



Political transition, organisational fluidity and police training: the case of South Africa

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From Racial Oligarchy to Democracy



From Racial Oligarchy to Democracy, 1994

Requires fundamental restructuring of the state apparatus including the police

Model of **democratic policing** adopted

Changes in legal framework (constitutional rechtstaat; human rights; citizen safety, partnership)

Changes in structure and function (citizen safety)

Architecture of oversight and accountability

Cultural ethos (demilitarisation)

Operational strategies (from confession based to evidence based investigations)

Many opportunities for **global ideas to be used**

Example 1: Restructuring of training required

In 1992 on eve of changes basic police training steeped in paramilitary tradition emphasis on riot control and counter-insurgency

Drill, physical training, and musketry skills 40%

Legal training through rote learning

Front loading - chalk and talk – instruction rather than education

Public order police training – confrontational and maximum force

Example 1: 1994+ Basic Training/ continued

Strong reliance on **global ideas** and dependence on developmental assistance

The *Basic Level Training Pilot Programme* funded by the UK and supported by *Commonwealth Advisory Team* and overseen by *Multi-National Police Training Implementation Team, 1994-5*

Designed a new script for police training relying on “international norms of professional policing” – changes system of recruitment, selection and training aimed at producing ‘community police officers’ with

- social skills,
- human rights orientation
- community policing philosophy

A critical moment in the elaborate design of a new approach based on the model of democratic policing.

Example 2: Radical changes in Public Order Policing

Three critical moments in utilisation of **global ideas**

1. Training for public order policing in new democracy – International experts and Belgian assistance 1994-2000

2. Preparing for Soccer World Cup drawing on German and French expertise, 2010

3. The Marikana Commission of Inquiry and International Panel of Experts to advise about training, 2015



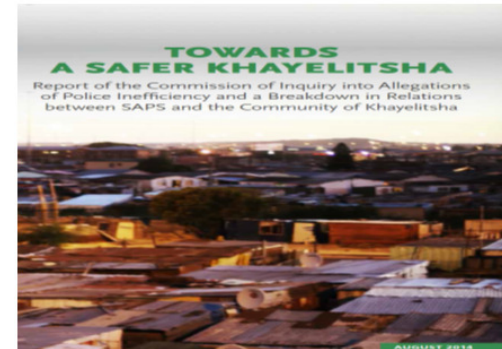
However reforms diluted

Internal organisational factors	External contextual factors
<p>1. 1996 Moratorium on police training stalled reform momentum at training colleagues</p>	<p>A. High levels of violent crime persisted - Requires 'war on crime' and more powers to police – <i>re-militarisation</i></p>
<p>2. Massive recruitment of personnel – to Africanise the organisation 123 000 recruits trained between 2003-2012</p>	<p>B. After 2002 growth in protests lock police into adversarial contact with police abuse increasing</p>
<p>3. Lowered standards and controls Opportunities for corruption Police misconduct flourishes</p>	<p>C. Creeping political influence over police as in other state departments <i>Zumafication</i> of the state</p>
<p>4. Series of endless restructuring of special units makes for organisational instability</p>	<p>E. New demands increase Domestic Violence Act Child Justice Act Prevention of Organised Crime Act Cyber Crime</p>

Current state of affairs ?

Two recent Commission of Inquiry take stock

- Police-community relations and inefficiency in service delivery in an urban ghetto inhabited by the poor, 2012



- Marikana Commission of Inquiry into shooting of striking workers, 2012



Multiple ailments

- High Crime Environment is challenging and often dangerous
- Case overload for detectives is appalling
- Morale is low, absenteeism rife, corruption high, loss of dockets common
- Service delivery uneven – pockets of excellence
- Abuse of power common and command and control lacking

Modernity and its opposite

A sobering moment

SAPS is the largest of police organisations on the African continent 31
March 2015 193 692 personnel

By African standard a very modern police organisation – in terms of
infrastructure, resources

Uses an enlightened discourse -emulates 21st Century global police
speak in context of democratisation

Beyond this modern surface however it is a deeply embattled institution

Structural realities of developing democracy challenging as it
paramilitary legacies of policing

New initiative: Back to Basics

Signs of willingness to take stock

Design interventions

Back to Basics campaign

for Recruit Training

for Detective Training

for Public Order policing

Willingness again to utilise police expertise from elsewhere

Challenge as elsewhere in Africa to adapt ideas to local context.

The very notion of *professional police* needs to be home-grown

Police and policing in Africa

South African police a particular variation on an African theme

Third wave of democratisation opened up spaces for global exchanges

Many opportunities of training and education from soft skills to hard skills

The quest for a democratic and professional model of policing however, far from realised.