



HPP NPC Registration Number: 1999/015007/08

## Chairperson Report – 2023

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*“Supplementing Municipal Services for a Safe, Clean and Healthy HSRA”*

Dear HPP NPC Member,

I have pleasure in submitting HPP’s Annual Report for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. The report is available on the HPP website ([www.hpp.org.za](http://www.hpp.org.za)).

### Hermanus SRA Context

A Special Rating Area (SRA) is a defined geographical area in which registered property owners contribute additional rates, to supplement specific municipal services.

The Hermanus Special Rating Area (HSRA) is managed by Hermanus Public Protection (HPP), a registered non-profit company (NPC) established in 1999. HPP aims to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment to its property owners and visitors, by supplementing specific municipal services.

The HSRA is funded from the additional rates paid by property owners, based on the municipal valuation of properties within the SRA boundary. We do not receive any grants or subsidies from the Overstrand Municipality (OM) but are able to raise additional income.

HPP’s strategy and operations are managed by a board of Directors who are appointed by members at an Annual General Meeting. The directors are not compensated for their services.

HPP has an Executive Officer, who manages the outsourced operations provided by service providers and interacts with stakeholders on operational issues.

### New Board

Errol van Staden (Chairman) and Tobie Louw (Director Strategy and Finance) stood down as Directors at the AGM held on 13 September 2022. Errol and Tobie have been thanked for serving the HSRA with distinction for three years.

The board fortunately retained the services of Ann Wright (Director Cleansing) who has provided good continuity and perspective on past occurrences. The new Directors appointed were Leon Rauch (Finance) and I. The co-opted services of Fransien Koegelenberg (Central Business District) and Gerrie van der Westhuizen (Safety) were ratified at the November 2022 Board Meeting. The Board was supported by Marcia Bown as the full-time Executive Officer.

### Socio Economic Circumstances

During the reporting period, South Africans have buckled under the combined pressures of heightened electricity load shedding, inflation, interest rates, unemployment, poverty, and crime levels. Despite being part of the more economically prosperous Western Cape Province, citizens living in the Overstrand Municipal and the HSRA have endured these pressures too. South Africans and particularly those who are poverty stricken, find themselves in dire circumstances.

### Crime and Safety in the HSRA

The first quarter crime statistics for 2023/2024 were released in August by the South African Police Service (SAPS). The statistics cover the April to June period. Statistics for SAPS Hermanus precinct, which includes the areas of Karwyderskraal, Fisherhaven, Hawston, Vermont, Onrus, Sandbaai, Zwelihle and Hermanus reveal the following trends:

- An overall decrease in crime across the same periods since 2019.
- Crime detected because of police action (i.e. active policing operations such as roadblocks and raids) has increased year on year.
- Burglary at non-residential property is now at a similar level as 2019 with 40 reported incidents. (These incidents decreased in the period from 2019 to 2022.)
- Contact crime (in particular common assault and assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm) was on the increase, although the 2023/2024 quarter saw a drop in incidents.
- Theft out of motor vehicle incidents has also been increasing year on year, but has not reached the levels recorded in 2019.

In contrast to the SAPS Hermanus precinct, crime statistics within our SRA reveal the following:

- There is a concerning increase in commercial crime which has doubled in incidents since 2019 (commercial crime includes the criminal acts of fraud, embezzlement, corruption, forgery, money laundering and certain computer-related and cybercrimes amongst other statutory offences). Many of the cases reported in Hermanus are related to ATM fraud and online scams.
- Burglary at residential addresses has decreased.
- Shoplifting, however, is increasing.

### Strategic Priorities

A set of strategic priorities was identified by a group of seventeen stakeholders, representing a variety of communities in the HSRA, in October 2022. The Board subsequently adopted the priorities which were:

Deliver services which offer value for money to property owners; build strong relationships with stakeholders; communicate clearly and often; contribute towards the revitalisation of the Central Business District (CBD); prepare property owners to manage threats; motivate and plan for the continuation of the HSRA beyond June 2025; promote change and support organisations which address threats in the environment, but which fall outside our mandate; harness the rich reservoir of human resources in Hermanus to co-create and deliver on these priorities.

I am pleased to report that good progress has been made in pursuing these strategies and fulfilling the HSRA's mandate.

### Safety through Camera Surveillance

HPP's camera surveillance capability is managed closely by the Executive Officer. She is supported in this task by two outsourced service suppliers, Fidelity-ADT (FADT) and WCC Technologies. This area of our operations has undergone significant change in the past year.

An assessment of the camera surveillance network operation was conducted in November 2022 by an external specialist.

The assessment has led to:

- The application of guidelines to ensure the structured expansion of the camera network.
- The development of operational objectives for each new camera site.
- Clear parameters which ensure the maintenance and financial soundness of the camera network.
- The upgrading of the online incident reporting in our control room.
- The installation of standardise software analytics and surveillance equipment to proactively detect incidents.
- Enhanced intelligence gathering.

Additional camera sites were established in the following areas:

- CBD - two new sites
- Eastcliff - nine new sites
- Westcliff - five new sites.

Ten (10) new sites are in the pipeline, either awaiting approval from the OM or in development with a neighbourhood community.

The roll out of cameras across the HSRA over the past two years has produced good results. In recent months an increase in crime prevention incidents has been noted. This has been aided by the detection of suspicious behaviour by CCTV operators and the follow-up action of response teams on the ground.

### Operation of the HPP Camera Network

HPP outsources the installation and maintenance of the HPP Camera Network to WCC Technologies, who provide an ongoing quarterly maintenance provision to all camera sites as well support the technology infrastructure for the network.

During this year HPP enhanced our camera operations through the upgrade of the analytics software. The HPP camera network back-haul and back-up power has also been massively improved to ensure the system is secure, robust and priority cameras are still operational during mass power outages. Majority of the HPP cameras have back-up battery power. All HPP mountain high sites as well as five apex sites across the area have been upgraded with new or additional cameras, enhanced back-up batteries or more powerful radios and sectors to ensure a high quality data feed.

### Safety Operations

HPP outsources its safety operations to FADT who now employ 42 staff members, operate three armed vehicles and monitor the camera network of over 130 CCTV cameras.

The HPP Control Room, patrol vehicles and CBD foot patrollers operate 24 | 7, with foot patrols covering the Cliff Path and Hoy's Koppie 7 days a week, 12 hours a day. A bicycle patrol on waste collection days as well as a night patrol of public CBD spaces, were introduced as additional services in the past year.

### Cleansing Operations

IPHUPHA Cleansing Services is the subcontracted provider which removes litter from the Cliff Path and its surrounding edges six days a week. HPP is responsible for the area stretching from the New Harbour to Grotto Beach - apart from the parking areas at Gearings Point, Bientangs Cave and Fick's Pool. Hoy's Koppie and Bekker's Park are also covered.

The bagged litter is then placed at the bins in the parking areas for the Municipality to collect. The team also works on certain Public Holidays. A newly introduced service was the cleaning up of dog excrement along the Cliff Path, three days per week.

Several incidents of uncontrolled dogs on the Cliff Path were reported in the past year. In some instances, injuries to walkers were caused and sadly, abuse was expressed by some owners when requested to put their dogs on leads. These problems could be addressed if fines are issued by the OM's Law Enforcement Officers.

### Other Operations

HPP worked with the OM on several other fronts which included the clearing of alien plants and planting native plants at prime tourist nodes. We have also participated in projects to improve the CBD and surrounds.

In addition, we participated in a holiday programme for school leaders which, amongst others, raised awareness of their environmental responsibilities.



Figure 1: Annual Overview - July 2022 - June 2023

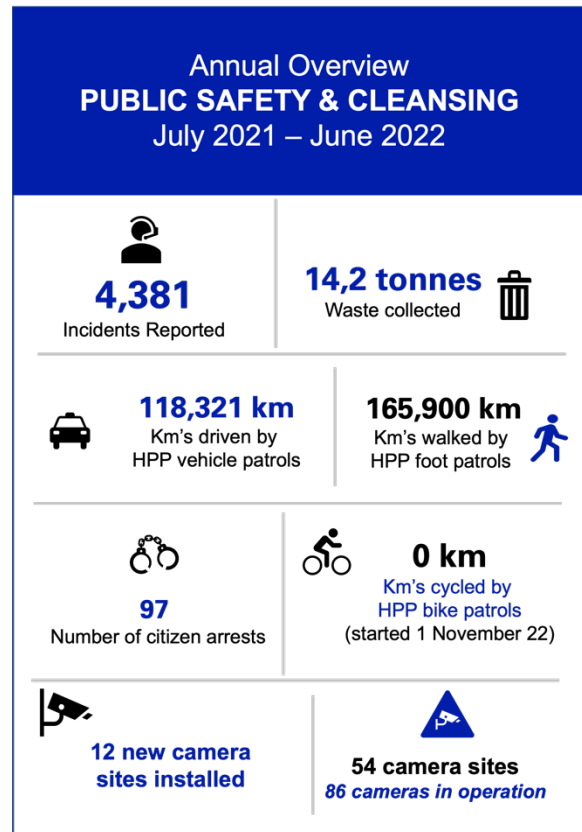


Figure 2: Annual Overview - July 2021 - June 2022

### Growing Relationships and Communication

A concerted effort was made to grow HPP’s relationships with property owners, the OM, the business community, SAPS, the neighbourhood watch groups and neighbouring SRA’s.

The HSRA was established to provide a supplementary or “top-up” service to those of the OM. We are privileged to have a municipality which was recognised in the last year as the “Best Municipality” in the Western Cape, by the Western Cape Government. I am pleased to report that a spirit of good cooperation exists between the OM and ourselves. The tone of meetings between the Mayor, her Mayoral Committee, as well as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and ourselves is one of “How may we help?” However, please be assured that a good amount of challenge and push-back exists in our encounters.

Plans to address the safety concerns of property owners in Eastcliff, Kwaaiwater, Northcliff, Voëlklip, and Westcliff, through CCTV surveillance were co-created. The appointment of Fransien Koegelenberg (Director CBD) has enabled collaboration with the CBD business community and business chambers, to further invigorate the CBD.

We have also engaged with the neighbourhood watch groups to ensure a shared commitment to an agreed code of conduct in the field. It has been rewarding to see how the various law enforcement and safety entities have worked together to combat crime in the area.

HPP’s relationships with property owners was underpinned by monthly newsletters and performance reports which were made available by email, WhatsApp and our website. The interaction with

representatives from the various suburbs and the CBD has deepened the level of communication and understanding of needs.

### Homelessness and Vagrancy in Hermanus

The increasing incidence of homelessness and vagrancy undermine the sense of safety and well-being of property owners in the HSRA. In addition, tourism and business in the CBD are significantly affected.

We recently reported that approximately 55% of the incidents which HPP responded to, were related to vagrancy and public disorder. These challenges, rooted in increasing levels of poverty, unemployment and social disconnection, are of course a global phenomenon and not unique to Hermanus.

Due to HPP's mandate, we are not able to take a lead in addressing these social issues. We have supported the initiatives of the Hermanus Homeless Working Group (which is led by the OM) and other entities.

We have also made it known that HPP does not have the authority to arrest or remove vagrants and homeless people from our CBD and our neighbourhoods. Our task is to monitor vagrants and call the OM's Law Enforcement team if by-laws are transgressed.

The devastating socio-economic conditions described in the early part of this report, may indeed be an incubator to further increasing homelessness, vagrancy, crime, and social upheaval at a level which Hermanus has not seen before. We need decisive action underpinned by a social compact, drawn up by all stakeholders, to avert such a situation.

### Satisfaction Survey

HPP has again conducted a satisfaction survey amongst its property owners. The results of the latest survey show that:

- This year, 257 ratepayers responded to the survey, 5% of the HSRA property owners.
- Overall, 98% of the HSRA ratepayers are satisfied with the services provided, with 63.3% being very satisfied.
- A highlight of the survey revealed that 88% of respondents perceive the HPP to play an important role in preventing crime.
- Over 93% of ratepayers view the service as value for money with 71% responding that it is excellent value for money.
- Visibility of patrols was rated as "very visible" by 63% of respondents and the cleanliness of the cliff path and Hoy's Koppie were rated as "good" by 74% of respondents.
- Areas of concern and requests voiced by respondents included: requests for additional foot and vehicle patrols; concerns re vagrancy and informal car guarding; security in Fernkloof Nature Reserve; and unleashed dogs and dog waste.
- 42 respondents submitted additional compliments regarding HPP's service and impact.

### Additional requests made to HPP

Two requests which fall outside HPP's approved business plan, our financial agreement with the OM as well as the OM's SRA by-laws, were received by the Board. They were:

- To provide safety services to the Botanical Society and within the Fernkloof Nature Reserve

- To take responsibility for parking management in the CBD

At the close of the reporting period the HPP Board was in the process of gathering information on what exactly was required. No decisions were made re the requests. The Board however is fully aware that the governance requirements to agree to these requests are extensive and that HPP's capacity will have to be boosted to deliver appropriately.

### Relationship with Overstrand SRA (OSRA) neighbours.

The OSRA Forum, which includes the Kleinmond and Onrus|Vermont SRA's met on a quarterly basis during the year. Recent meetings have included Sandbaai property owners who are in the process of establishing their own SRA. The purpose of the meetings was to share good practices and to collaborate on common issues. We have also worked together in making proposals to the OM re its CCTV policy.

### Learning from other SRA's

We have benefited from the experience of City Improvement Districts (CID's) such as the Voortrekker Road Corridor Improvement District and the Cape Town Central City Improvement District . My thanks go to Derek Bock and Tasso Evangelinos, the relevant Chief Executive Officers, who have generously shared their knowledge with us. Importantly, our EO now attends the City of Cape Town CID Forum's quarterly meeting to keep informed on best practice.

I am also indebted to Brian Wright, the Chief Executive Officer of the Urban Management Company, which oversees precincts in the KwaZulu-Natal Coast such as Umhlanga and Ballito.

### Oversight by the Overstrand Municipality

At the start of the year a sub-committee of the Board met with the OM's CFO and her team on a quarterly basis. The purpose was to comply with the requirements of our financial agreement with the OM. In the latter part of this year, the CFO has included the Overstrand SRA's in this meeting to cover compliance and other pertinent issues. In the past year HPP has also submitted all the reports required by the OM.

In addition, Councillors R. Nutt and C. Lerm have participated at the HPP Board Meetings on a regular basis. They do not have voting powers on the decisions made. I thank them for the valuable suggestions made in our deliberations.

### Summary review of the past year

I am grateful to report that HPP has met the objectives which were set for the 2022/2023 year. The board has also made good progress towards achieving the strategic priorities which were determined in October 2022.

A highlight of the past year has been the level of co-creation with several property owner groups, in HPP's planning and implementation processes.

For HPP to fulfil its mandate of providing supplementary services to those of the OM, positive relationships need to exist at all levels between HPP, the OM and property owners. I believe we have made good progress in this regard and that further work is required in this area.

### Looking ahead

The Overstrand Municipality's SRA-policy determines that the HSRA has a 5-year term (July 2020 – June 2025.) We have now completed our third year.

It is a strategic priority for HPP to motivate and plan for the continuation of the HSRA beyond June 2025. Property owners will have to exercise their votes in this regard in August 2024. The required milestones for this project have already been set and work will commence in January 2024.

HPP's remaining strategic priorities (as recently reviewed by a group of 27 stakeholders) and which are in the process of being finalised by the Board, will require our full attention.

### Thank You

My gratitude goes to:

- The Overstrand Municipality for a productive relationship
- Our service providers Fidelity-ADT, WCC Technologies and IPHUPA Clearing and Cleaning Services, for their outstanding work
- The various security and safety bodies who we work with in the field.
- Errol van Staden and Tobie Louw for their advice and experience they shared with the board.
- Our Board Members for this period; Ann Wright, Fransien Koegelenberg, Leon Rauch and Gerrie van der Westhuizen.
- HPP's Executive Officer, Marcia Bown.

On behalf of the Board, I thank HSRA property owners for their support during the year.

Jerry van Niekerk

Chairperson

12 September 2023