Unit indicated that there were five members on duty, including two members at the entrance gate, in addition to the unit managers. Four of these staff members were women and one was male.⁹⁶ Staff said that there was generally a similar number of staff members on duty on a daily basis. If the inmates needed to be moved for any reason, there might be one person at the records centre, one person escorting an inmate to court, and one person left alone in the section.

Unit J accommodates juvenile inmates and, at the time of the interview, was accommodating 29 inmates. It had three staff members from the A Division and two from the B Division, with one woman from each division. One member from each division served on the night shift, which meant the daytime ratio was 1:14.5.⁹⁷

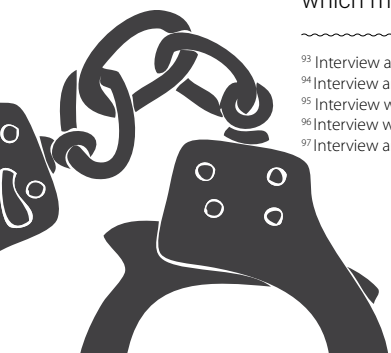
⁹³ Interview and figures provided by senior official (IR6), Witbank, 26 September 2013.

⁹⁴ Interview and figures provided by senior official (IR6), Witbank, 26 September 2013.

⁹⁵ Interview with unit managers, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

⁹⁶ Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

⁹⁷ Interview and figures provided by senior official (IR6), Witbank, 26 September 2013.





Section or Unit C has a very different profile. It was accommodating 550 remand detainees. It had four members from Division A and four members from Division B, none of whom were women. There was also one case management supervisor who was working on a 10 x 4 shift pattern. From the four members per division, one person was allocated to the night shift. This meant that there were three people working during the day with the 550 inmates – a ratio of 1:183. This was far below the requirement of one security official for every 30 remand detainees.⁹⁸ Staff from this section were not required to do escort duty.⁹⁹ The inmates were managed by keeping them locked up for most of the day, except for meals and exercise.¹⁰⁰ The Centre would not be able to manage this many inmates with so few staff if they were unlocked. Given that, overall, the Centre was 280 percent capacitated in respect of remand detainees, this is a sad picture of their daily experience. About 45 to 55 detainees were accommodated per cell. On one of the days that the research team visited Witbank, it was experiencing one of its frequent days without any water. One can only imagine the effect of prolonged lock-up times on inmates sharing an already overcrowded cell with no water.

Personnel needed to guard inmates at external hospitals were drawn from the staff working in the sections. This created a further drain on their numbers. This could draw a lot of staff. For instance, if there are three maximum-security inmates in a hospital, six officials are required during the day and one person at night. These numbers are required for each division.

During the night, staff numbers were greatly reduced. At D and E Unit, which are located in the 'old centre', there were only five officials for the whole unit.¹⁰¹ In the new centre, there was supposed to be one member for each of the units, as well as members at the gates.¹⁰² If one security official does not arrive for their shift, then the Centre must make do without them. A member might then be responsible for patrolling more than one section. At times, the new centre has been manned by a total of three members, and the old centre by a total of two.¹⁰³

4.2. Johannesburg Management Area

The Management Area and its four correctional centres are all situated on the same campus outside of Soweto, Johannesburg. Built at the same time as the Sun City Casino, the Johannesburg Correctional Centres have also become known as Sun City. It houses an area management office, a community corrections office, as well as four correctional centres: Medium A (remand centre), Medium B (sentenced inmates), Medium C (maximum sentenced inmates who are attending school) and the Female Centre. As a complex, Sun City has the capacity to accommodate 4,864 inmates and, in July 2014, it accommodated 9,146 people.¹⁰⁴ This means that the Area was 188 percent capacitated.

The approved establishment from 2003 allocated 2,256 staff members to the whole management area. However, there are a total of 1,675 financed posts in Johannesburg Area, of which, 1,631 are filled. These include 261 in the area management office, and six in the Correctional Supervision and Parole Board. There are also 111 people employed in the community corrections office.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ DCS Staffing Guidelines: Management Areas, para 1.11.19.

⁹⁹ Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

¹⁰² Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

¹⁰³ If one security official does not arrive for their shift, then the centre must make do without them. A member might then be responsible for patrolling more than one section.

¹⁰⁴ Telephone interview with Deputy Director Corrections, Johannesburg Management Area.

¹⁰⁵ Johannesburg Management Area. (March 2013). Financed Posts, Financed Vacancies, Filled, Approved Establishment and Unfilled Posts.

Two correctional centres were selected from the Johannesburg Management Area: the Female Centre and Medium A (which caters for remand detainees).

4.2.1. Johannesburg Female Centre

- ▶ Approved accommodation: 605
- ▶ Number of inmates: 885 (146% occupied)
- ▶ Approved staff establishment: 249
- ▶ Financed posts: 217
- ▶ Post filled: 211
- ▶ Shift pattern: 10 x 4 (10 days working followed by four days off)

The Johannesburg Female Centre was visited on 2 and 3 October 2013. It has approved accommodation for 605 female inmates and, at the time of the research visit, was holding 885 inmates (146 percent occupied). Of these, 602 were sentenced and 283 were unsentenced inmates. The Centre also accommodates less than 20 sentenced juveniles and around 35 babies who are living with their mothers. It accommodates women in all security categories – minimum, medium and maximum. There is also a unit that accommodates elderly inmates. At times, the lock-up total can increase to as much as 1 200 inmates.¹⁰⁶

The Centre has been identified as a Centre of Excellence because it accommodates different categories of inmates.¹⁰⁷

The Female Centre had an approved staff establishment of 249, but had 217 financed posts (see Table 4) and, at the time of the research, 211 of these were filled. The human resource personnel indicated that all 211 staff were working inside the Centre. They also indicated that there were 198 custodial or security staff, whereas the schedule prepared at the Area Management level indicated that there were 179 case officer and security officer posts filled in March 2013.¹⁰⁸ All of the staff, with the exception of the professional staff (social workers, psychologists and educationalists) were centre based staff. There was an overall staff-to-inmate ratio of around 1:4.2.

There were nine medical personnel, a much higher figure than for a centre like Witbank. This is due to the gender of the inmate population, as well as the fact that many of the inmates are pregnant or are mothers. However, one of the nursing sisters was working only in an administrative capacity. The nurses felt that this was an insufficient number given the size of the inmate population and their needs as women, as well as the needs of the infant population.¹⁰⁹ On the Wednesday of the research visit, when there should have been a full complement of nursing staff, there were only four nurses on duty. One of the nurses was attending a yearlong course in midwifery at Baragwanath hospital, reducing the available number of nurses to seven.¹¹⁰ There was one psychologist and two social workers. There were two educationalists and five vocational training staff – four in the textile workshop and one in a hair salon.

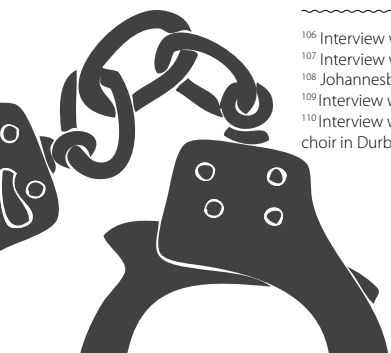
¹⁰⁶ Interview with senior official (IR24), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with senior official (IR24), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹⁰⁸ Johannesburg Management Area. (March 2013). Financed Posts, Financed Vacancies, Filled, Approved Establishment and Unfilled Posts.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Senior Professional Nurse (IR28), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Senior Professional Nurse (IR28), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013. One nurse was on leave, one was attending a choir in Durban, one was attending a year-long course on midwifery at Baragwaneth hospital.





The social workers were carrying a caseload of 609 inmates between them, these being the sentenced inmates. This is an effective caseload of 304 inmates each, which is more than the recommended caseload. There had previously been three social workers, until 2011, when one of them was transferred.¹¹¹

At the time of the research visit, there had only been one psychologist in the Female Centre since 2009, but there were three other psychologists in the Management Area. The psychologist was not consulting with the unsentenced inmates save for life-threatening or serious emergencies. The psychologist was responsible for the assessment of inmates for the Correctional Supervision and Parole Board. An assessment for these purposes could take three to four days. The psychologist was also counselling inmates and caring for their mental health and well-being. The psychologist was seeing around 30 inmates each month, though there was a greater demand from inmates to see the psychologist. Some of the inmates would have up to eight repeat sessions.¹¹² The psychologist estimated that at least four qualified psychologists would be needed to adequately cater for inmate needs and to assist with the proper rehabilitation of inmates.¹¹³

While the establishment for Johannesburg Female Centre should be 211 staff, in fact, between two and seven people were working in other centres or in the Area Commissioner's office at any one time.¹¹⁴ Like the other centres, Johannesburg Female Centre informed the researchers that their staff numbers had declined over the previous years. Where people resigned, retired, were dismissed or were transferred elsewhere, it took a long time to replace them or they were not replaced at all.¹¹⁵ Respondents said that it took at least a year to replace a staff member, and sometimes longer. Many officials interviewed were unhappy in their positions and were looking to find work elsewhere. They complained about the lack of monetary incentives and the lack of prospects for promotion. One could only apply for a promotion when a post became available, or when one became eligible after seven years.¹¹⁶ Many who had tertiary qualifications felt that they were underutilised as ordinary correctional officials.

Many staff complained that with the introduction of the 7-Day Establishment and Resolution 1 of 2007, their take-home pay was substantially reduced. Many also felt bitter that they had not yet received the promised overtime pay from the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) that they felt was their due in terms of the Resolution.

Learner correctional officials were being placed at various correctional centres, but this was not said to be of much help to staff, as they needed to be heavily supervised and there were few tasks that they could do alone.¹¹⁷

While most of the staff employed at the Centre were women, there were six men, who did not work in the units.

The Female Centre has four units: E, D, B and the Special Care unit (which includes the hospital, kitchen, elderly inmates, mothers and babies, and the juveniles). There were four unit managers.

There were a number of programmes and learning opportunities for the women. They were allowed to receive visits from external religious workers, and various social work programmes. There was a 'cozy den' where women were being taught beading and crafts.

¹¹¹ Interview with social workers, Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹¹² Interview with psychologist, Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Interview with senior official (IR26), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Interview with senior official (IR26), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹¹⁷ Interview with senior official (IR26), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

There was also a salon where they could learn hairdressing and about beauty salons. Women could work in the laundry, kitchen, and cleaning the offices.

4.2.1.1. Shift system

The Female Centre was one of two centres in Johannesburg that piloted the 12 x 2 shift system that was proposed by the national office of the DCS. Although the security staff preferred this system because it gave them more time off, the Centre found it difficult to staff the Centre sufficiently.

At the time of the research visit, the Female Centre was following the 10 x 4 shift pattern, with alternative Friday to Monday long weekends off. Staff members would work a nine-hour shift, with a one hour break for lunch. The Head of Correctional Centre was also working the 10 x 4 shift pattern. The staff complement was divided into an A and B division or team. Day staff would work from 07h00 to 17h00.

Social workers, the psychologist and educationalists would work a Monday to Friday shift – usually from 07h00 to 16h00 including lunch, or until 15h00 if they worked through lunch.

The nurses would work in two divisions and stagger their work so that there were always nurses on duty on Saturdays and Sundays. They were being paid overtime for weekend work. They were not working night shifts, but there was always one nurse on standby at night. A general practitioner would visit the Centre every day and a psychiatrist, every fortnight. A dentist would also visit the Centre once a week. Nurses would work shifts from 07h00 to 16h00, including an hour for lunch. Those who did not take lunch could leave at 15h00.¹¹⁸

Social workers and psychologists are classified as non-centre based, and so did not work for 45 hours a week, nor did they qualify for any danger allowance. This was despite the fact that they were working closely with inmates, often in situations where they were not provided with adequate protection from security officials. It was reportedly difficult to recruit social workers and psychologists, and most of the staff interviewed said they would have been happier working elsewhere.

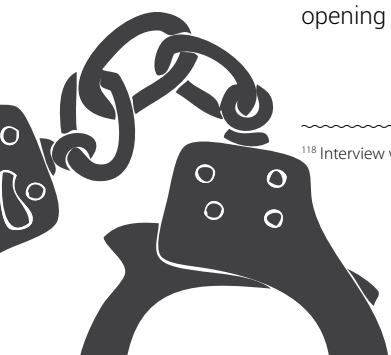
The night shift had two watches: the first watch from 14h30 to 20h30, and the second watch from 20h30 until 07h30 (eight hours). More members were allocated to the second watch than the first in order to help with the unlocking of inmates in the morning.

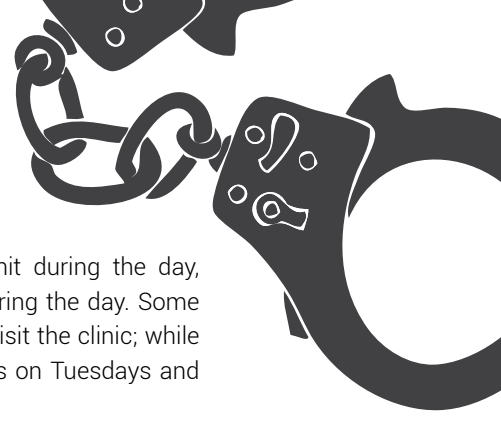
4.2.1.2. Lock and un-lock

Inmates are unlocked from their cells at 07h15, after the day shift arrives and have attended their morning parade. The official lock-up time is at 15h00, though there are times when the Centre may have to lock inmates up early, from around 12h00 or 13h00. The cells are mastered between 16h00 and 16h30, and then the day shift leaves at around 17h00.

Cells generally have two doors, and they are 'mastered' when the second, outer door is locked with a special master key. The master key is then stored in a special safe to which only the officer-in-charge has the key. The officer-in-charge leaves the premises for the night, taking this key with them. Once the cell is mastered, it can only be un-mastered and unlocked again once the officer-in-charge unlocks the safe and takes out the master key. The process of opening the cells at night is discussed later in the report.

¹¹⁸ Interview with Senior Professional Nurse (IR28), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.





Once inmates are unlocked, they are allowed to move around their unit during the day, though they are only allowed access to the courtyard at certain times during the day. Some of the sentenced inmates attend classes, workshops or programmes, or visit the clinic; while unsentenced inmates may have to go to court. Inmates are allowed visits on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

4.2.1.3. Daily programme

One of the concerns at the Centre was for the limits created by the available infrastructure. The Centre did not have special classrooms or spaces in which to run programmes and schools. Staff referred, with concern, to the instruction from former Minister of Correctional Services Sibusiso Ndebele that it was compulsory for every inmate without a qualification equivalent to Grade 9 to complete Adult Education and Training (AET) levels 1 to 4.¹¹⁹ Staff said that at Johannesburg Female Centre, there was no physical space to accommodate them. There were two classrooms at the Centre, and use was also made of the dining hall. There were plans to build another classroom in the courtyard outside during 2014. E-learning was also becoming a requirement for study, but the Centre had neither the computers nor the space to accommodate inmates working on computers, and there were security concerns about how to monitor the inmates' use of computers. There were only two educationalists at the time, and staff felt that many more educationalists were needed if they were to educate all of the inmates.¹²⁰ Educationalists are also considered to be non-centre based staff, yet they were teaching in a classroom full of inmates without the presence of security officials. They were not trained as security officials.¹²¹

“
At the time there were many external service providers interested in providing services to female inmates. However, due to a lack of space and human resources to facilitate their access, they were frequently being turned away
”

The two social workers were responsible for the assessment of sentenced inmates and the development of sentence plans for those sentenced to over two years imprisonment. They were responsible for running a variety of social work programmes, writing progress reports for the Correctional Supervision and Parole Board, and coordinating the work of external service providers. They also had to work with the mothers and babies in the Centre, and help to facilitate the babies moving away from their mothers to stay with someone in the outside world when they are between two and three years old. It was noted that it had been a challenge to place the children of non-South African women, as they often did not have family members in the community, and the children had to be placed in foster care or with child welfare.¹²² The social workers had no separate room from which to run their programmes, and most programmes were being run from their offices.

At the time there were many external service providers interested in providing services to female inmates. However, due to a lack of space and human resources to facilitate their access, they frequently being turned away.¹²³

¹¹⁹ See Media Release of the Department of Correctional Services (9 October 2013). “More than 11 600 inmates registered for adult basic education. Available online on <http://www.gov.za/speeches/view.php?sid=40371&tid=124844>, accessed on 15 July 2014.

¹²⁰ Interview with educational practitioner (IR27), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹²¹ Interview with educational practitioner (IR27), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹²² Interview with social workers, Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹²³ Interview with psychologist, Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

4.2.1.4. Staffing issues

Security staff and case officers

The Centre's staff comprised both internal and external security officials. The internal security officials were assigned to work in the units, where they worked both as case officers and as security officials. A case officer was assigned to each cell. They were responsible for preparing case files on each inmate, and attending case review meetings held between the supervisor, case officer and each inmate to review what programmes inmates were doing and what they still needed to do. Case officers also had to attend to daily complaints and requests by inmates, which they had to try to resolve.

These officials were also responsible for manning the gates and for internal escort duties. Sometimes there were as many as 30 movements by inmates in one day, and staff members had to be able to escort the inmates. Security functions took precedence over case files and case officers had to fulfil their case officer functions when they could. Sometimes this meant that nearly all the staff members were taken out of the units, leaving only one member behind in the unit.¹²⁴ This gives cause for security concerns. If a fight were to break out, there would be insufficient staff members to deal with it.

The shift pattern had the advantage that all of the staff, except for the night duty staff, were on duty at the same time for three days a week. However, the Centre worked with half of the staff complement for most of the week – from Thursday to Monday. This had an impact on operations. For example, in E Unit, which accommodates around 200 inmates, there was ordinarily a unit manager, a supervisor and three officials. From Friday to Monday, this figure dropped to two officials during the day – a staff-to-inmate ratio of 1:100. Friday was a difficult day, as there would often be more inmate movements, requiring more staff.¹²⁵

In D Unit, there were eight case officers and a unit manager to supervise the 300-odd inmates, including over 80 maximum-security inmates in the upstairs section. From Tuesday to Thursday, most of the case officers would be on duty, but from Friday to Monday that number could drop to three people. The unit manager said to researchers, 'Whew, Fridays it's a havoc [sic].'¹²⁶ On Friday, it is likely that there would be one official upstairs alone with the maximum-security inmates, and two downstairs with the medium-security inmates. Despite being alone, the staff member in the maximum unit would still have to escort inmates to the clinic, court and to programmes. The situation could potentially be very dangerous. According to the unit manager, 'She does everything. She can be held hostage if that is what the [inmates] want to do. She is on her own.'¹²⁷ This was of course contrary to regulations, which state that an official is not meant to be alone with inmates. Sometimes an official from the downstairs section would be moved upstairs to support the lone official in the maximum-security section.

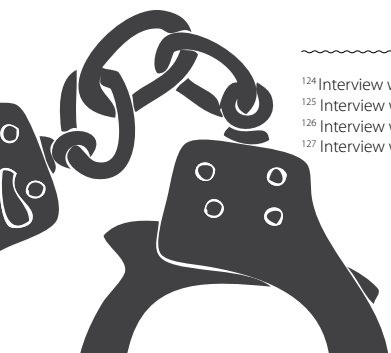
Sometimes, there would be three officials in a section. If an inmate needed to visit the psychologist, there would be two officials left behind. But then if another inmate wanted to go to the shop to buy her groceries, she would also need to be escorted. This would leave one official behind. If anything were to happen to the inmates, for example, if one inmate was injured by another, then they would need to be escorted to the hospital by the remaining staff member and the section would be left unmanned. A unit manager commented, 'That

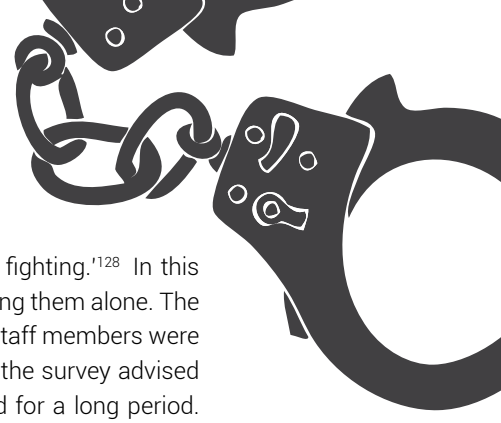
¹²⁴ Interview with senior official (IR25), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹²⁵ Interview with senior official (IR25), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹²⁶ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

¹²⁷ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.





is how we are working. There are problems. Each and every day they are fighting.¹²⁸ In this situation, there would be no chance to lock inmates in the cells before leaving them alone. The official would usually lock the section and leave the section unmanned.¹²⁹ Staff members were apparently used to staying alone with inmates. However, respondents to the survey advised that a staff member would never be left alone or a section left unmanned for a long period. They would always try and find someone to act as backup.¹³⁰ It also sometimes happened that there would be no official available to escort an inmate to a course or an appointment inside the Centre. In such a case, the official might then open the gate and allow the inmate to go to the appointment unescorted.¹³¹ One case officer spoke about how she had once been alone in the section with 200 inmates for the whole shift. Her strategy had been not to escort inmates out of the section.¹³²

Due to short-staffing, case officers were sometimes required to work night shifts meaning that their duties as case officers were neglected.¹³³

Due to short-staffing in the sections, the officials were struggling to maintain the daily programme. Complying with the three daily meals requirement was difficult. As a result, the women were only being fed bread in the afternoon for their evening meal, just before lock-up. Additional staff members had to be brought in from the administration section or even from management, to assist during mealtimes.

The social workers complained that, especially on Mondays and Fridays, there were insufficient staff to escort inmates to their offices for programmes or consultations, with the result that they could not see clients at all.¹³⁴

External security staff were responsible for manning the external gates and for conducting external escort duties. The Centre services 10 courts. There were also some inmates staying in public hospitals who needed to be escorted there and guarded. At the time of the research visit, six inmates were staying at Baragwanath hospital. According to a senior security official, every four inmates at the hospital will draw at least 12 officials from the pool of security staff. If they are maximum-security inmates, then the number of security officials would need to be increased to eight officials assigned to the hospital during the day and another eight at night.¹³⁵ Because of short-staffing, there would sometimes be insufficient staff members to escort inmates to external hospitals for their appointments.¹³⁶ There was also sometimes a shortage of staff to bring inmates to their appointments with the nursing staff at the clinics.

The Centre would sometimes use officials from the Emergency Support Teams (EST) to escort maximum security inmates to outside hospitals or courts, or if there was a special function such as a family day or sports day.

There was also a shortage of staff members at the case management administration or reception offices, where all inmate admissions and releases are processed. This included people who were released to visit the hospital located within the Management Area and those going out to courts. Inmates could be admitted to the facility as late as 21h00. There were two shifts of four members: the first shift would work from 06h00 to 15h00, and the second shift,

¹²⁸ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

¹²⁹ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

¹³⁰ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

¹³¹ Interview with case officer, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

¹³² Interview with case officer, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

¹³³ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

¹³⁴ Interview with social workers, Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹³⁵ Interview with senior member Internal Security (IR29), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹³⁶ Interview with Senior professional Nurse (IR28), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

from 11h00 until the evening. From Friday to Monday, two staff members would start at 06h00 and the other two would arrive at 11h00. If one or more staff members were not on duty, then it would be too much for the other members to cope with the requirements.¹³⁷ During weekends, officials had to take on additional responsibilities to cover for the fact that only half of the staff were on duty. Another challenge was non-South Africans who are admitted and who cannot communicate in English.¹³⁸

At night, there are 10 units needing to be staffed with one official in each. There should also be a member in charge and one official working at the electric gate (12 officials required). However, due to short-staffing, and depending on the need to send officials to man the hospitals, the Center was always able to allocate the full number of staff members required. Usually they had eight to nine officials per shift at the most. Sometimes they were reduced to five staff members on night shift, including the official in charge and the person at the gate.¹³⁹ This meant that only three officials were available to patrol the units at night.¹⁴⁰ This was a challenge, as the units are located far away from one another. If an inmate was to call for help, it would take some time to hear, or to locate where the call was coming from.¹⁴¹

As explained above, one of the motivations for the DCS proposing a move to the 12 x 2 shift pattern was to ensure that staff started and finished work when there was likely to be ample available public transport. However, in the Johannesburg Female Centre, which had two-watches at night, this was not possible. Although the DCS used to provide transport for night duty staff, it was no longer doing so at the time of the research visit

The first watch would end at 22h30, when some people struggled to find transport. In a move that appeared to be tacitly sanctioned by management, two staff members on the night watch would pair up. Instead of one member working each shift, one of the members would undertake to do both shifts one night, and the other member would take two shifts the following night.¹⁴² As a result, instead of the 24 personnel who should have been on duty over the two night shifts, only 12 would be working on a night. Some of these officials would then have to work in the hospitals, where they would also work the double shift.¹⁴³ These staff members would end up working a 16-hour shift. But it sometimes happened that people were too exhausted to finish their shift and would leave early. Someone else would then have to be found to fill in for them.¹⁴⁴

4.2.2. Johannesburg Medium A (Remand Centre)

- ▶ Approved accommodation: 2 630
- ▶ Number of inmates: 4 645 (176% occupied)
- ▶ Approved staff establishment: 736
- ▶ Financed posts: 449
- ▶ Posts filled: 441
- ▶ 'Warm bodies' at the Centre: 405
- ▶ Shift pattern:
 - 10 x 4 (ten days in and four days off)

¹³⁷ The DCS Staffing Guidelines, revised 1 October 2010 do not indicate the number of members allocated to reception, but indicate that 10 minutes should be spent by staff of admitting and releasing awaiting trial inmates, and 30 minutes on admission and release of sentenced inmates, para 1.11.26.

¹³⁸ Interview with official, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

¹³⁹ Interview with senior official (IR24), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹⁴⁰ Interview with senior member Internal Security (IR29), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹⁴¹ Interview with senior member Internal Security (IR29), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹⁴² Interview with senior member Internal Security (IR29), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.





Johannesburg Medium A was visited on 23 and 24 of October 2013. Medium A is a centre for male remand detainees, or unsentenced inmates, though it also houses around 137 sentenced inmates who work in the Centre. Medium A has capacity for 2 630 inmates and, at the time of the research visit, 4 645 inmates were being accommodated there (with an accommodation level of 176 percent). The number of inmates had been substantially reduced over the previous few years – in February 2011 the accommodation level was 6 268.¹⁴⁵

The number of remand detainees was successfully reduced through the collaborative effort of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, the National Prosecuting Authority, the Legal Aid Board, and the South African Police Service. Remand detainees were regularly brought before court to consider whether they were eligible for their bail conditions to be amended under Section 63A of the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977.¹⁴⁶



Despite these reservations, the numbers of detainees awaiting trial for longer than two years had declined from 800 in 2012, to around 200 inmates at the time of this study



The Centre had also started applying Section 49(G) of the Correctional Services Act, which had just come into effect at the time of the interview.¹⁴⁷ This section provides that no remand detainee may stay in custody for longer than two years without the Head of Correctional Centre bringing this to the attention of the court to determine whether the remand detainee should be released, or for her or his further detention. If the detainee's further detention is ordered by the court, then the Head of Correctional Centre must refer the case back to court at yearly intervals. The Head of Correctional Centre must also report to the Director of Public Prosecutions, at six monthly intervals, with details of those detainees who have been detained for a successive six-month period. At the time of the interview, this procedure had been of limited success. Of more than 350 cases referred back to court between July and September 2013, only five detainees had not been returned back to the Centre.¹⁴⁸ Despite these reservations, the numbers of detainees awaiting trial for longer than two years had declined from 800 in 2012, to around 200 inmates at the time of this study.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Department of Correctional Service. (28 February 2011). Gauteng Region – Approved accommodation versus inmates' population and occupancy levels per correctional centre.

¹⁴⁶ The Head of Correctional Centre may apply to court to have the bail conditions of a detainee amended, or for the detainee to be released on warning, if the population of the centre is overcrowded and constitutes a 'material and imminent threat to the human dignity, physical health or safety of an accused'.

¹⁴⁷ This section came into effect on 1 July 2013. Proclamation 21 in GG 36621 of 1 July 2013.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with senior official IR37, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with senior official IR37, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

In 2003, the approved staff establishment for the Centre was 736, but the Centre has never operated at that level. In the year prior to this study, due to pressure on the DCS to reduce the number of posts, the number of financed posts had been reduced to 449 (see Table 4). At the time of the study, there were 441 posts filled at Johannesburg Centre A, but 26 of these officials were working outside of the Centre in the EST, dog unit, or in the environment team (gardening services, etc.). As a result, there were only 405 'warm bodies', or people actually placed at the Centre. There were at the time 11 positions vacant. A further eight people were expected to leave, due to resignation, transfer or long-term temporary disability. This would have brought the number of warm bodies down to 397.¹⁵⁰ The staff complement was relatively stable. Only six new members joined the Centre in 2013. It was a struggle to recruit and retain professional staff, who it was said, left for 'greener pastures'. Some of the professional staff also left due to concerns for their own security.



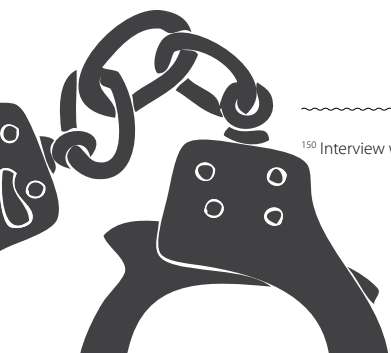
Everyday there are times when inmates are not brought to the clinic due to staff shortages

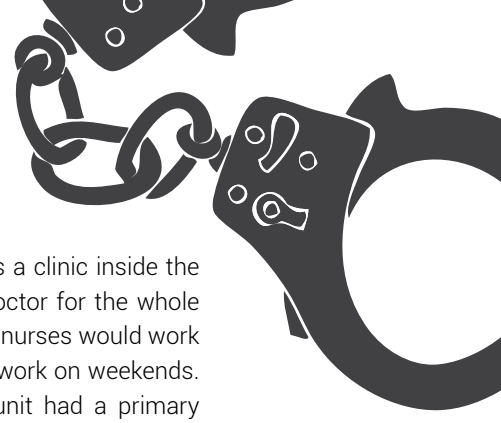


The Centre had 33 managers in accordance with the Departmental organogram, 23 of whom were working in the Centre itself. About 80 of the staff were administrative, including those working in the admissions section.

Remand detention centres do not aim to rehabilitate inmates, and the Correctional Services Act does not extend development and rehabilitation programmes to unsentenced inmates. The Centre therefore had a very different staff complement to centres for sentenced inmates. It had no educationalists or psychologist. It had one social worker, whose services were directed mainly at the few sentenced inmates accommodated in the Centre. All of the unit staff members were security officials, rather than a mix of case officers and security officials. The 2003 approved establishment for security officials was 561, but there were only 261 security officials in the Centre.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with senior official Staff Support (IR38), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.





There were 16 nurses working at the Centre and one manager. There was a clinic inside the Centre, as well as sub-clinics inside the units. There was one medical doctor for the whole Management Area, who would visit the Centre for two hours each day. The nurses would work from 07h00 to 16h00, Monday to Friday, and were being paid overtime to work on weekends. There was one nurse on standby until 07h00 in the morning.¹⁵¹ Each unit had a primary healthcare clinic, which was visited by a nurse every day. The nurse would be accompanied by a security official. Each day, during un-lock, inmates were allowed to register a request to see the nurse. They would then be brought to the nurses for the consultation. The workload for the nurses was very high and the inmates had many medical complaints.¹⁵²

Over weekends there would be four or five nurses on duty. The nurses would not go into the clinics within the sections, but would wait for officials to bring inmates to them during emergencies. A senior healthcare practitioner said, 'Everyday there are times when inmates are not brought to the clinic due to staff-shortages'. He further said, 'sometimes there is a chill in my spine when I see how few staff there are compared with the number of inmates'.¹⁵³

Inmates would be screened on admission to the Centre by nursing personnel, who would check their medical history and any medical needs. A nurse would work at the reception section from around 14h00 until 20h00. The following morning, a more comprehensive medical examination would be conducted and everyone would be screened for TB. In the process, they might also identify inmates with mental illnesses. The more serious of these cases would be referred to Sterkfontein Hospital, but the majority would be accommodated in the Centre. In September 2013, the Centre had 72 psychiatric patients.¹⁵⁴ The Centre also had some nurses who were trained in psychiatric care, and a psychiatrist would visit the Centre twice a month.¹⁵⁵



Sometimes there is a chill in my spine when I see how few staff there are compared to the number of inmates



The Centre services around 29 courts in Gauteng. As a result, there were between 600 and 700 inmates admitted and released each day.¹⁵⁶

4.2.2.1. Shift pattern

The Centre was using the same 10 x 4 shift pattern as the Johannesburg Female Centre. This meant that the full staff complement would be on duty from Tuesday to Thursday, with both divisions on duty, and it would function at half capacity from Friday to Monday, with only one division on duty. Management reported that this was particularly difficult because the Centre still had to service the courts on a Monday and Friday, even with only half the staff.

¹⁵¹ Interview with senior official Health Care Services (IR40), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Interview with senior official Health Care Services (IR40), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with senior official Health Care Services (IR40), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with senior official (IR37), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

The day shift would work a 10-hour shift from 07h00 to 17h00, though most would not take lunch, and so would be able to leave work at 16h00. Because the Centre was very short-staffed, staff could not afford the time to go on lunch together so they would usually send someone out to buy lunch for the rest of the staff in the units. They would eat in the units. The night shift had two shifts: first watch was from 15h00 to 23h00, and second watch was from 23h00 to 07h00.¹⁵⁷

Staff working in reception had a late afternoon shift, from 11h00 until 20h00. They would deal with the admission of inmates brought into the Centre.¹⁵⁸

Prior to the introduction of the Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD), staff at Area Management could be called upon to assist in periods when the Centre was short-staffed. At the time of the research visit, since most of the Area staff members were non-centre based personnel, they could no longer assist the Centre or work with the inmates.

During extended weekends, the Centre's administrative staff members would have to support the units, with the result that administrative work was suffering. Because women could not work in the units, it would be the male administrative staff working in the units.

Even during a normal working day, the administrative staff could be called upon to lend support during mealtimes when large numbers of inmates were unlocked.¹⁵⁹

Staff in the Remand Centre carried tonfas with them at all times.

4.2.2.2. Work in the units

At the time of the visit, there were 10 unit managers across 11 units. The units were large, one accommodating more than 900 inmates. The Head of Correctional Centre was very concerned about the impact of the 10 x 4 shift pattern on the working environment in the Centre and had compiled daily statistics on the number of staff in the units, which was shared with the researchers.



Because the Centre was very short-staffed, staff could not afford the time to go on lunch together so they would usually send someone out to buy lunch for the rest of the staff in the units



¹⁵⁷ Interview with senior official (IR37), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁵⁸ Interview with senior official Staff Support (IR38), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with senior official Staff Support (IR38), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.





Table 7: Unit Totals – Johannesburg Centre A¹⁶⁰

	Monday 21 October 2013			Tuesday 22 October 2013		
Unit	Officials	Unit Manager	Inmate total	Officials	Unit Manager	Inmate total
A1	5	1	720	13	1	663
B1	5	0	685	8	1	627
C1	5 (-1)	0	213	7	1	226
D	3	1	515	12	1	944
E	2 (+1)	0	532	3	2	469
A2	4	0	715	11	0	641
B2	4	1	457	8	0	399
C2	4	1	506	11	1	438
A Single	2	0	39	6	0	35
B Single	2	0	29	6	0	30
Kitchen	4	1	138	8	1	138
Total	40	5	4 549	96	8	4 610
Early unlock to reception			34			35
Grand total			4 583			4 645

Table 7 demonstrates the stark difference between a unit staffed by a full complement, when both divisions are on duty (Tuesday), and a day when only one division is on duty (Monday). On the Monday, there was less than half of the staff working in the units. On the Monday, for the whole Centre, a total of 178 staff had been set down on the duty roster, but only 129 had reported for work. Some of them were sick, some had pre-booked leave, while others took leave on the day.

All staff interviewed believed that they were short-staffed and that this was made worse on the extended weekends, when there might only be three or four members in a unit. On the four-day weekend, the five unit managers would have to stretch their work so that they could cover for the other units during the day. Table 7 illustrates how, on the Tuesday, the overall staff-to-inmate ratio in the units was 1:45. On the Monday, the staff-to-inmate ratio overall was 1:114. However, certain units were comparatively well staffed (the kitchen and single units), while others were less so. On the Monday, the staff-to-inmate ratio in A2 was 1:178. The same unit

¹⁶⁰ Tables provided by Head of Correctional Centre, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

had a staff-to-inmate ratio of 1:58 on the Tuesday. This was clearly challenging for many of the staff working in the units. Though the staff members had no need to escort inmates to programmes or to court, there were everyday activities which took officials out of the units. For instance, they might need to escort inmates who were cleaning the rubbish bins. At lunchtime, between 11h00 and 13h00, it was typical for only half of the staff to be on duty.¹⁶¹ Some days the officials would send out one person to buy lunch for everyone. In order to deal with short-staffing, the officials would lock up the inmates as soon as possible and allow no unnecessary movement.¹⁶²

On weekends, an activity such as the serving of meals was difficult to manage, and risky for staff and inmates. If there were three members in a unit, one would be on guard in the kitchen, one would control the line of inmates queuing for their food, and another would be at the gate. This was an insufficient number to control the inmates. On some days, there would be too few staff in the unit for them to open up for inmates at all and they would have to wait for additional support from the other units.¹⁶³

Consequently, most of the managers and administrative staff had to work in the units between Friday and Monday, when there was only half a division on duty, with the result that their administrative work was suffering

The cells were crowded, with between 60 and 80 inmates in a cell. At one stage, the Centre had one unit accommodating up to 102 inmates in a cell with an official capacity for 25 to 32 inmates. In such circumstances, not all of the inmates had a bed or mattress, though they were given blankets to sleep on.¹⁶⁴ Prolonged lock-up in confined and overcrowded circumstances, and with limited time outside of the cell and opportunity for exercise, could only be profoundly unpleasant for the inmates.



The cells were crowded, with between 60 and 80 inmates in a cell. At one stage, the Centre had one unit accommodating up to 102 inmates in a cell with an official capacity for 25 to 32 inmates



The daily programme for inmates was as follows: inmates were unlocked early in the morning, counted, and given breakfast. The officials would then take inmates' complaints and requests. They would then be allowed outside to exercise and for the medical parade. Those that had visitors would be allowed to go to the visiting areas. Remand detainees were allowed only one visit per week. Inmates were accommodated in units according to which court they would be tried at. Visiting days had been allocated to the different court units. Lunch and supper were served at the same time, in contravention of section 8(5) of the Correctional Services Act. Inmates would then be counted and locked up again for the night.¹⁶⁵

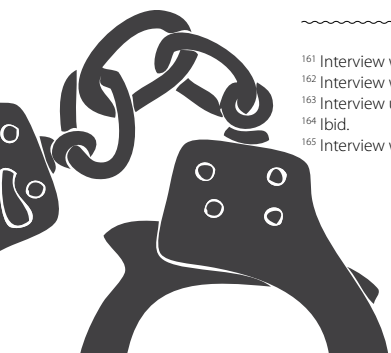
¹⁶¹ Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

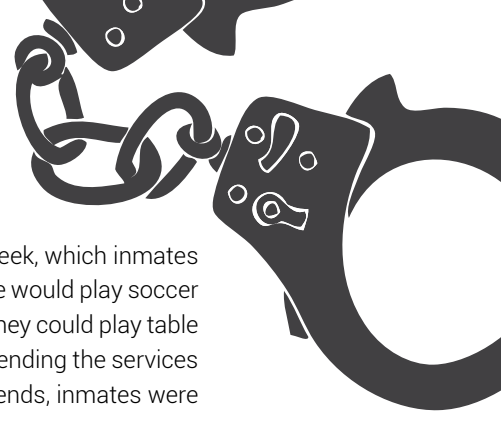
¹⁶² Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁶³ Interview unit manager, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with senior official (IR39), Johannesburg Medium A 23 October 2013.





Religious service providers were being allowed to run services during the week, which inmates could attend. There were no real recreational activities for the inmates. Some would play soccer during the exercise period and they were sometimes given board games or they could play table tennis.¹⁶⁶ There were also church services during weekends, when those attending the services were unlocked. The other inmates would remain locked up.¹⁶⁷ On the weekends, inmates were not getting any time to exercise.¹⁶⁸

Union officials working in the sections stated that the staff-shortages had severely hampered their ability to work within the structured day programme. When there were too few staff members and too many inmates, they were forced to do the daily counts in the cell, without even taking the inmates out of their cells.¹⁶⁹ Although legislation requires at least one hour of exercise per day, and management officials indicated that this was happening, security officials stated that they were not able to unlock all of the inmates each day for exercise. Officials indicated that inmates were allowed one hour of exercise on the day that they received visits. For the rest of the time, they were locked in their cells. They were only allowed out of their cells for about 30 minutes, twice a day, for the serving of meals.¹⁷⁰ For instance, researchers were told that in A1 unit, which had 15 cells, only two cells were being unlocked for exercise per day.¹⁷¹ This was in order to minimise the security risk to inmates and officials when inmates were out of the cells. Inmates accommodated in the higher floors were not always allowed down to the courtyard to exercise when they were unlocked. On the other hand, allowing inmates to mingle in the confined space of the corridor posed its own security risks, as it would be difficult to intervene in a fight.¹⁷² On weekends, the staff would open one floor at a time to allow the inmates time out of their cells. They would move inmates back inside before moving onto the next floor to have it open for a little time. Unfortunately, the corridors are very narrow, and on the higher floors there is no direct sunlight into the passages.

Although most inmates were kept locked up all day, a few inmates, such as the cleaners, would be allowed out of their cells during the day.¹⁷³

Staff members sometimes finished their activities early in the day. They would lock up the inmates between 14h30 and 15h30. Most of the staff would leave early, leaving a few members behind to handover to the night shift.¹⁷⁴ On weekends, staff might leave earlier.

Juvenile inmates between the ages of 18 and 21 years are held in C Unit. In C1, there were around 230 inmates. With both divisions working together, there were 12 staff members, including the unit manager, and one member at the gate. However, on weekends, the number of members would sometimes fall to five or even three members. There were insufficient members to take care of the diverse needs of this young inmate group. The staff tried to help locate the inmates' family members. They would also try to keep them busy with games and sports, but found it challenging to manage these activities. On weekends, they kept the inmates locked up all day except for their one hour of exercise, or if they wished to attend a religious service.¹⁷⁵ Some of the units allowed the juvenile inmates out during the day, while in other sections, they were kept locked up except for exercise time. Unlike the adult inmates, there were some programmes available for the juveniles, which were rendered by external service providers.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

¹⁶⁹ Interview with union officials, Johannesburg medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁷⁰ Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁷¹ Interview with Security officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

¹⁷² Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁷³ Interview with Security officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

¹⁷⁴ Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

High risk inmates were accommodated in single cells. Single cells were also used to accommodate those who are potentially at risk of harm by other inmates, such as transgender inmates, homosexual inmates and members of the SAPS.¹⁷⁶

Due to short-staffing, officials were often moved from one section to another in order to provide additional support. When all of the inmates were unlocked for roll-call, the dog unit members were brought in to provide additional support.¹⁷⁷

In addition to the daily programme, staff were also responsible for maintaining the safety and security of the inmates and staff generally. This involved the regular searching of inmates and the cells, and confiscating contraband or illegal articles from inmates. For mass searches, around 60 members needed to be assembled, sometimes including members of the dog unit. Just prior to the interview, members found four bullets secreted in the rectum of an inmate at reception. Despite a thorough search, the gun nor remaining bullets were not found.¹⁷⁸

4.2.2.3. Night shift

There are 12 units, so there ought to be 13 staff members on duty at night – in both shifts. This was not always possible due to staff-shortages, absenteeism and leave.¹⁷⁹

Similar to the Female Centre, Centre A also reported that staff would often utilise the unofficial pairing system at night. The first watch person would also work the second watch shift, and then their partner would work the first and second watch shifts the following day. This allowed people to rest on alternate days. However, the long shifts were contrary to the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, reflecting on the Duty Register as if the first and second watch people had worked in the correct shifts.¹⁸⁰

4.3. Groenpunt

Groenpunt is situated in the Free State/ Northern Cape region. There are three centres at Groenpunt: the Maximum Security Centre, Medium Security Centre and Juvenile Centre, totalling around 3,200 inmates. The research team visited the Juvenile Centre and the Maximum Security Centre on 7, 8 and 10 October 2013.

The Centre is situated on a vast property, which also has an agricultural centre. It is situated rather off the beaten track, and is about 20 minutes from the nearest town or village. The access road to the Centre is badly potholed and there have been long-term road works on the road leading to the Centre, which regulates the traffic through stop-go procedures. Though many of the staff stay on the premises, many of them also stay off the premises.



The list of grievances presented by the inmates referred to...
officials' failure to maintain a safe and secure environment



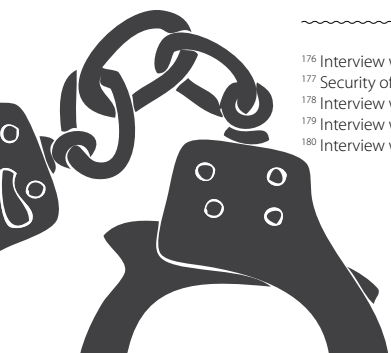
¹⁷⁶ Interview with senior official (IR39), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

¹⁷⁷ Security officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2014.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

¹⁷⁹ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

¹⁸⁰ Interview with senior official, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.





4.3.1. Maximum Security Centre

- ▶ Approved accommodation: 1 193, but 300 spaces were decommissioned
- ▶ Number of inmates: 1 593 (133% occupied)
- ▶ Approved staff establishment: 307
- ▶ Posts filled: 287
- ▶ 'Warm bodies' at the Centre: 260 (27 staff members work in the Area Commissioner's office)
- ▶ Shift pattern:
 - 12 days working and 2 days off

4.3.1.1. Groenpunt riots

On 7 January 2013, there was a riot in the Maximum Centre, which was the subject of an inquiry by the South African Human Rights Commission¹⁸¹ and the Judicial Inspectorate of Correctional Services (JICS). The Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services also undertook an inquiry and visited the Centre on 16 January 2013, together with the Select Committee on Security and Constitutional Development.¹⁸² The incident was further discussed at the Portfolio Committee in May 2013.¹⁸³

According to the investigations, inmates had previously submitted a list of complaints to management, which had gone unattended.¹⁸⁴ On the day in question, inmates had been told that they would be allowed to play soccer, but they were kept in their cells until 11h00 (as the officials were attending a meeting), at which time it was too hot to play soccer. The inmates refused to enter their cells before lunch.¹⁸⁵ The inmates then demanded to see the Head of Correctional Centre and when they were unhappy with his response, demanded to see the Area Commissioner, but did not get to see him. The inmates then refused to go into their cells. The Emergency Support Team (EST) was brought in to try to force the inmates into their cells. Inmates started throwing rocks at officials and unrest erupted. Inmates broke open cell doors, set fire to mattresses and offices in the unit, looted the shops, and threw rocks at officials. The Emergency Response Teams (ERT) from Groenpunt, Boksburg and Baviaanspoort were brought in, as was the SAPS. The situation took two days to calm down. Twenty five inmates were immediately transferred, and later more than 400 were removed to other centres.¹⁸⁶ During the riots, and subsequent efforts to bring the Centre under control, nine officials were injured and 50 inmates were injured. However, the JICS reported that, ultimately, 104 inmates were injured.¹⁸⁷ On the day of the Portfolio Committee's visit to the Centre, an inmate was beaten by officials in retaliation for the stabbing of a warder. The inmate died of his injuries.¹⁸⁸

The list of grievances presented by the inmates referred to a range of issues such as poor food management and food shortages, infrastructural problems and a lack of attention to broken plumbing, poor rehabilitation programmes, poor case management, poor management of administrative activities leading to delays in appeals and grievances, exploitation of inmates by officials, and officials' failure to maintain a safe and secure environment.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸¹ South African Human Rights Commission. (3 August 2013) Report on Complaint Ref FS/1213/0350. In the matter of SAHRC (Own Initiative Groenpunt Riots) vs the Regional Commissioner of Correctional Services, Free State Northern Cape Region and Head of Prison, Groenpunt Correctional Centre. Available online on <http://www.sahrc.org.za/home/21/files/Groenpunt%20Report.pdf>, accessed 21 July 2014.

¹⁸² Report of the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Service on its visit to the Groenpunt Maximum Security Correctional Centre in the Free State Province, 6 March 2013. Available online on <http://www.pmg.org.za/files/doc/2013/comreports/130311pccorrectreport.htm>, Accessed 21 July 2014.

¹⁸³ See PMG report for the 8 May 2013, available online on <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20130508-department-correctional-services-predeterminedobjectives-briefing-ag-department-briefing-gang-related-incidents>, accessed 21 July 2014.

¹⁸⁴ Portfolio Committee report, para 2.2.2.

¹⁸⁸ Portfolio Committee report, para 4.

¹⁸⁹ Portfolio Committee report, Para 2.1.6.

The JICS Report raised the concern that extreme short-staffing was a major factor in the DCS's inability to prevent the riot. At the time of the riot, there were 728 inmates in the unit where the riots broke out and there were only about 10 officials to guard them. Despite this, all the inmates were unlocked at the same time. The JICS had raised concerns around short-staffing with the Regional Commissioner a year prior to the riot.¹⁹⁰ The DCS had also tried to summon off-duty staff to return to the Centre to help restore order. Members did not respond to the first alarm and a second alarm had to be issued. It was also claimed by the DCS that non-centre based officials were reluctant to respond to the call for assistance.¹⁹¹

“
The JICS report raised the concern that extreme short-staffing was a major factor in the DCS's inability to prevent the riot
”

The Portfolio Committee made a number of recommendations for the Minister to take up with the DCS. Many of them concerned the treatment of inmates and the need to strengthen their security and emergency procedures. They also called for an accurate breakdown of the staffing establishment, which properly reflects where employed staff members are working.¹⁹²

4.3.1.2. Staff establishment

The approved accommodation at the Maximum Centre is 1 193, but 300 of the cells were destroyed by a fire during the riots, so that the available accommodation was reduced to around 900. At the time of the research visit, 1 594 maximum-security inmates were being accommodated there. Accommodation levels were around 133 percent.

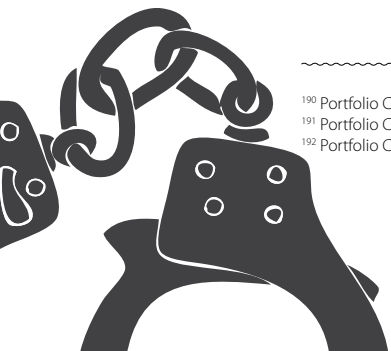
The Centre has two large units, Unit A and Unit B. Both units used to accommodate around 700 inmates each, but after the riots in January 2013, part of Unit A was destroyed and at the time of the research visit it only had space for between 230 and 300 inmates. Unit D accommodates those maximum inmates who have been upgraded to medium-security (around 350 inmates). These inmates would ordinarily be transferred to other medium security centres, but they are serving very long sentences, even though they are categorised as medium-security risk. Over time, some of these inmates will ordinarily be transferred to other centres. At the time of the study, unit C was still under construction, and once completed will house up to 350 inmates. There is also a hospital section, with two large wards and several single cells. A special care unit has single cells and acts as a segregation unit. It accommodates high-risk inmates. There were about nine inmates there at the time of the visit. There is also a kitchen unit, which houses those inmates working in the kitchen and as caterers. Most of the cells accommodate 30 to 40 inmates, though in D Unit there are fewer than 35 inmates per cell.

Maximum-security inmates were not allowed to work. The medium category inmates were allowed to do some work on the premises, working as monitors at the area commissioner's office and in the administration offices, and as cleaners. About 50 inmates had jobs.

¹⁹⁰ Portfolio Committee report, Para 2.2.6.

¹⁹¹ Portfolio Committee report, Para 2.2.7.

¹⁹² Portfolio Committee report, para 5.1.





The approved staff establishment is 307 and, at the time of the research, 287 posts were filled (see Table 4 above). 11 posts were vacant. 176 staff members were working in the units, while 66 were working in the administration offices. 27 officials work outside of the Centre, in administration in the Area Commissioner's office. These were people who elected to migrate to centre based staff, but who were still working in the area commissioner's office. This situation had remained unchanged since 2009, after the adoption of the OSD. These 27 officials did, however, work weekend shifts in the Maximum Centre. One person was a full-time shop steward, so, although he appeared on the establishment, he was not working in the Centre. There were 18 managers, including seven who were working in the Centre. There were seven unit managers. There was an overall staff-to-inmate ratio of around 1:6, which was higher than some of the other centres visited.

According to the respondents, no new staff had been added to the establishment following the riots. Rather, staff had since left through resignation, retirement and transfer.

There were seven medical staff, but no medical doctor. There were three social workers, but no psychologist for the Area or the Centre. There was one vacant post that was supposed to have been filled during 2013. There was only one educationalist working with 400 inmates.¹⁹³ One post has been advertised to employ another educationalist. Four staff members were responsible for vocational training. There was a small training centre that could train up to 20 inmates at a time, in painting, bricklaying and plastering. The artisans fell under the establishment of the Area Commissioner.



There was only one educationalist working with 400 inmates



It was reported that at one point there had been 12 nursing staff. At the time of the study, there were eight: one manager, six nurses and an auxiliary nurse. There were three vacancies for nursing positions. One of the nurses was due to take early retirement. Only one of the nurses was male, raising security concerns around the female nursing staff. A doctor would visit the Centre on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and a dentist was scheduled to come on Wednesdays.¹⁹⁴ A visiting psychiatrist was visiting the Centre once a month. The nursing staff complained that there were insufficient nurses to deal with the patient load.

At the time of the research visit, four of the nursing staff were on temporary incapacity leave and had not been able to work for a long period.¹⁹⁵

63 (23 percent) of the officials were female.

One of the concerns raised by the Portfolio Committee was the lack of ICCVs (Independent Correctional Centre Visitors) appointed to the Centre.¹⁹⁶ At the time of the research visit, there were three ICCVs working in the Centre.

¹⁹³ The DCS Staffing Guidelines indicate that there should be 1 educationalist per 15 inmates studying in the mainstream education system and one educational clerk per group of learners: para 1.11.52.

¹⁹⁴ Nursing staff (IR75), Groenpunt Maximum Correctional Centre, 10 October 2013

¹⁹⁵ Senior official (IR66), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 10 October 2013.

¹⁹⁶ Portfolio Committee report, para 3.12.1.

4.3.1.3. Shift pattern

At the time of the research visit, there were four shifts per day at the Maximum Centre. For the bulk of the staff, the day shift would start at 08h00, and end at 16h30. However, a small cohort of members would work from 06h00 to 13h30 in order to take over from the night shift and manage the breakfast shift. The early shift was usually performed by officials who live on the premises.

At night, first watch is from 16h00 to 23h30, and second watch is from 23h30 to 07h00. The shift system was one of the concerns raised by the Portfolio Committee in its enquiry regarding the riot, which expressed frustration at the DCS's responses to staff complaints about the system.¹⁹⁷

Table 8: The 12 x 2 (12 days on and two days off) Pattern

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
A	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	O	O
B	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	O	O	W	W	W	W	W	W	W

Since 2009, the Centre had been following the 12 x 2 shift pattern. This meant that officials worked for 12 days and were off for two days. At one stage, they tried a pattern where staff worked four days in and four days out, but it failed dismally since it meant that, at all times, only half of the staff complement was working.¹⁹⁸ Many staff wanted to take leave over weekends, which left the Centre short-staffed. In an attempt to manage this, the Centre tried to impose a limit on the number of people who could take leave at any given time; however, there were always people who needed to take emergency leave. Many of the staff would also take the two days of sick leave within the eight week cycle as additional leave to get time off.

The shift pattern meant that both divisions of staff would work every day, except for weekends, when there was only one division on duty. To deal with the weekend shortages, administrative staff and management would work in the units on the weekends when they were on duty.¹⁹⁹

The shift pattern also meant that staff had to work for long periods before they could take time off to rest, and many of them reported that they were exhausted. There was also little financial incentive to work over weekends, as they would be paid only a small portion of their salary, which, for a junior staff member, may only amount to about R200 to R300 extra for working for two Sundays a month.²⁰⁰ Staff members also had limited time to spend with their families.

The teachers and social workers worked Mondays to Fridays.

4.3.1.4. Working in the units

Although short-staffing was raised as a contributing factor in the January riots, no new staff had been recruited to the Centre. Instead, a few had since left.²⁰¹ Some of the staff had been suspended. The Head of Correctional Centre was transferred, and the Area Commissioner was suspended for a period, but had recently returned to work at the time of the research visit. Most interview respondents felt that they were short-staffed and that there were insufficient

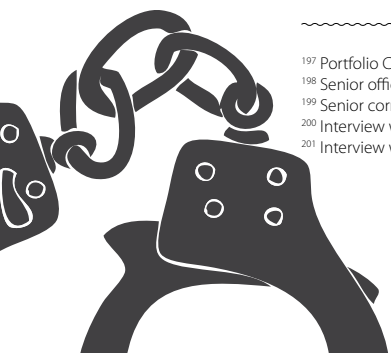
¹⁹⁷ Portfolio Committee report, para 3.2.1.

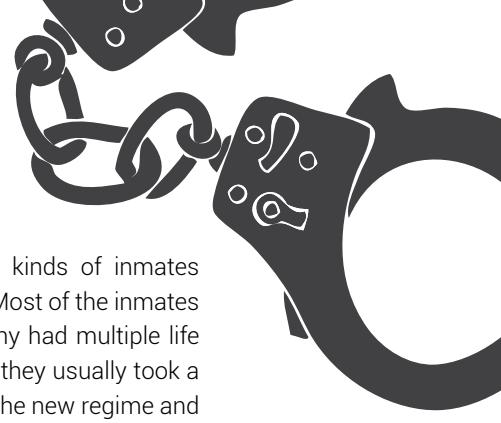
¹⁹⁸ Senior official (IR66), Groenpunt Correctional Centre, 9 October 2013.

¹⁹⁹ Senior correctional official (IR67), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²⁰⁰ Interview with senior official (IR66), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²⁰¹ Interview with senior official (IR65), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.





personnel to fulfil the Centre's requirements. Many felt that, given the kinds of inmates incarcerated in the facility, the staff complement should have been bigger. Most of the inmates were serving sentences of more than 20 years of imprisonment, and many had multiple life sentences for violent crimes. New inmates were admitted every week and they usually took a while to settle down, posing more of a risk while they were getting used to the new regime and their lengthy sentences.

Although the Centre was using a shift pattern that had most of the staff members on duty throughout the week, they still complained of short-staffing. The biggest drain on resources was the escorting of the maximum-security inmates who required two officials per inmate. Inmates needed to be escorted when they went to court. Some of them had further charges outstanding in court. Some of the inmates also needed to be escorted to the doctor. On a busy day, 30 or 40 officials might be needed to escort inmates to various appointments. Inmates also needed to be escorted to their various work teams, training workshops and classes. Monitors did not need to be escorted.²⁰²

Another requirement was to staff the external hospitals where inmates were admitted. There were between seven and 10 officials permanently working at Sebokeng hospital.

The units are broken up into sub-units, or groups of cells, and a case officer is assigned to each sub-group. This means that officials are expected to work both as a security officer and as a case officer.²⁰³



To deal with the weekend shortages, administrative staff and management would work in the units on the weekends when they were on duty



The daily programme was as follows: inmates were un-mastered at 06h00. The inmates were then counted and fed between 06h00 and 08h30. Those who needed to go out were unlocked. Inmates in Unit D were unlocked so that they could eat in the dining hall, whereas inmates in A and B Units were fed from small serveries in the units themselves. This was a security measure designed to stop the frequent fights that occurred when inmates were unlocked to go to the kitchen.

In the A and B Units, officials would unlock about five cells at a time, to give the inmates an opportunity to exercise. Inmates would be then be locked up again. Sometimes, due to short-staffing, inmates would only be unlocked to get their food and they would not be given a specific exercise time. In fact, inmates might only be given their hour of exercise once every four days.²⁰⁴ Following the riots, the Centre had received instructions from the regional office not to unlock too many cells at the same time.²⁰⁵ This may have alleviated the security concerns, but it was affecting the rights of inmates to exercise. The ICCVs reported that inmates had complained about the shortage of exercise.²⁰⁶ Those in D Unit, who were not working, were mostly unlocked during the day but remained in their unit.

²⁰² Interview with senior officials (IR65), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²⁰³ Senior correctional officials (IR67), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²⁰⁴ Unit staff, Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 10 October 2013.

²⁰⁵ Unit staff, Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 10 October 2013.

²⁰⁶ Interview with ICCVs, Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 10 October 2013.

The inmates would be given lunch at around 12h00. Officials would take lunch either before or after inmates had eaten lunch. When the officials came back to the units at 14h00, the inmates were served supper. Due to the shortage of staff, inmates were usually not fed their prescribed three daily meals, but were usually served lunch and dinner together.²⁰⁷

Between 09h00 and 12h00, inmates would be given the opportunity to attend programmes, work or school. Not all inmates were occupied during these hours. During classroom hours, or when social workers were busy with inmates, there was usually no security presence in the room.²⁰⁸

Between 08h00 and 13h30, when all the daytime staff were on duty, there could be up to 15 officials working in B Unit (ratio of 1:52). Usually, there would be about 12. When the early shift left, this number would then be reduced to around 10. However, there were times when the number of officials in the units was reduced to as low as four (in Unit B, this would amount to a staff-to-inmate ratio of 1:197). Sometimes, the EST officials were called in to assist.²⁰⁹ Should a member realise that there were insufficient staff in a unit, he would then have to lock up the inmates. Alternatively, additional members could be drawn from other units, or from those on standby.²¹⁰ However, the greatest impact of this short-staffing would be on the inmates who would be denied the opportunity to attend their daily programmes, to exercise or to move around outside of their cells.



Due to the shortage of staff, inmates were usually not fed their prescribed three daily meals, but were usually served lunch and dinner together



Inmates were locked up at around 16h30, though the inmates were required to be in their cells by 15h30. Although 16h30 was the official lock-up time, the time in which inmates could attend programmes was even more limited – between 09h00 and 12h00.²¹¹

Over weekends, only half of the staff complement would be on duty. There would still be activities taking place, such as religious services, sports and visits. As mentioned above, many staff would take leave over the weekend, reducing the numbers even further. There were also sometimes funerals that staff would want to attend. Often, due to last minute leave, the duty roster would have to be re-arranged.

There has been quite a lot of violence in the Centre in the past, and at the time of the visit, there was a level of violence that had persisted. Inmates would be stabbed and beaten by other inmates. The Number gangs were strong and well organised in the Centre.²¹² The threat of inmate violence felt ever present. Officials carried tonfas and pepper stream (a more direct form of pepper spray) at all times. Some officials also had to carry a neutraliser for the pepper stream. Oddly, officials said that violent incidents were less likely to occur over weekends.

Female officials were mainly assigned to gate duty. A few of the female staff worked in the units with the men. Two women were assigned to Unit B and three in Unit D. There, the women were assigned a male partner so that they could always work in pairs. Women were not supposed to be left alone in the units with the inmates. The staff had to be vigilant when the women were on duty. If there was a fight in the unit, then the women would be instructed to stand where they could be seen by the other officials or they had to run to the gate.²¹³

²⁰⁷ Senior correctional official (IR67), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²⁰⁸ Security officials and professional staff, Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 10 October 2013.

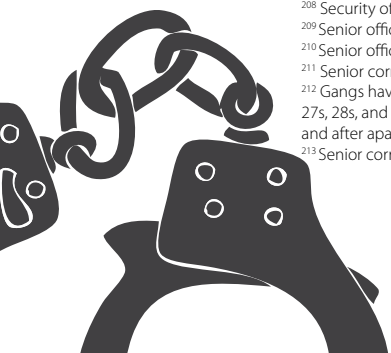
²⁰⁹ Senior official (IR65), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²¹⁰ Senior official (IR66), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²¹¹ Senior correctional official (IR67), Groenpunt Maximum, 8 October 2013.

²¹² Gangs have existed and flourished in South African prisons for over 100 years. Predominant among them are the Number Gangs, - the 26s, 27s, 28s, and the Airforce gang. For more information, see Jonny Steinberg. (2004). Nongoloz's Children: Western Cape prison gangs during and after apartheid. Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

²¹³ Senior correctional official (IR67), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.





Although this would protect the women, it would also reduce the number of total officials on hand to deal with the situation. There was a reluctance about having women on the staff, as they were seen to 'put a drain on our services. It would be better if we could have more males.'²¹⁴ The women were not able to patrol, or conduct searches on inmates, so they were seen by some male officials as being of limited value in the units.

The Centre relied heavily on its staff for security. The electric fences were unreliable and most of the time they did not work. Few of the CCTV cameras were functional, and the Centre did not have dogs patrolling the perimeters.

There should have been 19 officials assigned to each of the two watches on the night shift. Due to short-staffing, the Centre was only operating with 10 officials assigned to each watch. The rest of the staff were assigned to the day shift in order to increase numbers. Unfortunately, this meant that there were fewer officials assigned to various posts than required.²¹⁵ This also created a security risk in the Centre.



However, the greatest impact of this short-staffing would be on the inmates who would be denied the opportunity to attend their daily programmes, to exercise or to move around outside of their cells



Due to a shortage of staff, particularly professional staff, not all inmates were able to attend rehabilitation or development programmes. According to senior officials, programmes were offered to inmates closer to the time that an inmate was due for release,²¹⁶ though this might mean years or decades, given the duration of some of the inmates' sentences at the maximum-security facility. The development programmes were being run by correctional staff, whereas the therapeutic programmes were being offered by social workers.

4.3.2. Groenpunt Youth Centre

- ▶ Approved accommodation: 255
- ▶ Number of inmates: 156 (61% occupied)
- ▶ Approved staff establishment: 98
- ▶ Financed posts: 89
- ▶ Posts filled: 88
- ▶ 'Warm bodies' at the Centre: 81
- ▶ Shift pattern:
 - 12 days working and 2 days off

The Youth Centre is situated some distance from the Maximum Centre. The Centre has accommodation for 255 inmates. At the time of the visit, 156 inmates were being accommodated there. It was the only centre visited that was underutilised and only operating at 61 percent of its capacity. It accommodates sentenced youth inmates from 18 to 25 years of age.

²¹⁴ Interview with senior official (IR65), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²¹⁵ Senior official (IR66), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013. For security reasons, we have not indicated where those shortages are.

²¹⁶ Senior correctional official (IR67), Groenpunt Maximum, 8 October 2013.

The Centre was designated as a Centre of Excellence in 2005. The young inmates are accommodated in a series of free-standing bungalows or cells. These hold 10, 15 or 20 inmates. Two of the bungalows were out of commission at the time of our visit.

The ideal staff establishment for the Youth Centre is 98 (see Table 4). 89 posts are financed and 88 were filled at the time of the visit. The overall staff-to-inmate ratio was a healthy 1:2.8. There were two staff members working at the Management Area office and 16 managers working at the Centre. Five of those managers were working inside the Centre with the inmates. 36 officials were working inside the penal institution and 17 were working in the administration block. This included the night shift officials, but excluded those working on the external gates. Including those working at the gate would mean that there were 40 custodial or security officials. 16 of these officials were dedicated security officials. About seven of the people who appeared on the establishment worked elsewhere in the Management Area: in the dog unit, in transport, etc.

The Centre was well appointed with professional staff. There were two nurses, but one was on maternity leave at the time of the interview. The nurses from the Maximum and Medium Centres at Groenpunt would be called upon for standby at the Youth Centre. Nursing staff worked Monday to Friday, with overtime pay on weekends and public holidays.²¹⁷

There were two social workers. Seven staff members were responsible for educational activities. There were also six inmate tutors responsible for teaching. Six staff members were working in workshops or on vocational training with the inmates. Educationalists and vocational staff were considered to be non-centre based and were working a 40-hour week with slightly less pay. There were no posts available for qualified artisans at the Centre, and the vocational staff members were mostly correctional staff who had an interest in teaching vocational skills.²¹⁸ The Centre had a well-equipped pottery studio, but no longer had a member to teach pottery. The Centre was registered to issue N Certificates, but there were no staff qualified to teach these skills.

The officials complained that there were insufficient teachers and that they were not able to accommodate all the inmates. There were also infrastructure constraints. Because of this, case officers or security officials were sometimes trained to render programmes for the inmates, though a senior official felt this was not always successful.²¹⁹ Inmates did not always qualify for consideration by the Correctional Supervision and Parole Board because they had not completed the required programmes.

There were no longer any artisans at the Centre. They had left when the new OSD was introduced and they were not regarded as centre based staff.

Women made up 29 percent of the staff (26 members). The women were not regarded as being at such a high risk as in the Maximum Centre. Some officials felt that the women worked in a very 'hands-on' way with the inmates. They were also responsible for searching the bungalows.

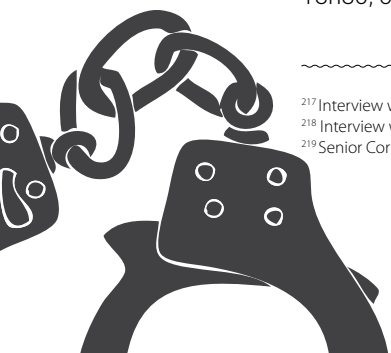
4.3.2.1. Shift system

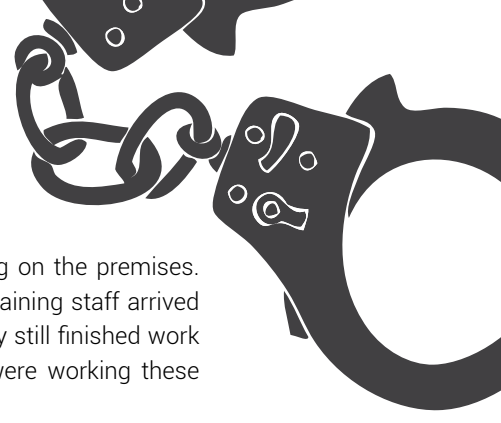
The Centre was following the same shift system as the Maximum Centre. Staff would work for 12 days and then take two days off. Staff would work a seven and a half hour day, or eight and a half hours if they took lunch. Like the Maximum Centre, there were four shifts a day: 06h00 to 13h30; 08h00 to 16h30; 16h00 to 23h30; and 23h30 to 07h00.

²¹⁷ Interview with professional staff, Groenpunt Youth Centre, 10 October 2013.

²¹⁸ Interview with professional staff, Groenpunt Youth Centre, 10 October 2013.

²¹⁹ Senior Correctional Official (IR48), Groenpunt Youth Centre, 7 October 2013.





The officials who came to work early were usually those who were living on the premises. Though some staff indicated that these staff tended to wait until the remaining staff arrived on duty, at 08h00 or 09h00, before they unlocked (for safety reasons), they still finished work earlier. There was a suggestion that it was often the white staff who were working these favourable early shifts.²²⁰

Social workers and teachers worked Mondays to Fridays, from 07h00 to 15h00, with no lunch break. Nurses worked from 08h00 to 16h30, and on alternate weekends.

The centre based staff were divided into two divisions, with about 39 in each. However, when one member looked through the list of members on his division, he excluded eight who were not available to work, or who had left the Centre. That left his division with only 31 members.²²¹ From this number, at least six would be assigned to night duty. Five or six of these were available to work in the units during the day. There was a very tight margin for moving people around the Centre.

One official felt that the nighttime staff members were reluctant to walk around and conduct proper patrols of the Centre. Because of its structure, it is difficult to patrol. A senior staff member said that it was necessary to discipline staff for not carrying out their responsibilities.²²²

4.3.2.2. Work in the units

With so few inmates, the Centre was being run with only one unit under the unit management system. There were six case officers, one case management supervisor and one unit manager.

The daily programme went as follows: inmates would be unlocked at 06h00 for breakfast. At 09h00 they would go to school until 11h30, when they took a break for lunch. Inmates collected lunch in the dining hall and ate in their houses. Three hours is a very short period for a learning programme. After school, some inmates attended their skills development workshops. Programmes did not run everyday because there were fewer staff members on duty in the afternoon, and not always enough to run the programmes. At 15h30, inmates would have supper and at 16h00, the Centre would start its lock-up. However, most respondents indicated that the three meals system was not working, suggesting perhaps that inmates were often served their lunch together with their supper. By 16h30, the day-staff would leave to go home.

All juveniles were required to attend school. There was also a range of development programmes available to them, including sewing, welding, carpentry, bricklaying and painting, though subject to the limited number of staff and infrastructure available. Unfortunately, those inmates who arrived at the Centre after June were not able to attend school, and would only be registered for the following academic year.

There ought to be eight security officials in the units during the day, while others would be deployed on the tower posts, at the schools and in the sports area. However, it was not often that the full number of staff was available. There were usually only six case officers or security personnel in the units on a daily basis.²²³

There ought also to be eight staff on each of the two night watches, but this was seldom the case. Usually, the night watch operated with six members.²²⁴ Staff felt that there was still somewhat of a shortage of staff, especially at night, when there might only be four or five

²²⁰ Interview with security officials (IR57 and IR58), Groenpunt Youth Centre, 8 October 2013.

²²¹ Senior correctional official (IR49), Groenpunt Youth Centre, 7 October 2013.

²²² Senior correctional official (IR49), Groenpunt Youth Centre, 7 October 2013.

²²³ Senior correctional official (IR49), Groenpunt Youth Centre, 7 October 2013.

²²⁴ Senior correctional official (IR49), Groenpunt Youth Centre, 7 October 2013.

members on duty.²²⁵ The numbers were being maintained to some extent by taking staff from the weekend day shift.²²⁶ There was only one division on duty over weekends, but there were still activities for the inmates including sport and religious activities. Inmates also received visits over weekends and on public holidays. Sufficient staff were required to manage the visits, and staff had to be deployed to manage both the contact and non-contact visiting areas.

If a staff member was sick, then a replacement would need to be found. Replacements for the night shift were taken from the day shift staff of the same division. However, because there were such small staff numbers, and an even smaller replacement pool, the Centre would often operate with a skeleton staff.

There had been fights among the young inmates. Officials said that the inmates would smuggle cigarettes into the Centre and steal from one another. This would lead to some fights.

Unlike other centres, the Centre did not have the demand of daily inmate escorts, so the staff were not often out of the Centre.



Unfortunately, those inmates who arrived at the Centre after June were not able to attend school, and would only be registered for the following academic year



²²⁵ Senior Correctional Official (IR48), Groenpunt Youth Centre, 7 October 2013.

²²⁶ Senior correctional official (IR49), Groenpunt Youth Centre, 7 October 2013.





5

General concerns emanating from the centres



5.1. Shift pattern

Each Management Area visited was using a different shift pattern and in most cases more than one shift pattern was in force at the same time. In addition, each Area was using a different shift system, which required staff to work a different number of hours. Some had time for a lunch break and others did not.

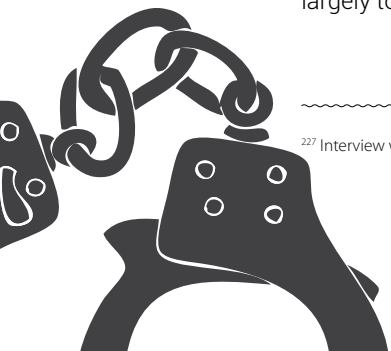
None of the staff reported feeling particularly happy with the shift system. With the exception of the 12 hours x 2 system (two days working and two days off) at Witbank, most staff had to work for long periods before being allowed to take a weekend or time off for rest. However, staff were then working 12-hour days. Some of the staff at Witbank also worked the 10 x 4 pattern, with shorter working days.

The 12 days x 2 pattern (12 days of continuous work followed by two days off), followed at Groenpunt, seemed the most exhausting system of all. Johannesburg Medium A staff felt that the 10 x 4 shift pattern was a nicer pattern for staff, but that there were insufficient staff to make it work. On extended weekends, there were too few staff members for the Centre to function effectively.²²⁷

The biggest challenge, however, was that no matter which shift pattern was used, there were periods when only half the staff members were working. Those days were confined to weekends at Groenpunt, and to four days at Johannesburg, whilst at Witbank there was no time when the whole staff was on duty, leaving the Centre to operate at half capacity at all times. The daily activities of each centre were constrained when only half of the staff were on duty, severely limiting the movements and activities of inmates. In many instances, the Centre was not complying with its constitutional and legislative requirements in ensuring adequate exercise, access to health, development and rehabilitation programmes. More fundamentally, in most centres visited, inmates were spending most of the day, as well as the whole night, locked up, usually in overcrowded cells. The human dignity of inmates was compromised.

When the new OSD was introduced, its primary aim was to reduce the cost of overtime payment to staff. But it was also intended to allow correctional centres to offer a full service to inmates seven days a week. From the information obtained during this research project, this seems largely to have failed.

²²⁷ Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.





5.2. Challenges posed by short-staffing

Every centre visited considered that they were understaffed and required more staff. The different professional groups also felt that they were understaffed and unable to cope with the workload. This was especially exacerbated by the shift patterns, which meant that, at times, the centres operated at only half the capacity.

One of the most frequently cited concerns around the shortage of security officials was around the need to escort inmates to court and hospitals. For example, Witbank services about 35 courts, which are sometimes situated some distance away. Taking inmates to court is a priority for the Centre. The Correctional Services Guidelines require that every maximum-security inmate be escorted by two officials. If there are eight inmates that need to be escorted, then 16 officials are required. Officials are also required to escort inmates internally to the doctor and to social workers. There are many times when the centres just do not have sufficient personnel.²²⁸ At one centre, the staff advised that if the centre is short of members in the external security team, then they are obliged to draw on internal security staff who are working in the sections, leaving the sections short-staffed. Sometimes the centre calls upon the Emergency Support Team (EST) to escort inmates.

When there are insufficient security staff members, personnel strength is drawn from other places, even from management. One of the managers said, 'Sometimes, even as managers we have to do the job done by correctional officials'.²²⁹

Unit managers spoke about the daily problem of staff arriving late for their shifts. Despite trying to introduce disciplinary measures, this problem persists. Staff from the previous shift must cover the shortfall until the replacement arrives. Alternatively, there is a personnel gap for that period.²³⁰



Sometimes there are just two of you in the unit. One of you must stay in the unit and look after the inmates, and the other must escort them to their programmes, or to the hospital or wherever. Then you swap. At the end of the day you are just exhausted. But we try our best. And you make sure that everything gets done accordingly



Officials spoke about how tiring it was trying to manage with a shortage of staff. One case officer said, 'Sometimes there are just two of you in the unit. One of you must stay in the unit and look after the inmates, and the other must escort them to their programmes, or to the hospital or wherever. Then you swap. At the end of the day you are just exhausted. But we try our best. And you make sure that everything gets done accordingly'.²³¹

Union officials and management said that they have repeatedly raised concerns with management about the shortage of staff.

There are real concerns about staff safety with the shortage of staff. It was very pronounced in the larger centres and where the real staff-to-inmate ratio was very small. Nonetheless, there had been surprisingly few incidents where staff safety was severely threatened, probably because the centres took careful measures to prevent this. However, as can be seen from the events of the Groenpunt riots in 2013, there is always the potential for a grievance to be turned into a real security situation, which is only exacerbated when there are too few staff on hand.

²²⁸ Senior correctional official (IR3), Witbank, 25 September 2013.

²²⁹ Senior security official (IR4), Witbank, 25 September 2013.

²³⁰ Interview with unit managers, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

²³¹ Interview with Case officer, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

There have been a couple of staff injured in Johannesburg Centre A, mainly due to staff intervening in a fight between inmates.

Some of the staff, particularly those of the older generation, thought that many staff at the correctional centres were not committed. Some thought that the correctional services could be more effective if people with the 'correct attitude' were employed, rather than people who some staff described as not having passion or understanding for the job.

Many of the staff felt that, due to the short-staffing, they were able to run a relatively trouble-free centre 'by the grace of God'. Although there were too few staff, most of the centres had not had any major security breach in the last couple of years preceding the study. They attributed this to the relationship of trust built up between inmates and staff over the years. They also said that it helped to keep inmates busy – something most centres were unable to do due to short-staffing and inadequate physical space to keep inmates occupied.

Some staff expressed the desire to work in a safer environment and would therefore want more officials to be present. There was an understanding that some of the inmates are potentially dangerous.²³²

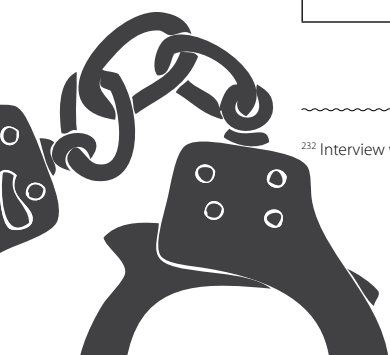
5.3. Impact of short-staffing on inmates

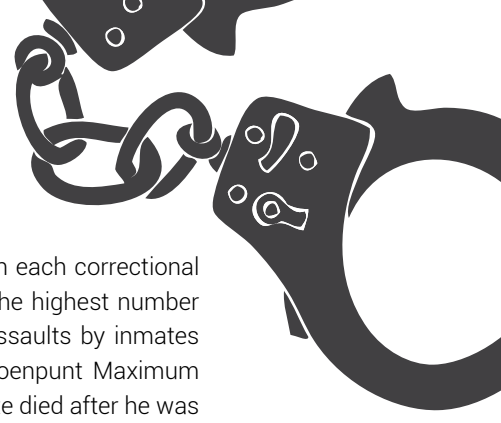
Short-staffing impacts on the safety of inmates. When they are out of their cells, their movements need to be closely monitored, and there needs to be sufficient staff to control their movements and to respond should any problem arise.

Table 9: Assaults and Deaths in Correctional Centres: 2013/2013 year

Centre	Assaults, official on inmates	Assaults, inmate on inmate	Assaults, inmate on official	Deaths	Un-natural deaths
Witbank Correctional Centre	Figures not available				
Johannesburg Female Centre		20		9	
Johannesburg Medium A	25	277		27	3
Groenpunt Maximum Centre	139 (116 from January 2013)	91	1	22	
Groenpunt Youth Centre	2	32			

²³² Interview with case officers, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013..





As can be seen from Table 9, there were a number of reported assaults in each correctional centre, though there may have been many more which are unreported. The highest number of assaults recorded was in Johannesburg Medium A, and these were assaults by inmates on inmates. There were also a large number of reported assaults at Groenpunt Maximum Centre. Although it was reported by the Portfolio Committee that one inmate died after he was assaulted by officials in January 2013,²³³ his apparently unnatural death was not reflected in the statistics given to the researchers.

The medical staff at Johannesburg Medium A stated that they suture inmates on a daily basis following fights. They might need treatment from blunt force injury or lacerations by sharp instruments. This happened often during the day. The person might be treated in the clinic, or referred to hospital. A few months before the interview, a person was stabbed, but died before the medical staff could take him to hospital.²³⁴ There is an ambulance based at the Area and this can be used to transport a person to hospital. Alternatively, the staff can call a private ambulance to take a person to hospital. Inmates are handcuffed during the transport and the vehicle is followed by security officials.²³⁵

When fights happen during the day, as they often do around lock-up time in the juvenile section, then staff will have to remain on duty in order to separate the inmates and to refer them for treatment when this is necessary.²³⁶ Staff felt that fights happened most often during the day when inmates could move around outside of their cells. Inmates might steal things from other inmates, such as the washing from the washing line in the courtyard. The centre does not do laundry for the remand inmates, but gives them a bar of Sunlight soap with which they must keep themselves, their clothes and bedding clean. The centre does not issue linen bedding, but does give inmates a blanket.²³⁷ Because these items are limited, they can be a desirable commodity among inmates.



Many of the staff felt that, due to the short-staffing, they were able to run a relatively trouble-free centre by the 'Grace of God'



One of the periods identified as high risk was when inmates are given meals. As is evidenced from the discussion on individual centres, most centres have an inadequate number of staff to manage meal times safely. When inmates are taken to collect their meals, they should be guarded by officials to make sure that nothing happens to them. One official said, 'but, if there are 180 inmates and three officials, how are they going to help in that situation?'²³⁸ Most centres appeared to have adopted a strategy of serving meals in the inmates' cells and only allowing a few cells out to collect food at a time, rather than unlocking a whole section together. At Johannesburg Female Centre, during the long weekend, the staff fetch the meals and call the inmates to come and collect it at the kitchen in the section. If there is only one official in the section at the time, she will be alone at mealtime as well.²³⁹

²³³ Report of the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Service on its visit to the Groenpunt Maximum Security Correctional Centre in the Free State Province, 6 March 2013. Available online on <http://www.pmg.org.za/files/doc/2013/comreports/130311pccorrectreport.htm>, Accessed 21 July 2014, para 4.

²³⁴ Interview with senior health care professional (IR40), Johannesburg medium A, 23 October 2013.

²³⁵ Interview with senior health care professional (IR40), Johannesburg medium A, 23 October 2013.

²³⁶ Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

²³⁷ Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

²³⁸ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

²³⁹ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

Some staff felt that inmates were likely to take advantage when there were fewer staff on duty and were more likely to 'misbehave'.²⁴⁰ One member stated that inmates were most likely to fight over weekends when only half the number of staff members were on duty.²⁴¹ The periods of greatest risk were between October and January when gang members seek promotions within the gangs. They seek promotions through 'sacrifice' in which 'blood must flow'. This is when inmates are likely to stab one another or officials.²⁴² When there is a fight, the inmates will be separated, and a member will take the inmates to the office in the unit to try and resolve the issue. This might mean that there will be fewer staff left to keep an eye on the remaining inmates in the unit.²⁴³

Another consequence of short-staffing is that inmates, other than those in schools or programmes, are locked up for the greater portion of the day. Probably the most pronounced staff-shortages were at Johannesburg Centre A. It would be impossible, with the existing staff numbers and especially over the long weekends, for the staff to manage the population if they were unlocked during the day. Although management indicated that inmates were unlocked during the day, unit staff reported that inmates are kept inside their cells for most of the day, except when they were unlocked so that they could collect their meals from the serving area, for a period of exercise, visits by family, and visits to the clinic. However, as discussed earlier, inmates are not regularly given their prescribed daily hour of exercise.

Most officials agreed that short-staffing impacts on the daily routine and experience of inmates. They often spend more time locked up in their cells during these times and are often only to be unlocked during meal times. Also, many of them do not get escorted to programmes, educational classes, or to social workers. The confinement over long periods leads to stress and frustration among inmates. One official stated, 'that is when they do their mischief', and they get involved in gang activities and fights.²⁴⁴ Particularly in crowded cells, inmates have limited space to move around. It may lead to fights over small irritations.



Another consequence of short-staffing is that inmates, other than those in schools or programmes, are locked up for the greater portion of the day



In many centres, inmates are not allowed out of their cells for exercise every day. Even when they are, the opportunities for structured or organised exercise are very limited and most inmates use this time to socialise with other inmates, walk or just sit or stand around. In some centres the inmates can play soccer. A medical practitioner said that the lack of exercise has a negative impact on the health of inmates and may lead to more medical complaints.²⁴⁵

Sexual violence and abuse happens most often when inmates are locked in their cells. Long lock-up periods could also increase the risk of sexual violence. Some officials admitted that sexual violence was a problem in correctional centres, but that it was seldom reported. Inmates were afraid of reporting it and they were often guarded by other inmates so that they did not have

²⁴⁰ Interview with case officers, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

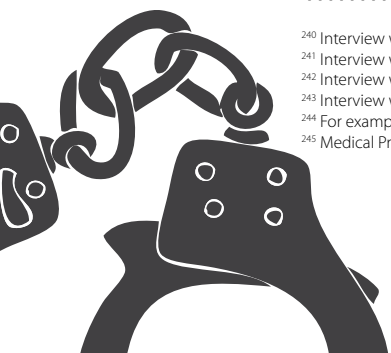
²⁴¹ Interview with unit managers, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

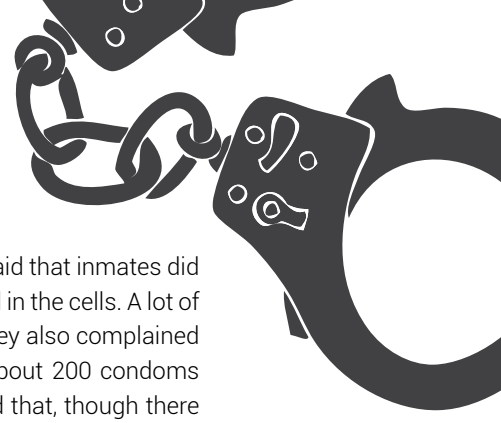
²⁴² Interview with unit managers, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

²⁴³ Interview with unit managers, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

²⁴⁴ For example, senior correctional official (IR67), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²⁴⁵ Medical Practitioner (IR75), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 10 October 2013.





the opportunity to report it to officials.²⁴⁶ The medical staff at the centres said that inmates did complain to them about the sexual abuse, rape and 'sodomy' that happened in the cells. A lot of the time the inmates sought help around consensual sexual activity, but they also complained of rape, especially in the juvenile sections.²⁴⁷ The medical staff put out about 200 condoms daily and most of these would be taken by lunchtime.²⁴⁸ The ICCV believed that, though there were many instances of sexual violence occurring after lock-up, not many inmates reported it directly. They were more likely to give hints of sexual assault. If the inmate was to report sexual violence, then the SAPS would be called so that the inmate would lay a charge of rape.²⁴⁹

If someone does report sexual violence, then it must be reported to the SAPS and an internal disciplinary process must be initiated for the alleged perpetrator. Sometimes the perpetrator will be moved to a single cell so that the denial of privileges, as part of the punishment, can be effected.²⁵⁰ People can also be demoted in their privilege groups.

The sentence plan is crucial to prepare for an inmate's rehabilitation. This is challenging as most of the inmates, especially those serving long sentences, only attend the programmes when it is time for them to go home, whereas it might be more helpful if they attended programmes when they are admitted so that case officers can monitor their progress. But, due to short-staffing or a lack of social workers, the programmes are delivered at a slow pace to inmates.²⁵¹

The administration around inmates also suffers through short-staffing. Case files cannot be kept up to date. This might impact on the readiness of cases being forwarded to the Parole Board, and in turn may result in a delay in the consideration of parole.²⁵² This is exacerbated by the fact that there is a backlog of cases to be heard by the Correctional Supervision and Parole Board. At most centres, the staff admitted to having out of date case files.

A psychologist thought that it would be in the best interests of inmates if there were more staff. Staff would have less stress and they would be more able to be rehabilitators, as defined by the White Paper.²⁵³

A shortage of staff impacts on the inmates' ability to see the clinical staff. If there are too few officials to escort an inmate to the clinic, then they might not see a nurse that day. Similarly, at night, if the officials do not respond to a person's cry for help, then they will not be attended to.²⁵⁴ Medical staff also said that, at times, short-staffing meant that there were no escorting officials to take inmates to the hospital for treatment.²⁵⁵

Due to short-staffing and stressful working conditions, staff often get irritated or mistreat the inmates. An ICCV at Johannesburg Medium A felt that there were occasions where officials assaulted inmates. However, she felt that inmates did not usually report this for fear of reprisals from the officials.²⁵⁶

²⁴⁶ Senior correctional official (IR67), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²⁴⁷ Interview with senior health care professional (IR40), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

²⁴⁸ Interview with senior health care professional (IR40), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

²⁴⁹ Interview with ICCV, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

²⁵² Senior correctional official (IR67), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

²⁵³ Interview with psychologist, Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

²⁵⁴ Interview with senior health care professional (IR40), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

²⁵⁵ Medical staff (IR75), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 10 October 2013.

²⁵⁶ Interview with ICCV, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

The shortage of staff impacts on the work of the ICCVs. When the centre is short-staffed from Friday to Monday, there is often no security official to escort the ICCV into the unit to see an inmate with whom they have an appointment.²⁵⁷ If there is an urgent complaint or the ICCV needs to follow-up with an inmate, the officials do bring inmates to see the ICCV in the offices.²⁵⁸

Short-staffing also affects the members' ability to address complaints and requests raised by inmates. Members have to try and resolve a whole range of issues, such as resolving disputes regarding allegations of theft, assault, or attending to charges of rape. They also have to contact the inmates' families.²⁵⁹ Table 9 above illustrates that there are a number of reported cases of assault by members on inmates. This number was especially high in Groenpunt, though the majority of assaults occurred during the riots in January 2013.

We were not able to get disaggregated statistics on the number of unnatural versus natural deaths. We were advised that deaths are considered 'unnatural' until an enquiry into the death has been completed.

5.4. Emergencies and standby staff

Sonke was interested in understanding what would happen in the event of there being an emergency in the centre, especially at night – for example, if an inmate was ill, or if there was a fight. The centres were asked how inmates could raise the alarm for help after lock-up. Some of the centres indicated that there used to be alarms in the cells, which inmates could activate, but that none of the centres had anything like that operating at the time of the visit. Generally, inmates could only raise the attention of the correctional official by 'banging a cup on the bars', known as 'beeker kap' or by shouting for help.



Some of the centres indicated that there used to be alarms in the cells, which inmates could activate, but that none of the centres had anything like that operating at the time of the visit



Officials said that they usually respond when they hear inmates calling for help. But, because some of the sections that night staff patrol were large or there may be insufficient staff to allocate one member per section as required, it might be some hours or a whole night before staff responded to a call.²⁶⁰ In a centre like Groenpunt Youth Centre, where the bungalows are dispersed in an open camp, it would be more difficult to raise the alarm by shouting or calling for help. It is unlikely, in this situation, that staff would be able to intervene in a fight or where an inmate was being sexually assaulted, while the violence was actually taking place. They were more likely to be of assistance once the incident has already taken place.

If an inmate called for help, the security official on duty would go and find out what the problem is. If there was a fight or argument in the cell, the official might be able to resolve this by talking to the inmates through the bars. Officials said that there might be as many as one fight a night.²⁶¹ It was difficult, if not impossible, for an official to see into the whole cell from the doors or windows. His vision would be blocked by the crowded beds. Sometimes inmates also put up sheets around their beds or on the windows for privacy.

An official may not open a cell on his own. In any event, when inmates are locked up at night, the interior door is locked and then the exterior cell door is later locked with a master key, or is 'mastered'. The master key is kept locked in a safe in the duty office and can only be unlocked by the Member in Charge, who is not in the centre at night.

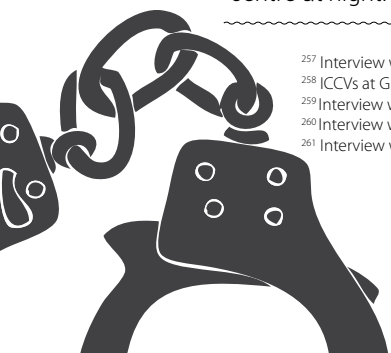
²⁵⁷ Interview with ICCV, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013; ICCVs at Groenpunt Correctional Centre, 10 October 2013.

²⁵⁸ ICCVs at Groenpunt Correctional Centre, 10 October 2013.

²⁵⁹ Interview with unit managers, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

²⁶⁰ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

²⁶¹ Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.





The most frequent call for standby assistance is in the case of a medical emergency. There is always a nurse on standby after hours and over weekends. If a medical emergency occurs, then a nurse must be called to go into the centre to see whether the inmate needs to be taken to the clinic or hospital. That nurse must be accompanied into the centre by security officials. It may take half an hour to an hour to get the nurse on duty to come to the section. If the nurse is in the section, she will speak to the inmate to determine the problem. Often, the problem can be resolved by giving the inmate medication or talking to them without unlocking the cell.

In Johannesburg Medium A, staff were also called out for emergencies related to fighting in the cells.²⁶² The nurses might be called out several times a night for emergencies.

According to the nurses at Witbank, nurses used to be escorted into the sections to see the inmates, but due to security concerns, inmates are now brought to see them at the clinics, which are located in the various sections.

According to one ICCV, there were many fights and inmates were being abused by other inmates. Most often, 'unless someone is bleeding or dying they won't respond until the next day.' When someone was raped or attacked in a cell, the inmate would usually wait until the morning to complain.²⁶³



According to one ICCV, there were many fights and inmates were being abused by other inmates. Most often, 'unless someone is bleeding or dying they won't respond until the next day



If the problem is such that the cell needs to be opened, the official on duty must call the Member in Charge and she or he must call the standby officials. In most centres, the staff said that it took about 20 minutes for the Member in Charge and standby officials to arrive. In some centres, standby officials lived on the premises. At Johannesburg Female Centre, a senior official indicated that she was usually called out once or twice a week.²⁶⁴ The emergencies usually related to illness or to injury. At Johannesburg Female Centre, the maternity section was not locked with the master key in order to ensure easy access for officials to the cell.

One emergency might be if an inmate dies in a cell, as one did on the morning of the visit to Witbank. The security officials are required to call the nurse and the cell must be opened. The inmates must be removed from the cell and the body left in place so that forensic evidence can be collected. The other inmates would have to be distributed to other cells.²⁶⁵

Emergency situations also occur during the day, usually if there is a fight in the unit. If a fight occurs in the Female Centre, the officials are equipped with whistles, which they can blow so that their colleagues can come and assist them. However, officials stated that it would be difficult for the other officials to hear the whistles.²⁶⁶ The women do often fight. Officials felt that they were generally able to separate them and resolve their disputes through listening to them and mediating. But fights are caused because, 'people are incarcerated here. People stress a lot. We work here, we are also stressed.'²⁶⁷

²⁶² Interview with senior official, Health Care Services, Johannesburg medium A, 23 October 2013.

²⁶³ Interview with ICCV, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.

²⁶⁴ Interview with senior official (IR24), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

²⁶⁵ Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

²⁶⁶ Interview with case officer, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

²⁶⁷ Interview with case officers, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

Fights are more likely to happen during the day when the women are unlocked. Officials reported that they could access the cells quickly once a fight started. They also reported that inmates are less likely to fight at nighttime. Emergencies were most often because an inmate was sick, rather than for a fight at night.²⁶⁸

At Groenpunt Maximum, the official on duty will call the standby officials. If it is for a smaller issue, then they will manage with the standby officials. For more serious matters, they will have to activate the alarm and officials will assemble, and the EST will also come as support. It may take up to 45 minutes to assemble a full support team.²⁶⁹ The smaller matters arise two or three times a week, usually for a sick or injured inmate. According to officials, it is not often that inmates have big fights in the cells. This is more likely to occur when the inmates are unlocked and there are officials around.²⁷⁰

In other centres, officials from other units will be called to assist. In the event of an emergency, correctional officials call for the assistance of staff allocated at other units or for support from the EST. If there is a large fight or big emergency, then the centre will ring its sirens and call for assistance from all units.²⁷¹ During 2013, there was a fight in one of the sections at Witbank. The staff called for the EST and staff from other sections using their radios.²⁷²

Groenpunt was criticised during the riots for amount of time that it took to assemble backup. Groenpunt is situated in an isolated spot and it would take staff living off the premises at least half an hour to 45 minutes to reach the Centre, leading to delays in response time. The state of the road leading to the Centre does not assist, as it is a sand road with only one lane that is controlled by stop-and-go access.

Some of the nurses live on the correctional centre premises, while others live off premises. It is often the nurses living on the premises who most often work standby shifts. However, others might also be called upon from time to time. For a nurse working on standby to be brought to Johannesburg Female Centre after hours and who lives around 20 minutes away from the Centre, it is a 40 minute round trip. The Centre sends a driver to collect her and she returns to the Centre so that she can attend to whatever medical emergency arises.²⁷³

There are standby officials for every shift. Not only do they respond to emergencies, but they also act as replacement staff if a member does not arrive for her or his shift. Staff are supposed to be paid every time they are called out on standby. However, there have been delays with this. One official complained that he had only been paid in 2012 for standby shifts that he had worked in 2009.²⁷⁴ The staff working on the standby shift are taken from the division on duty. So, if a member from Division A works his day shift, and then the night staff member from that Division does not arrive at work, the same member who has already worked a 12-hour day shift might have to work the 12-hour night shift as well. However, because this is an almost untenable situation, management must try and find another member who would be willing to work that night shift. According to one member, he has always managed to find someone who lives on the premises and is willing to assist.²⁷⁵ This member complained that the newer cohort of staff members was less willing to fill this need than the older, more experienced personnel.

²⁶⁸ Interview with case officers, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

²⁶⁹ Interview with senior official (IR65), Groenpunt Maximum, 8 October 2013.

²⁷⁰ Interview with senior official (IR65), Groenpunt Maximum, 8 October 2013.

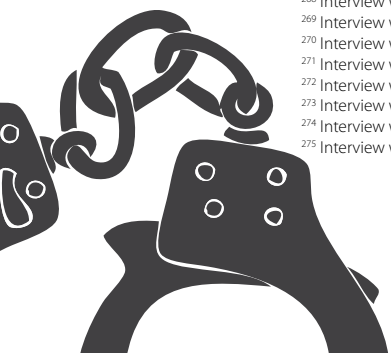
²⁷¹ Interview with unit managers, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

²⁷² Interview with unit managers, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

²⁷³ Interview with senior health official (IR28), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

²⁷⁴ Interview with senior official (IR24), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

²⁷⁵ Interview with senior official (IR6), Witbank, 26 September 2013.





Another kind of emergency is when officials are injured by inmates. The officials are stabilised at the clinic and then referred to the nearest hospital.²⁷⁶

Inmates are also sometimes admitted to the centre with injuries that they sustained during the course of arrest or during the commission of the alleged crime. Johannesburg Medium A used to have a policy that they would not admit anyone who had an injury, but now the SAPS insists that the person be admitted.²⁷⁷

5.5. Security

Although it was not a primary concern of the research, some of the senior officials expressed a concern around security. They felt that there was a lot of corruption in the centre and ill-discipline among staff.²⁷⁸ Some of the centre management believed that there had been some steps taken to deal with security issues or with staff who breach security protocols. However, there were many problems remaining.

5.6. Unit Management

Unit management had been introduced into correctional centres many years ago. Unit management divides the sections up into smaller, more manageable units. A unit is meant to have around 240 inmates.²⁷⁹ A unit manager, two case management supervisors,²⁸⁰ and case officers are then allocated to each unit. In 2003, the DCS organogram mandated that there should be one case officer for every 40 inmates,²⁸¹ though this was revised in 2010 to one to 20 in the day shift and one to 30 for medium-security centres.²⁸² The case officers must get to know the inmates, to assess them and to develop a sentence plan for them. However, case officers are often too busy with general security work so that they do not have time to do their case management work.²⁸³

In Johannesburg Female Centre, the unit was divided into smaller housing units or cells. A 'cell mother', or case officer, was assigned to each cell. The cell mother was responsible for the case files for each inmate in the cell. They had to update the files²⁸⁴ and ensure that their sentence plan is drawn up and approved. The challenge was when the case officer needed to do night duty because the Centre was short-staffed. This meant that the case files would be left unattended.²⁸⁵

Due to short-staffing, respondents at all of the centres indicated that unit management was not working correctly. When unit management was introduced, the centres were not given more staff to populate the units according to unit management requirements. Units often had more than their intended number of inmates and fewer than their intended number of staff. Staff and management felt that there was not a clear divide between the duties fulfilled by case officers and those fulfilled by security officials, and that case officers often had to carry out security functions and struggled to find the time to fulfil their security functions adequately.

²⁷⁶ Interview with senior health care professional (IR40), Johannesburg medium A, 23 October 2013.

²⁷⁷ Interview with senior health care professional (IR40), Johannesburg medium A, 23 October 2013.

²⁷⁸ Interview with Senior officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

²⁷⁹ Department of Correctional Services. (1 October 2003). Organisational Structure, Volume 8: Management Areas, p.10.

²⁸⁰ DCS Staffing Guidelines Norms, Revised 1 October 2010, para 1.11.18.

²⁸¹ Department of Correctional Services. (1 October 2003). Organisational Structure, Volume 8: Management Areas, p.10.

²⁸² DCS Staffing Guidelines Norms, Revised 1 October 2010, para 1.11.19.

²⁸³ Interview with unit managers, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

²⁸⁴ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

²⁸⁵ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

Managing unit management was reported as a challenge for the unit staff as they are responsible for both security and case management, and taking care of the basic needs of the inmates. There is not sufficient staff to enable staff to attend to all of these functions.²⁸⁶

5.7. Absenteeism and leave

Absenteeism and leave had a significant impact on the numbers of staff available to work in correctional centres. Officials are entitled to 22 days of leave a year if they have been working for the DCS for less than 10 years, and 30 days annually if they have been in service for 10 years or more. This is a substantial amount of time to factor in when planning for a staffing schedule. The absenteeism allowance suggested by the DCS Staffing Guidelines has been increased from 10 percent to 15 percent, and now to 20 percent, in order to cater for sick leave caused by HIV and AIDS in the Public Service.²⁸⁷

The correctional centres have to factor in annual leave for each staff member and staff need to take leave before July, otherwise their leave for the year may not be brought forward to the following year and is forfeited. Consequently, there are periods when there is a heavier usage of leave. When a large number of staff take leave, then the centre must work with a skeleton staff. Most respondents felt that the periods of the heaviest leave were just prior to the forfeiture period in May/June; during exam periods towards the end of the year when staff take study leave; and over the holiday period in January and December, and the Easter holiday period.

Respondents felt that there were also problems with staff taking unauthorised leave. To compound this problem, some staff felt that management did not deal with this strictly enough.²⁸⁸ Unit managers must approve the leave for their unit staff so that they can plan their duty rosters. But, on a daily basis, they have to make adjustments to cater for staff who take unplanned leave or sick leave.²⁹⁰

“
But fights are caused because, ‘people are incarcerated here. People stress a lot. We work here, we are also stressed’.
”

At Witbank, the 12 x 2 shift pattern generally made it difficult to manage leave. If a staff member takes 10 days of leave, it means that they are off for the whole month and the section has to make do with shortages for that period. In centres where the 10 x 4 shift pattern was applied, management said that staff frequently took leave on Fridays, Saturdays and Mondays. It was not such a struggle to get staff to come to work on Sundays because they would be paid their extra Sunday allowance.²⁹¹ Because people are entitled to leave, it is difficult to prevent them from taking it. However, the impact of leave on Fridays and Mondays, when only half the staff complement is working, was felt to be the worst. The Centre is meant to be fully operational then and there are still demands to service the courts, and take people to hospitals and clinics. Staff agreed that there are many people who take leave over weekends as they feel that there is no longer a pay incentive to work on Saturdays.

²⁸⁶ Interview with unit manager, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

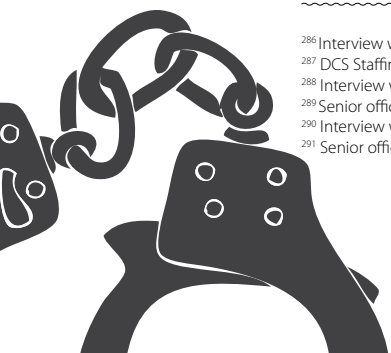
²⁸⁷ DCS Staffing Guidelines Norms, revised 1 October 2010, para 1.11.61.

²⁸⁸ Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

²⁸⁹ Senior official (IR38), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

²⁹⁰ Interview with Unit Managers, Witbank, 26 September 2014.

²⁹¹ Senior official (IR26), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.





Staff are also entitled to 36 days sick leave in a three year cycle. The human resource management policy determines that a person may take two days of sick leave in an eight week cycle without obtaining a medical certificate. At Witbank, it would often happen that staff worked their two days in, were out for two days, and then took two days of sick leave, meaning that they would then be 'out' for four days. This has a big impact on short-staffing.²⁹² At Johannesburg Centre A, where the 10 x 4 shift pattern was in force, the Head of Correctional Centre reported that staff often took leave after their long weekend, when they were due to report to work. They would report as sick for the Tuesday and Wednesday so that they would only start their week on the Thursday.²⁹³

Officials at Groenpunt also felt that the 12 days on and two days off system led to greater staff exhaustion. They felt that staff didn't get sufficient rest and were more likely to abuse the sick leave provisions. One senior official indicated that when people took sick leave, he tried to visit them to monitor whether the sick leave was warranted or not.²⁹⁴

Staff spoke about people being disciplined for being absent for prolonged periods without leave. At Johannesburg Female Centre, a staff member was dismissed after she was absent for more than 30 days.²⁹⁵

Pregnant women may also take eight days of pre-natal leave, as well as their maternity leave.

The consequences of short-staffing and members taking leave is that those members who do make it to work usually have double or triple the responsibilities. Night shift staff might have to take responsibility for two or three units, instead of one. The other consequence is that when a person does not pitch for work, then the person who has already worked their day shift, and is who is on standby for the night, has to continue to work for the next shift into the night.²⁹⁶ During the day, when the units are short-staffed, the staff who are at work are often so stretched that after a couple of days they are exhausted and in need of leave themselves. They are unable to attend to all of their responsibilities because all their time is taken up with security tasks, such as locking and unlocking, counting inmates, ensuring people are fed, escorting inmates to various activities, to court and hospitals, etc.²⁹⁷

5.8. Staff recruitment and retention

The staff establishment at the centres was, by and large, fairly stable. Each centre cited instances where staff had left over the last year, but few were able to point to new recruits. It takes time for new people to be recruited to centres. Vacancies are reported to the Area Commissioner, who must report this to the regional office, which in turn reports it to the national office. The regional office advertises the posts. It takes time to advertise, to interview and to fill the post. Some respondents indicated that this process can take up to a year.

A person may apply for an internal post, which involves no change in rank and no financial consequences. If this is the case, the position will be advertised by the manager of a component and interested staff members may apply.

²⁹² Senior official (IR6), Witbank, 26 September 2013, and IR5, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

²⁹³ Interview with senior official (IR37), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

²⁹⁴ Senior official (IR50), Groenpunt Youth Centre, 7 October 2013.

²⁹⁵ Senior official (IR26), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

²⁹⁶ Senior security official (IR29), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

²⁹⁷ Senior security official (IR29), Johannesburg Female Centre, 2 October 2013.

The current DCS learnership takes a year to complete and the graduate may only be employed in a centre if they are awarded a certificate of competence. The graduates will be spread out among the different centres. One staff member felt that due to delays in filling posts, the vacancies were never filled 100 percent.²⁹⁸ Many respondents were unhappy with the learnership programme as they felt that they could not make effective use of the learners. They are not allowed to work at night, nor may they be alone with inmates. Learners may not escort maximum-security inmates, may not work alone at the gates, may not escort inmates alone, or conduct searches alone. They are often given administrative jobs, where they play only a limited role in boosting staff numbers and capacity.

Many of the staff felt aggrieved that there were limited opportunities for promotion in the DCS. Some of the staff also have limited prospects for promotion because they were employed at a time when the minimum educational requirements were lower than they are now. In order to be promoted, an official must have at least a Grade 12 Certificate.²⁹⁹ Officials at more junior levels felt that they had fewer prospects for promotion than those at senior levels. At the junior levels, there is also a larger pool of applicants competing for very few positions. This makes the process extremely competitive and disillusioning for those who aren't selected.

There are also challenges regarding the retention of personnel. In addition to many staff wishing to leave for 'greener pastures', where conditions are less stressful and the pay might be better, many staff opt for early retirement at the age of 55. This is a particular incentive for those who have limited promotional prospects. Some people have remained on the same junior level for 18 years.

5.9. Staff morale

Many staff indicated that they were disillusioned and had a low morale. Part of this was related to the long working hours and the shift system. But many of them felt aggrieved at the lack of promotion opportunities and their lack of ability to progress in the system. Many of the staff were also dissatisfied with their pay. The new OSD meant that staff are no longer paid overtime for work over weekends, and staff working on Sundays and public holidays are only paid a small additional portion of their earnings. In addition, many of them were still angry that they had not been paid out their compensation after the new occupational dispensation had been introduced. Many felt that the shift patterns had been introduced without adequate consultation, or they felt that their views had not been taken into account.

5.10. Employee Assistance Programme

Respondents often felt that officials were exhausted and working under highly stressful conditions. Their stress was often manifested in irritability and impatience with inmates. They also tended to be absent from work or ill. Outside of work, it sometimes results in excessive drinking.³⁰⁰ An ICCV felt that staff were very stressed as a result of short-staffing, and took out their anger and aggression on the inmates. The ICCV felt that officials occasionally mistreat inmates as a result.³⁰¹

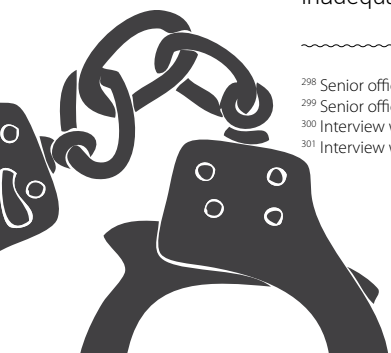
Most officials and management felt that the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) was inadequate for the staff numbers, and not made sufficient use of. One person had been appointed

²⁹⁸ Senior official (IR66), Groenpunt Maximum Centre 9 October 2013.

²⁹⁹ Senior official (IR66), Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 9 October 2013.

³⁰⁰ Interview with senior official (IR39), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

³⁰¹ Interview with ICCV, Johannesburg Medium A, 24 October 2013.





at the Johannesburg Area and was meant to service over 1 000 staff and management.³⁰² Some people felt that EAP officials were paid at too low a rate and therefore the staff did not stay in the service for very long. At Johannesburg Medium A, it was said that an EAP official never stays for more than six months before they leave for 'greener pastures'.³⁰³

5.11. Gender Balance

In line with international trends to employ women in correctional centres, it is a DCS policy to ensure a gender balance of male to female staff. Former Minister of Correctional Services Sibusiso Ndebele said that a 50/50 male and female representation within the DCS staff complement was 'non-negotiable', and would be achieved by 2015.³⁰⁴ By March 2013, 31.8 percent of the correctional staff were women.³⁰⁵ On the other hand, the vast majority of inmates are males, with only 2.24 percent of the total inmate population who are female.³⁰⁶ This means that if women are to work in positions alongside their male colleagues, they will need to work in male correctional facilities.

The employment of male officials in women's prisons and of female officials in all male prisons, has long been subject to some controversy, particularly when women work in male correctional facilities. There are concerns that women are liable to be raped and to other forms of sexual violence, may have sexual liaisons with male inmates, and would be unable to perform adequately in security functions. Privacy issues are also a concern when it comes to the searching of male inmates.³⁰⁷ From a positive perspective, having women in all-male facilities introduces a level of normality and may challenge traditional male-female stereotypes. However, it does mean that both male and female officials need to be properly trained and made aware of these dangers, and that appropriate training for women build their capacity to deal with conflict and violence in prisons.

At most of the centres, with the exception of the Johannesburg Female Centre and the Groenpunt Youth Centre, staff felt concerned about the safety of women working in the sections. Almost half of the staff employed at Witbank were women, and a portion of staff in Groenpunt Maximum and Johannesburg Medium Centre. At Witbank, respondents said that there had not been any recent incidents where female staff were assaulted and there had been no 'sexual incidents involving women,' but staff said that they were sometimes threatened.³⁰⁸ A member working in external security reported that, many years ago, a woman had once been assaulted by a remand detainee, but that assaults were not common.³⁰⁹ Many felt that it was improper and unsafe to allow women to work in the male sections. A 'buddy' system was in place where each female official was paired with a male official on duty. The men felt that there was an additional burden on them because they needed to look after the security of their female colleagues as well as attending to their own security and case management requirements.

³⁰² Interview with senior official (IR39), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

³⁰³ Interview with senior official (IR39), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

³⁰⁴ SA News.gov.za. (30 August 2013). 'Correctional Services Set to Achieve 50/50 Representation', available on line, <http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/correctionalservices-set-achieve-5050-representation>, last accessed 8 September 2014.

³⁰⁵ Department of Correctional Services. (2013). Annual Report 2012/2013, p. 98.

³⁰⁶ Department of Correctional Services. (2013). Annual Report 2012/2013, p. 33.

³⁰⁷ See for example Newbold, G. (2005). 'Women officers working in men's prisons', *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand Te Puna Whakaaro*, Issue 25, available online <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/journals-and-magazines/social-policy-journal/spj25/women-officers-working-in-mens-prisons25-pages105-117.html>, last accessed 8 September 2014.

³⁰⁸ Head of Correctional Centre, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

³⁰⁹ Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

There are also some limits placed on the work that women can do in male centres. The Correctional Services Act requires that an inmate must be searched by a person of the same gender as themselves, and in the absence of any member of the other gender.³¹⁰ In a correctional centre accommodating only men, but staffed by nearly 50 percent women, this poses a challenge. As a total staff complement, there may, at times, be a sufficient number of members to conduct searches, but when the women are factored into the count, there are in fact not enough for the required task. From time to time, there may only be women in a unit, but they are not allowed to search the male inmates and this could compromise security.³¹¹ Conversely, male officials cannot search a female inmate at the Johannesburg Female Centre. Occasionally a male person needs to be searched when visiting the Johannesburg Female Centre. The female staff need to arrange for one of the six male staff members at the Centre to perform the search.³¹²

Women are often placed in units or working environments which are considered less of a security risk. At Witbank, women did not work with the further charges section, remand inmates, or in the special care unit. Another risky area for women was the reception area, where new inmates are brought into the centre.³¹³ Sometimes, as many as 50 inmates can be brought in at a time. Despite this concern, 62 percent of the eight staff members (four per division) assigned to this section at Witbank, were women.

At Johannesburg Medium A, only 62 of the 405 staff were women (15 percent), and the women were not allowed to work in the units with the male inmates at all. It was considered very dangerous for women to work with the male remand inmates. Inmates were not separated according to the severity of the crimes they were charged with, and it was believed that unsentenced inmates might take more risks than sentenced inmates. In addition, the staff-to-inmate ratio in the unsentenced sections was much higher and inmates were not occupied in daily programmes. Women would work in the administration offices and at reception. On weekends they were also working at the gate. However, there was a concern that there were not enough office jobs to accommodate all of the women.³¹⁴ Union officials felt that it was incorrect of management to recruit more females as they could not be effectively used in the centres holding awaiting trial males. In addition to the security risk, there were privacy concerns. The structure of the cells was such that there was an open shower and toilet area at the entrance of the cell, and it was unsuitable for female officials to enter the cells without their male colleague first checking to see whether everyone was decent.³¹⁵ One of the officials suggested that some inmates would manipulate this system, and if they knew a woman was about to inspect the cell, they would rush to the showers and strip.

A woman cannot be allowed to remain alone in a section holding male inmates without a male security official present and should not escort male inmates alone. However, where there are more women than men working in a section (such as at Witbank E Unit on the day of the interview), the male staff could not go off for lunch leaving the women in the section alone.³¹⁶

It was reported that women could not get involved when male inmates were fighting and that, should a fight occur, the female officials had to stay apart to protect themselves, and if possible, to remove themselves from the section. There was a concern that they might be taken hostage. Due to the risk posed to women, as well as their assumed or real lack of strength, they were of limited usefulness when it came to dealing with fights or security situations in male centres.

³¹⁰ Section 27(3)(b) of Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998.

³¹¹ Interview with unit managers, Witbank, 26 September 2013. ³¹² Interview with correctional official (IR36), Access Control, Johannesburg Female Centre, 3 October 2013.

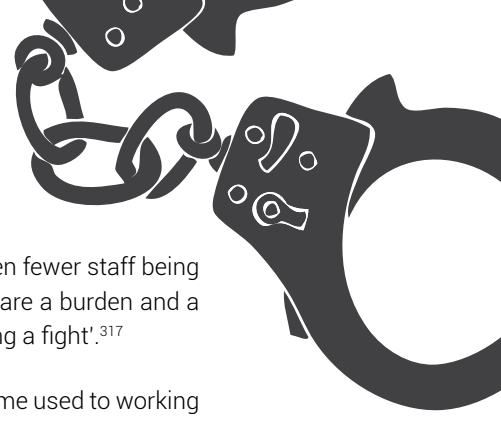
³¹³ Senior correctional official (IR6), Witbank, 26 September 2013.

³¹⁴ Senior correctional official (IR37), Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

³¹⁵ Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

³¹⁶ Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013





Because they played no physical role in a fight situation, this resulted in even fewer staff being available to deal with the situation. One official also complained that they 'are a burden and a stress. They can perform, but they are weaker, and they scream or cry during a fight'.³¹⁷

Despite the risk, many of the female officials generally felt safe, or had become used to working in the male centres. Women at Witbank said they felt safe in the Centre and that they were not left alone by the men.³¹⁸ One woman said, 'I think our male officials protect our female officials. They take care of us very well'.³¹⁹ However, this does place male staff in the position of having to protect the female staff as well as undertake their other responsibilities. Women working in the Youth Centre felt safe and they tended to work much more closely with the inmates, and it was believed that they had a 'mothering' influence on the young inmates.

Female employees also have different leave patterns to the men due to pre-natal and maternity leave. In a facility staffed only by women, the impact of a number of women on maternity leave together can be quite significant. Given that so many women work in male-only centres as well, this can also impact on their staff complements. At Johannesburg Female Centre, 241 days were taken for maternity leave during the 2012/2013 financial year.³²⁰ This constituted 22 percent of all leave taken in that month. However, it should be noted that this was the highest figure we saw over a period of a year. At Witbank, maternity leave, at its highest number for the financial year, accounted for 230 days or eight percent of all leave days during December 2012.³²¹

There was a general concern that if the DCS continued with its gender equity policy and 50 percent of staff were women, that women would be given the more comfortable and safe office jobs, while the men would have to work in the units with the inmates.³²² Labour unions did not feel that they were fully consulted in decision-making around the recruitment of women.

It is unclear how much of the attitudes towards women in correctional services was influenced by patriarchal or sexist attitudes, which our study was not able to unpack. This is an issue that could do with more study and reflection.

5.12. Centre based vs non-centre based

Many of the 'non-centre' based staff were unhappy with their classification as such. For instance, the artisans working with inmates in the factories at Witbank were classified as non-centre based, although they did work with inmates and saw themselves as working at the same level of risk as other officials. Similarly, the educationalists, psychologists and social workers work in close proximity with inmates, often without the benefit of a security official to protect them.

Centre based staff are employed under the Correctional Services Act (CSA), whereas non-centre based staff are employed under the Public Servants Act (PSA). They have different pay and working conditions. People working in the centres are paid more than non-centre based staff. For example, an assistant director employed under the PSA has a higher civilian ranking than a senior correctional official employed under the CSA. However, a centre based senior correctional officer earns more than a non-centre based assistant director.³²³

³¹⁷ Senior correctional official, Groenpunt Maximum Centre, 8 October 2013.

³¹⁸ Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

³¹⁹ Interview with security officials, Witbank, 26 September 2013.

³²⁰ Primary Measurements of Female for the Month of March 2013.

³²¹ Witbank Leave Statistics, December 2012.

³²² Interview with union officials, Johannesburg Medium A, 23 October 2013.

³²³ Interview with senior official (IR3), Witbank, 25 September 2013.

6

Recommendations



7.1. Increase staffing levels

In order for the Department of Correctional Services to ensure the safe custody and human dignity of inmates, and to promote the social responsibility and human development of all sentenced inmates in terms of the Correctional Services Act,³²⁴ it is essential that sufficient numbers of staff are employed to adequately staff the centres and provide services to inmates. We therefore recommend that the DCS, together with the National Treasury, investigate ways of appointing additional staff to correctional centres as soon as possible.

Ways to reduce the turn-around time in making new appointments to correctional centres also need to be sought. The current system, whereby all appointments are made through the national office, leads to inordinate delays and is untenable.

7.2. Revising the shift pattern

The shift pattern has been in discussion for more than three years and is not yet resolved. A Ministerial Task Team has been appointed to look at devising an appropriate shift pattern for all correctional centres,³²⁵ which may speed up the process. This report has indicated some of the advantages and disadvantages of three different shift patterns, yet cannot recommend any of these as being optimal. It might make more sense to revert to a 5-day shift pattern, where the majority of staff work Mondays to Fridays, and a reduced staff complement works on weekends, with overtime pay only on weekends and public holidays. The weekdays are when correctional staff need to support the work of the professional staff and work teams, as well as ensure that inmates are brought to courts. Sufficient personnel need to be available for these activities, as well as for the administrative tasks involved in managing and operating the correctional centre and ensuring the fulfilment of the goals of the White Paper on Corrections. The staff complement on weekends should be sufficient to allow inmates the maximum time out of their cells, and to allow for participation in religious and sporting activities.

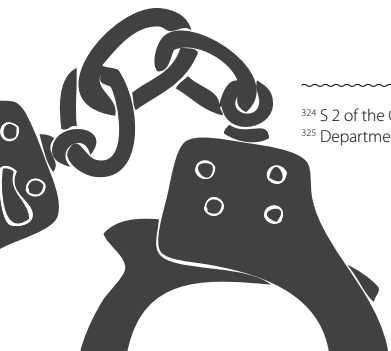
We would also recommend two night shifts to cover the period after the daytime staff have left.

7.3. Night shift

The DCS needs to move towards a position where it can increase the amount of time that inmates can participate in useful activities during the day and reduce the amount of time spent locked up in their cells. In most of the current shift patterns, the daytime staff leave between 15h00 and 17h00, but inmates are locked up much earlier than that. It is only at Witbank, where the day shift works until 18h00, that the inmates are mastered around that time.

³²⁴ S 2 of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 as amended.

³²⁵ Department of Correctional Services. (2013). Annual Report 2012/2013, p. 50.





However, as discussed earlier in the report, this system, which relies on the two days in and two days out shift pattern, where staff never work the same shift, is not feasible. However, if the first night watch had a bigger staff complement, then it might be feasible to allow inmates to spend a longer period unlocked. This requires that the overall staff numbers are increased, especially for security officials and case officers.

There needs to be sufficient staff on duty each night to man each unit. Insufficient personnel increases the risk that staff cannot hear and respond adequately to a crisis which may occur in a cell or unit, and thus may delay an inmates' safety and access to medical treatment.

7.4. Assess the deployment of women in male correctional facilities

Female staff can add significant benefits to the staffing of male correctional facilities and would be supported in the interests of equity. However, there are a number of concerns about the safety of women, especially in the units that are overcrowded and understaffed. Their safety needs, and the limitations caused by privacy concerns, does place an additional burden on male staff working in the units. The system needs to be assessed to determine how effective it is and how it can be improved to overcome these limitations.

7.5. Improve communication mechanisms between shifts and divisions or teams

Better mechanisms need to be established to ensure communication between different teams and shifts, to ensure the smooth running of the centre and the provision of services to inmates. This is especially needed in cases where staff seldom, if ever, work at the same time. Messages could be written in a book, which each official needs to sign on coming onto duty, or distributed by way of circulars or more regular meetings.

7.6. Inmates need to be actively engaged for a full working day

The most effective way of ensuring that the goals of the White Paper are achieved is to keep inmates usefully occupied for a full working day. At present, the vast majority of inmates are not busy during the day and most spend the largest part, or all, of the day locked up. This contributes to frustration, resentment and anger, which can erupt into violence or aggressive incidents during the day, and victimisation of other inmates at night or after they are locked up.

While it is clear that there is a shortage of facilities in which programmes are run, as well as the professional staff to run them, the DCS must investigate ways of increasing the programmes and developmental opportunities to inmates.



Conclusion



The DCS has indicated in its various presentations that the 7-Day Establishment cannot work effectively without around 18 000 additional staff members and an increased budget to pay them all. Our review of the three management areas confirms that the 7-Day Establishment has not enabled correctional centres to fully meet the objectives of the White Paper. Inmates spend long periods in their cells during the day. In most centres, the mastering of cells was taking place no later than it did previously. In most centres, inmates were not being served three separate meals a day. There were insufficient staff to escort inmates to development and educational programmes during the day, and there were insufficient professional staff to render the programme to all inmates as required. In any event, in most places, there was very limited time in the structured daily programme to allow more than three hours of attendance at school or vocational activity. Programmes and activities only took place during weekdays, when the professional non-centre based staff were on duty. In essence, it would appear that the 7-Day Establishment is little different for inmates than the 5-Day Establishment.

Through its utilisation of the 12 x 2 (12 hour shift system) shift pattern, Witbank was able to serve inmates three meals per day, and the time when cells were mastered was much later than in other centres. Those inmates who worked in the factory continued work into the afternoon. However, there were still many challenges for inmates attending school and social work programmes. Despite the longer day, it had limited impact on inmates, most of whom spent the day locked up in their cell.

Because staff were split into two divisions or teams, and were spread over the applicable shift pattern, the number of staff on duty during the day was a portion of the full staff complement. There were insufficient personnel to guard those inmates in their units who were not actively engaged in programmes. As a result, many of them were kept locked up for 'security reasons'. These reasons included ensuring that inmates did not use this opportunity to escape, threaten staff, or engage in fights with other inmates. Unfortunately, respondents said little about monitoring the safety of inmates while locked up in these conditions in their cells. Many acknowledged that inmates did not always report threats, assault or sexual violence to the authorities for fear of retribution by other inmates. Because this study focused on the perspective of staff, we were unable to probe the experiences of inmates during lockup periods.

A further concern is the shortage of staff during the night shifts. At each centre, the night shift was operating with a skeleton staff with one member assigned to each unit and others scattered around key security points in the centre. However, all of them acknowledged difficulties in ensuring the night shift was operating according to its approved establishment, and on most nights the shift was substantially reduced through absenteeism and leave. In many cases, there were not sufficient staff to patrol each unit, substantially affecting their ability to monitor activities in the cells. There were no alarm mechanisms that inmates could use to alert staff to any problem in the cell or to call for help, and they had to rely on shouting for help or banging on the cell doors. If an official was outside that unit, or far from the cell in trouble, there would be a significant delay in the time that it would take an official to get to the cell and respond to the problem.

If an inmate was in trouble –ill or injured – in a cell, officials all insisted that it took no more than half an hour for the Member in Charge, once summoned, to come and unlock the cell, and for other members to be called to provide security when unlocking the door. It might take half an hour or more for a standby official to arrive and assess any medical condition. This would only be the case, however, if the official was alerted to the problem and took the necessary action within a short period of time.

Based on the information available to us, it seems unlikely, at this stage, to extend the unlock times for inmates. There are simply not enough staff to ensure the safety and security of staff and inmates when they are unlocked, and to attend to the other responsibilities of correctional staff. However, it is apparent that there are safety concerns even with the current unlock times, and this is caused by a shortage of staff.



There are simply not enough staff to ensure the safety and security of staff and inmates when they are unlocked, and to attend to the other responsibilities of correctional staff





Layout & design by Lebotle www.lebotle.co.za