

# The end of the road for vandals



Sunday 29 January 2012

## THE END OF THE ROAD FOR VANDALS

'Enough already' is Metrorail's message to vandals who have crippled its rail services in recent months. Metrorail has enhanced its current resource mix to strengthen its revised security strategy. The rail operator's remedial strategy include the use of technology, additional human resources, revised operational tactics and close operational collaboration with its strategic public transport partners.

Lindelo Matya, regional manager of the Western Cape, says the region's security plan will be beefed up significantly to stop vandals in their tracks. *'We will be installing closed circuit television cameras which will be monitored and supported by strategically placed tactical response units'*. The cameras' coverage will be placed so as to integrate with other surveillance cameras in nearby areas.

More good news is that the region's current human resource capacity will be beefed up by the appointment of 100 ex-SANDF members. The rail system currently is safeguarded by about 100 railway police, 130 permanent Metrorail Protection Services officials and 900 contracted security officers working in two or more shifts.

Painstaking investigations by police resulted in 26 arrests last week. At least one person is alleged to be an instigator of the orchestrated onslaught on Metrorail to destabilize the train service. Information point to this being a deliberate plan by individuals whose contracts terminated at the end of December last year, to force Metrorail to absorb them into its workforce.

The interim interdict granted against 367 ex-employees of various private contractors will be made a permanent order of the court on Tuesday 31 January 2012 and Metrorail intends publishing the names of all interdicted and arrested individuals. As part of the investigation, these individuals have been profiled by police for future reference.

Metrorail technicians worked through the weekend to fix as many assets as possible. Whilst emergency repairs have enabled a significantly better service with improved travel times; the clamping of damaged points and revised working conditions lessen flexibility and reduce capacity. A special express bus service was made available to weekly and monthly ticket holders. In areas served by Golden Arrow Bus Services peak hours have been extended to offer additional capacity.

In a collective bid to protect the local economy, authorities were unanimous in their support of Metrorail to restore services to the embattled Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plain rail corridors. Provincial and local authorities, organized business, law enforcement agencies and other public transport operators have rallied to assist. Matya thanked stakeholders for their support: *'It is in our joint interest to integrate intelligence, resources and technological capabilities to protect the citizens of Cape Town and restore mobility for the loyal commuters of Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plan'*.

**End**

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