

# Ndebele mulls parole applications

PRETORIA: Correctional Services Minister Sibusiso Ndebele is currently considering the parole applications of 348 inmates sentenced to life imprisonment.



Parole applications for lifers are first considered by a Case Management Committee (CMC) and thereafter, the Correctional Supervision and Parole Board (CSPB).

The National Council on Correctional Services (NCCS) then reviews the parole applications, including recommendations from the CMC and CSPB, for recommendation to the minister.

The NCCS is chaired by Judge Siraj Desai and comprises 17 professionals including judges, magistrates, attorneys, clinical psychologists, social workers, medical doctors, professors and officials.

Upon receipt of advice and recommendations from the NCCS, the minister then exercises due consideration.

Since 22 December 2012, Ndebele has been engaged in the process of applying his mind to each of the 348 parole applications, in line with Section 65 (5) and (6) of the Correctional Services Act (Act 8 of 1959).

The Department of Correctional Services is mandated by law to manage and maintain a system of parole applicable to sentenced offenders.

"Parole is not a right and is always subject to specific conditions which an offender must comply with.

"The progressive parole system that is in place today in South Africa is based on international best practice.

"It allows for independent decision-making by CSPBs and in certain cases, allows for the involvement of other roleplayers

including representatives of the South African Police, the Department of Justice and even the victims," the department said.

In the case of lifers, the Correctional Services Minister takes the final decision to grant parole or not.

Offenders released on parole are closely monitored, including the use of electronic monitoring.

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