

New anti-crime collaborative forum has safety at its centre

At a recent meeting of the South African Council of Shopping Centres, the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa, Business against Crime South Africa, SAPS, retailers and shopping centre owners/managers, attendees agreed to form an anti-crime collaborative forum.



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"We need to share intelligence to create solutions. The importance given to the issue by Gauteng SAPS senior leadership and industry stakeholders is a step to the right direction. When it comes to stemming and preventing crime, we are all accountable and responsible. It is about working together and creating a relationship that is there in good and bad times. We all have the responsibility of fostering relations and sharing information to prevent crime and provide a safe shopping environment for consumers," said Amanda Stops, CEO of the SACSC.

Gauteng police leadership, led by the Gauteng Provincial Commissioner Lieutenant-General Mothiba, used the meeting to inform all affected business parties of the most recent developments in robberies. The meeting also enabled a frank exchange of views and suggestions of aspects, which could enhance the cooperation between the SAPS and business. A number of recommendations were made, including the creation of a sustainable collaborative anti-crime forum.

"The aim of the forum would be to share all information on shopping centre related crime, no matter how big or small, and to use this as an input to improving prevention and combating responses to the ongoing wave of crimes against the retail industry," said Dr Graham Wright, head of the CGCSA Crime Risk Initiative.

"This forum will also serve as a provincial coordinating and communications platform between the police and all of the business stakeholders, with a view to enhancing the alignment and impact of actions undertaken by the various parties. This

capability will essentially re-energise the Shopping Centre Security Initiative - a partnership between the SACSC, CGCSA and BACSA and which will be expanded to involve all other relevant role players."

Mothiba welcomed the initiative. "I wish to thank all those involved for their engagement on this issue. It is important that the safety and security of shopping malls be assured for its many thousands of visitors, so people can shop in a relaxed atmosphere without any fears for their safety. This partnership with the business community is important in delivering on this expectation."

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