



REPORT OF THE

**PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, HOME AFFAIRS AND SECURITY
SERVICES
ON
THE STATE OF SERVICE DELIVERY AND INFRASTRUCTURE AT ZIMBABWE
REPUBLIC POLICE (ZRP) ESTABLISHMENTS**

SECOND SESSION - NINTH PARLIAMENT

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S.C. 9. 2021

ORDERED IN TERMS OF STANDING ORDER No. 18:

- i. At the commencement of every session, there shall be as many committees to be designated according to government portfolios as the Standing Rules and Orders Committee may deem fit.
- ii. It shall be the function of such committees to examine expenditure administration and policy of government departments and other matters falling under their jurisdictions as Parliament may, by resolution determine
- iii. The members of such committees shall be appointed by the Standing Rules and Orders Committee, from one or both Houses of Parliament, and such appointments shall take into account the expressed interests or expertise of the Members and Senators and the political and gender composition of Parliament.
- iv. Each select committee shall be known by the portfolio determined for it by the Standing Rules and Orders Committee.

SPEAKER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Speaker announced that all the Committees of the First Session would continue to operate as previously constituted until such time that new Committee were appointed by the Committee on Standing Rules and Orders. On Thursday 7 October 2021, the Hon Speaker, announced that Committees would resume sittings on Monday, 11 October, 2021. The following are Members of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, Home Affairs and Security Services:

Hon Muchimwe P.T, Hon Chidakwa J, Hon Brig, Gen. (Rtd) Gwanetsa K.K, Hon. Chimbaira G, Hon Maj. Gen. (Rtd) Khumalo S.S, Hon Nguluvhe A. Hon Mguni S.K, Hon Masenda N.T, Hon Col. (Rtd) Dr Murire J, Hon Tsvangirai V, Hon January S, Hon Chamisa S, Hon Moyo L, Hon Chiyangwa P, Hon Chinotimba J, Hon Sewera J, Hon Rungani A, Hon Sikhala J, Hon Machingauta C, Hon Chipato A.

Hon Brig. Gen. (Rtd) Mayihlome L was appointed the Chairperson

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES S.O 21

Subject to these Standing Orders a Portfolio Committee shall:

- i.** Consider and deal with all Bills and Statutory Instruments or other matters which are referred to it by or under a resolution of the House or by the Speaker;
- ii.** Consider or deal with an appropriation or money bill or any aspect of an appropriation or money bill referred to it by these Standing Orders or by or under resolution of this House;
- iii.** Monitor, investigate, inquire into and make recommendations relating to any aspect of the legislative programme, budget, rationalization, policy formulation or any other matter it may consider relevant of the government department falling within the category of affairs assigned to it, and may for that purpose consult and liaise with such a department;
- iv.** Consider or deal with all international treaties, conventions and agreements relevant to it, which are from time to time negotiated, entered into or agreed upon.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Portfolio Committee on Defence, Home Affairs and Security Services conducted an inquiry into the state of infrastructure and service delivery by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP). The initiative was driven by concerns from members of the Police Service and the general public about poor service conditions which have led to the declining state of service delivery. This prompted the undertaking of the inquiry which culminated into this report. The report provides highlights of the Committee's findings, observations and recommendations.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE ENQUIRY

The specific objectives include:

- To have first-hand information about the conditions of service for the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP);
- To get insight into the challenges and experiences facing the ZRP;
- To assess the ZRP infrastructure (office, workshops, institutional and residential accommodation) and;
- To provide informed recommendations for improved service delivery by the ZRP.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Committee received oral evidence from the Ministry of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage on various issues including the security of minerals following reported cases of mineral leakages, a surge in cases of indiscipline among junior police officers and operational challenges at points of entry and exits along the borderline. The Committee undertook fact-finding visits and assessed the state of existing infrastructure and its maintenance and made several interviews with members of the Police Service from all the ten provinces of the country. During the visits, officers commanding provinces and districts made presentations highlighting operational and administrative challenges ZRP was facing in carrying out its constitutional mandate.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The advent of the Second Republic ushered in a strategic opportunity to improve the country's image and ensure social protection for all. In its efforts to embrace the Government's drive towards the realisation of the National Vision 2030, the Committee resolved to embark on a fact finding mission to establish the root causes of the alleged predicaments facing the ZRP. It was the Committee's observation that the problems with the ZRP were double edged in nature, that is, internally and externally. On one hand the inquiry investigated thoroughly the factors that led to a surge in alleged cases of indiscipline among junior Police Officers, a dilemma which has a direct impact on the citizenry in terms of its constitutional rights and expectations from the Police Service. On the other hand, it did not neglect the views of the members of the Police Service in terms of their day to day functional prerequisites. The Committee observed that the aforementioned state of affairs had the potential of compromising national security if left unaddressed. Therefore, it was found pertinent to gather factual evidence in order to establish ways of motivating, capacitating and strengthening the ZRP.

5.0 FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

5.1 Institutional Accommodation

The Committee noted that the Zimbabwe Republic Police has an acute shortage of accommodation. Following the increase of the organization's human resources establishment to 50 000, the state of office accommodation in the organization reached unacceptable levels with a deficit of 3 000 offices. The dilapidated state of most of the offices across provinces, districts and stations further diminishes the public's confidence in the organization's service delivery capabilities. Most severely affected were rural stations where officers have now resorted to the use of tents, zinc and wooden cabins as offices. In some stations such as Makosa in Mashonaland East and Hwange in Matabeleland North, prisoners' cells have been turned into offices. Some sections, for example the Victim Friendly Unit (VFU) and Community Relations and Liaison Office (CRLO), were sharing offices and this is not ideal considering that survivors of

Gender Based Violence (GBV) and other sensitive crimes require confidentiality and privacy when being assisted.

5.2 Residential Accommodation

The Committee was petrified to note that the Zimbabwe Republic Police had an acute shortage of residential accommodation resulting in almost half of its active human resource residing in rented accommodation. The state of affairs was appalling and left officers vulnerable to being compromised by some sections of the society. Current statistics reflected that, out of the human resource strength of 44 687 only 26 398 police officers resided in police camps. In most cases, a single house was shared by three families resulting in overcrowding. An estimated total of 19 999 police officers resided out of camp which affected the effectiveness and efficiency of police operations. The level of dilapidation of the existing residential infrastructure further compounds the dire situation. In some serious cases, horse stables and prisoners' cells have been converted into rooms currently occupied by desperate police officers. The Committee even noted that some members of the police deployed on specific operations used corridors for temporary accommodation while others slept in offices. Over and above that, most ablution facilities in the establishments were on the verge of collapse while at some stations they were nonexistent.

5.3 Stationery

In order for the Police to effectively discharge their duties on a daily basis, there is need for them to produce a number of documents such as criminal dockets for operational processes and reports for supervisory and administrative processes. It was sad to note that basic stationery items such as bond paper, toner, and bench paper, fingerprint ink among others, were not enough to cover all police stations. As a result, some Police members and officers would end up using their personal funds to purchase stationery items. In extreme circumstances, the Police would end up using outdated calendars and cardboard boxes as substitutes for paper sheets.

Lack of stationery compromises the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in any organization, more so for the ZRP which is a key security organization where records are very crucial. The Committee was indeed disturbed to note that officers sometimes resorted to begging from the public for typing, printing and photocopying services and, in extreme cases, went out of their way using their meagre resources to cover up for the organization by providing stationery.

5.4 Contemporary Technological Equipment (including ICT gadgets)

The Committee found it very strange that ZRP was seriously lagging behind in the use of modern technologies such as computers. With crime trends becoming more complex due to advancement in technology globally, an ill-equipped security organization may not be able to competently maintain peace and order. Moreover, with cybercrime increasing rapidly and criminals using very sophisticated equipment and technology to commit crime, the ZRP must be at par with global policing trends in using new technology to combat crime.

Contemporary technological equipment such as biometric fingerprint machine, photographing and video filming gadgets, CCTV and scanners for use in Information and Crime Management, is essential in modern day policing. Very few stations had office computers, printers and photocopiers. Most stations used computers personally owned by members whilst some relied on external typing services which had to be paid for. This poses threats of having confidential information falling into wrong hands.

Border control, especially at entry and exit points, is a mammoth task for the department due to lack of detecting devices, scanners, drones and the absence of a solid integrated system that allows instant sharing of security information requiring immediate attention.

5.5 Communication System (Telephones and radio equipment)

The Committee noted that communication is vital in enhancing effective policing. To that end, the Committee learnt that ZRP, in its Charter, pledges to answer at least 90%

of all telephone calls within ten seconds or three rings as well as attend to radio calls within three shouts. These set targets were, however, dependent upon the existence of the requisite telecommunications infrastructure.

It was observed by the Committee that Police stations, especially those in rural and peri-urban areas, did not have working telephone lines while their radio communication gadgets were down for a long time. Police officers had since resorted to using their personal mobile phones thereby making supervision under this sub core area difficult. To exacerbate the situation, some stations across police provinces did not have mobile network connectivity, making the state of affairs even direr. Instantaneous inter-station and inter-district communication mechanisms were poor (if not nonexistent), particularly in remote areas and thus made effective policing very complicated.

The Committee further noted that all ZRP provinces required adequate telecommunications infrastructure in the form of telephone lines, hand held and base station radios and long range repeaters. A delay in rectifying that had the potential of plunging the country into security turmoil given an upsurge of trans-boundary crimes which have an influence on internal crime control.

5.6 The state of transport

The Committee learnt that the organization's national fleet was far below its requirement of 7000 vehicles. The current motor vehicle strength stood at 2167 and only 807 were on the road. There was, therefore, a national deficit of 4833 motor vehicles. About 75% of the vehicles on the road were in urban areas especially at Provincial Headquarters whilst district and rural police stations accounted for the remaining 25%. The Committee noted that the depleted vehicular fleet and erratic fuel supplies had negatively impacted on the sub core area of scene attendance as three quarters of the stations did not have operational vehicles and that included traffic sections. This made it difficult for the Police to timeously attend to crime and road

traffic accidents scenes and most of the time, the police personnel were outpaced by criminals who had better resources. Motorcycles and bicycles were in short supply thereby impeding swift patrols. Border patrols, which required all-terrain vehicles with inbuilt modern communication and tracking equipment, were severely affected due to lack of transport. The same applied to aquatic patrols along the Zambezi River where high speed boats with special policing equipment were needed.

It was disturbing to note that several Commanding Officers did not have vehicles entitled to them. Vehicles for supervision were scarce, no wonder why there is an increase in indiscipline among junior police officers especially in remote areas. Lack of funding for maintenance of the existing fleet had further worsened the shocking transport situation in the ZRP. In addition, the Committee noted that there was a serious shortage of ambulances for the department in all the provinces.

5.7.0 Fuels and lubricants

5.7.1 The Committee was informed by the ZRP authorities that the organization required an average of 500 000 liters of petrol and 800 000 liters of diesel per month at the current vehicle strength. The figure was expected to increase as the number of vehicles increased. However, the department was receiving an average of 10% and 7% of its monthly requirements for diesel and petrol respectively.

Furthermore, it was observed that there was a serious shortage of engine oil, brake and clutch fluid and other lubricants for routine service which is crucial for the life of motor vehicles. Fuel carried in containers, especially in remote areas would easily get contaminated leading to engine failures.

5.8 Allowances

5.8.1 Travelling and Subsistence Allowances

The Committee noted that members of the Police Service sometimes carried out duties which required them to be away from their Stations, hence, the need to be paid

Travelling and Subsistence Allowances. However, it was noted that the budgetary allocation for that area was usually inadequate to meet all claims. Oftentimes members were deployed without travelling and subsistence allowances and food rations, subjecting them to corrupt tendencies, especially along the country's borderline.

5.8.2 Cycle Allowance

Police Officers, in their quest to conduct patrols, attend scenes, investigate crimes and attend court on time, have to use bicycles among other cheaper forms of transport. However, most cycles at Police stations were found in unserviceable conditions. While it is the responsibility of government to provide these critical tools of trade, most officers purchased those cycles with their personal earnings. It was disheartening to discover that the gazetted Cycle Allowance which must be paid to members of the rank of Sergeant and Constables had since been stopped. This, therefore, discourages officers in doing their duties as they have to use personal funds to maintain the same.

5.8.3 Clothing Allowance

Some members of the Police Service do not wear the prescribed ZRP uniform due to the nature of their duties. They use plain clothing. The Committee was very disturbed to note that a paltry ZWL\$15.00 was paid as an allowance towards clothing. The allowance currently pays for nothing less than a banana. Like in many other such scenarios, members of the Police Service were forced to dig deep into their pockets to buy clothing for use during the course of their work.

5.8.4 Other Allowances

Members of the organization are transferred from one station to the other on needs basis hence, the need to be paid disturbance allowances. The allowance has for some time not been forthcoming thereby affecting the welfare of members. It is in this regard that Treasury should seriously consider allocating funds towards this critical allowance, lest transfers become a demotivating factor for Police officers and members, and a source of persistent litigations. Quite often Police Officers are deployed in areas that

experience harsh weather conditions. Places such as Kariba, Hwange, Mount Darwin, Nyamapanda and Chiredzi among others, can become extremely hot. Uniforms usually lose colour faster than expected due to excessive heat. It is, therefore, necessary to consider paying heat allowance to officers deployed in such areas.

Living-out allowances were also not being paid to those officers who were staying outside camps. Such officers were experiencing hardships on payment of rentals in foreign currency and would oftentimes report for duty late due to transport challenges.

5.9 Holding cells and Welfare of detained persons

Ventilation was very poor in the majority of cells that were visited by the Committee. Some had toilets which were no longer usable. In worse scenarios, some stations did not have holding cells thereby resorting to using charge offices for detaining suspects while others used wooden or metal shacks which were hardly secure for the purpose. This was noted as risking the lives of both officers and suspects in one way or the other. A case in point was that of Maboleni in Midlands where there were no prisoners' cells. The Station relied on the District Cells which were about forty kilometers away. Communication and transport challenges exacerbated the handling of detained suspects at the Station.

Scarcity of food and linen for detained suspects was seen as a major challenge across provinces. Suspects depended on food provisions from their relatives. In worst scenarios, officers at the stations would provide their personal food to feed detained suspects.

5.10 Health facilities and Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs)

The Committee discovered that there were inadequate medical facilities and supplies in almost all the provincial police hospitals and clinics. Essential drugs and modern equipment were critically insufficient. Though very vital, PPEs were in short supply. The Committee was concerned to learn that officers would sometimes attend accident

and murder scenes without adequate PPEs where they were expected to carry injured persons and dead bodies.

At the pick of the Covid-19 pandemic, officers risked their lives as frontline officers, more so when they had to escort returnees to quarantine centers without adequate personal protective equipment.

5.11 Water and ablution facilities

The water and sanitation situation in the ZRP has remained ominous since most of the facilities have not been maintained or rehabilitated for decades. Most stations visited relied on the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) supply, which in most cases remains erratic. The majority of Police Stations would go for several months without water supply while a few got the precious liquid once a week. This situation had posed health hazards, especially in view of the Covid19 pandemic. In most rural areas, officers accessed water from community boreholes which were quite a distance from the station or their residential camps.

Most Police stations which did not have running water relied on the use of Blair toilets for relief. Toilet facilities at most Stations and bases were found in a sorry state. In rural areas, collapsing pit latrines a common site. In worse scenarios, such as at Maboleni Police Station in the Midlands Province and Makhado in Matabeleland South, officers used the nearby bush. The practice is unhealthy and it exposes members to snake bites and attacks by both diurnal and nocturnal animals.

Sadly, it is alleged that one of the police officers who was found dead in the nearby bush while responding to the call of nature at Makhado, was a victim of snakebite.

Being a public place, water and ablution facilities are an avoidable necessity at all police establishments and the Committee implores responsible authorities to look into this appalling situation in the ZRP as a matter of urgency.

5.12 Recreational Facilities

Members of the Police Service require recreational facilities where they can entertain themselves after work due to the strenuous nature of their duties. However, most of stations no longer had such facilities. Where those facilities were available, their condition was deplorable. Football pitches, tennis and volleyball courts, among others were hardly recognised as the infrastructure had since been abandoned and had not been maintained for a long time. Wet and dry canteens have since been abandoned yet they remain a crucial component of the Police Service. The Committee noted that there is need for total refurbishment of recreational facilities in order to resuscitate sporting activities for members to keep fit and mentally alert.

5.13 Security/Perimeter fencing

While the ZRP is a public place, security fencing is essential. Several ZRP premises were not properly fenced or protected from intruders. During public demonstrations associated with violence, ZRP premises are usually targeted by hooligans. A case in point is that of Gweru Central Police which was vandalized by unruly members of the public in 2018. The same situation prevailed in areas such as Inyathi and Gwanda which are infested by illegal gold miners and machete wielding gangsters who, of late, had been allegedly attacking Police officers on duty.

Lately, the Committee was indeed disturbed to note that some communities were teaming up against ZRP officers demanding the release of arrested criminals residing in the affected areas. This has made it very difficult for effective policing in such places due to lack of human and material resources for the security arm of the country.

5.14 ZRP unfinished projects

The Committee witnessed several stalled construction projects across the country mainly due to lack of funding. The most noticeable ones were the Bulawayo Southern Region Workshop, ZRP Dotito Main Camp in Mashonaland Central, ZRP Marondera

Block and ZRP Masasa in Mashonaland East. These projects were residential and administration blocks and works were halted for more than a decade. It was noted that most of the building projects were somewhat in their finishing stages and with an injection of enough financial resources, they could easily be brought to completion. The ZRP as an institution, has a complete construction unit with very competent personnel to do the work only if they were capacitated with enough materials. The completion of these projects would bring relief to the pressure on accommodation and office space in various places and hence improving working and living standards of officers.

6.0 KEY OBSERVATIONS

- 6.1** The state of infrastructure across the ten provinces leaves a lot to be desired. Dilapidated institutional and residential accommodation, poor ablution facilities resulting in officers opting for the bush system, obsolete office furniture, inadequate tools of trade, use of ineffective policing equipment which is inconsistent with contemporary policing technology, inadequate transport and fuel supplies are just but a few of the many signs and symptoms of an ailing policing system.
- 6.2** The Committee observed that the morale of officers across the entire Police Service was at its lowest ebb despite their demonstration of resilience and patriotism. Further procrastination of redress of the various challenges in the entire organisation has the potential of collapsing the policing system due to increased indiscipline and poor service delivery.
- 6.3** The Committee deduced that the majority of the challenges faced by the ZRP are a result of underfunding and delayed release of funds by the Treasury.
- 6.4** The Committee noted that retention funds can help expedite development and improve service delivery in ZRP. Previously, retention funds were used on critical expenditure items such as goods and services, institutional requirements, maintenance, construction projects and acquisition of capital assets. Accountability mechanisms can be put in place to ensure that funds are used responsibly and transparently.

- 6.5** The Committee observed that the ZRP has competent personnel in the construction unit requiring capacitation in terms of construction materials and requisite tools of trade. The organisation can utilize their expertise to build both residential and administration structures thereby cutting costs incurred on hired labour.
- 6.6** Poor remuneration and lack of incentives have the potential of fueling collusion and corruption amongst members of the Police Service especially along the country's borderline thereby affecting service delivery and compromising the security of the nation.
- 6.7** The use of personal communication devices and computers in policing seriously compromises the security of information and should be discouraged at all costs.
- 6.8** The absence of an integrated communication system that promotes intra-station, inter-station, intra-district and inter-district, intra and inter-provincial linkages has far reaching implications on effective policing and service delivery. A switch to the use of contemporary and robust communication devices and strategies that are in tandem with global policing trends should be prioritized by the relevant Ministry if improvements on service delivery are to be realised.
- 6.9** The public has lost confidence in the service delivery of the ZRP due to increasing cases of indiscipline especially among junior staff officers within and outside the working environment. The Committee noted that massive capacity building and training of officers on both policing skills and public relations issues should be prioritized if the security organ is to retain its erstwhile reputation of excellence.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1** It is recommended that the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development should allocate adequate financial resources to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Cultural for:
- i) recruitment of personnel to match new developments since the population is ever growing.

- ii) the development of infrastructure to match current and projected manpower levels in the Zimbabwe Republic Police so as to improve service delivery and bolster public confidence by July 2022;
- iii) the purchase of office equipment and furniture, tools of trade and consumables to create a comfortable and conducive working environment for members by April 2022;
- iv) the electrification of all stations and posts to enable effective use office equipment as well as for domestic purposes by June 2022;
- v) for the purchase of adequate operational vehicles (including boats, motorcycles and bicycles) for all the provinces by May 2022 to enable crime scenes to be attended to promptly and investigations to be expedited.
- vi) adequate fuel supplies, oils and lubricants as well as motor spares and maintenance kits by March 2022;
- vii) for operational needs such as cycle allowance, travelling and subsistence allowance, clothing allowance for officers in plain clothes, hardship allowance, living-out allowance, rations and uniforms by March 2022;
- viii) to cater for the welfare of detained suspects in respect of food, linen, water and sanitation among others by February 2022;
- ix) The Ministry of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage should engage the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development for the provision of sate land for construction of standard institutional accommodation by June 2022;
- x) The Ministry of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage should rollout a massive capacity building and skills training programme on modern policing strategies, use of contemporary policing equipment and public relations by June 2022.
- xi) The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development should immediately authorize the use of retention funds by ZRP and safeguards must be instituted to guard against the abuse of these retention funds.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The challenges bedeviling the ZRP are many and yet they cannot just be ignored. Effective service delivery has been impeded. The morale of members of the Police Service has sharply decreased. Public confidence in the Police Service is critical for peace and order to prevail in the country. Being the face of the nation, the department needs to be adequately resourced. In its realisation of the National Vision 2030 goals of smart governance and upholding the rule of law, the Government should prioritise access and usage of ICTs by the ZRP as this will effectively bolster efforts in effective policing. The Committee implores Central Government through Treasury to urgently and seriously consider addressing the resource gaps existing in ZRP.