BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE POLICE AND THE PRIVATE SECURITY INDUSTRY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME IN SOUTH AFRICA

Olaotse John Kole1 and David Masiloane2

ABSTRACT

High crime levels are a challenge to South Africa and it is clear that the South African Police Service needs a broader partnership/collaboration with other organisations and community formations to deal with this matter. Due to its large role in crime prevention and to its enormous physical and human resources that could augment police resources in the fight against crime, the private security industry could play a crucial role. Partnership policing between the South African Police Service and the private security industry is a vital component in the fight against crime. All available resources need to be utilised given the nature and scope of crime, as demonstrated by the recently published crime figures for the 2015-2016 reporting period. The article identifies the barriers to partnership between the police and the private security that has hamstrung any effective and efficient fight against crime. Literature and empirical research was used to identify these barriers and recommendations were made that could minimise or remove these barriers to benefit the partnership.

Keywords: crime; crime levels; crime prevention; private security officer; private security industry; police.

INTRODUCTION

As stated in South Africa’s National Crime Prevention Strategy (1996:48), crime prevention is not the sole responsibility of the South African Police Service. Effective crime prevention strategies need the involvement of other role players such as the private security industry – an industry that has a larger workforce than that of the South African Police Service. The extra resources that the private security industry could add to the fight against crime can be inferred from Minnaar (2007a:128) who states that this industry has more resources than the police. Based on this, properly coordinated partnership policing between the police and private security could add value both in terms of physical resources such as closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras and serving as a force multiplayer. In order to achieve such a functional partnership between the police and private security inhibiting factors will need to be identified and addressed. As this study will indicate, these inhibiting factors could emanate from either police officials or security officials or from within their respective modes of operation.

Institutional challenges – such as the late arrival of the police at crime scenes and the lack of vetting of security officers by some security companies – are some of the factors that could be addressed in terms of the policies, operating procedures and regulations currently in operation within both the police and the private security industry. These factors are easy to manage through monitoring and regular inspections. In 2012 the Minister of Police discovered that, out of the

1. Dr. Senior Lecturer. Department of Criminology & Security Science, School of Criminal Justice, College of Law, University of South Africa. Email: koleoj@unisa.ac.za
2. Prof. Director: School of Criminal Justice, College of Law, University of South Africa. Email: DMasiloa@unisa.ac.za
170 728 security officers who were vetted in 2008, 14 729 had been involved in criminal activities (Mnisi, 2012). Further evidence of how these matters can be managed is the fact that the South African Police Service (through the Commanders of police stations) is that the response times for complaints to be indicated (Kole, 2015:137).

Insecurity or the fear of crime compel many people and businesses in South Africa to opt for private security services for their protection (Minnaar 2007a:131). Similar sentiments could also be inferred from Schöneich (1999:3) who stated that the private security industry came into being because of its ability to look after the needs of clients since some people have lost confidence in the police. To investigate the factors that hamper the effective partnership between the police and the private security industry this article is grounded both on the National Crime Prevention Strategy as the document that forms the basis of the multi-party approach to the fight against crime and on the conduct of both the police and security officials that inhibits this approach.

THE HISTORY OF THE PRIVATE SECURITY INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AFRICA
The discovery of diamonds in 1868 in Griqualand West in the Northern Cape Province necessitated the protection of the diamond fields by reliable men (Vidulich, 1982: 7–8). Subsequently, shopping centres also came to use security guards called Matshengelane. According to Potgieter, Ras and Neser (2008:39), the Matshengelanes did not have any skills but all that was required of them was that they be physically well built and that they had the ability to use the “knobkerrie” to ward off potential criminals. They were often seen during cold winter nights sitting around fire containers to keep themselves warm (Potgieter et al, 2008:39). In the 1950s and 1960s robberies escalated due to the banks using taxis to transport money to and from the Reserve Bank. To minimise these crimes, Fidelity Guards, a security company, started transporting cash in a vehicle that had protective features. Ten years later, the cash-in-transit services had come to be much in demand and Fidelity Guards was not able to fulfil this need. Accordingly, it merged with Armoured Car Services (Vidulich, 1982:9). Pillay (2007:61) states that the Private Security Industry (PSI) was then joined by trained ex-police and ex-military officers who arrived in South Africa from Zimbabwe after the Rhodesian war in the 1970s. These security officers were mostly used to guard the strategic national key points and they were increasingly managed by the members of the South African Defence Force and the South African Police (Pillay, 2007:61).

In an apparent objection to the use of former police and military personnel to undertake security work, Byrne and Jones (1977:23) state that security work cannot be considered a function that can be carried out by any person. The altered nature of the security industry has led to young and educated people from different backgrounds entering the security market. The criterion for being a security officer is no longer physical appearance only; people who become security officers should be properly trained to perform their functions and be able to adapt to changing security technology. The PSI is mainly concerned with protecting the property of its clients (Minnaar, 2007b: 8) and, according to Yorke-Smith (2010), most security companies offer guarding services; armed response; cash management services; electronic installations such as CCTV systems; electronic manufacturing and distribution; electronic fence and component manufacturing; close protection; event security; locksmith services; security systems; consumer goods protection; and in-house security.
THE GROWTH OF THE PRIVATE SECURITY INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Minnaar (2007b:8-9) states that the PSI contributes to the economy of the country by creating employment for many people. Some of the factors that have contributed to the growth of the Private Security Industry from 1995 are: the high levels of crime in the country; the insistence by insurance companies that their clients have adequate security measures in place in order to control losses; the lack of effective policing by the South African Police Service; and insufficient funds for crime prevention initiatives (Minnaar & Ngoveni, 2004:43). These factors, coupled with the fact that the police cannot be everywhere at all times, advance the relevance of the private security industry in crime reduction. Minnaar (2007b:8) states that this phenomenon is not unique to South Africa as it has been a trend observed in other countries as well.

The number of security officials working in South Africa is more than double the number of police officials. Schönsteich (1999:24) states that, in 1997, the ratio between private security and police was 3:1 in South Africa; 3:1 in the USA; and 2:1 in the United Kingdom and Australia. The ratio of active registered security officers to police officials in South Africa in 2013 was 4:1 (Steyn, 2013:2). According to Schönsteich (1999:21), there is little information available on the statistics of PSI from the earlier periods of its inception in South Africa. What is known is that the PSI experienced growth from the 1970s. This sentiment is supported by Irish (1999:3) who states that the PSI grew by about 30 percent per annum from the 1970s and that, in 1999, there were 350 000 active and non-active security guards. The official record on the growth of the private security industry in South Africa can only be traced from the 1990s. Singh (2008: 40) states that this is because the PSI in South Africa started to be regulated from that period onwards after the Security Officers Act 92 of 1987 being passed only in 1989. Table 1 below illustrates the growth of security guard numbers from 2004 until 2013.

Table 1: Growth of private security guard numbers from 2004 until 2013

The above table shows a continuous growth of active and non-active security guards from 2004 until 2013. Kole (2015:45) states that, although the growth of the private security industry in South Africa is acknowledged (there was a huge increase of 110 315 registered active security guards during the period 2004 – 2009) there was also a decrease of 64 685 registered active security guards between the period 2010 to 2013. The decrease might have been the result of one of, or a combination of, the 2008 global recession and the growth of dynamic technology which might be impacting negatively on security guard numbers because users of private security end up reducing the number of security guards while resorting to security technology such as CCTV.

To a large extent, the growth in the number of security guards is also consistent with the growth in the number of security companies, as reflected in table 2, below. The Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA) annual reports do not list the number of genuine security companies only but contain a list of all security companies and this list might include “fly-by-night” security companies as well. The fly-by-nights are companies that render security services without complying with the law and are also not properly registered as such. According to the CEO of the Security Industry Alliance, Steve Conradie, the government is contributing to this problem by hiring security companies that are not registered with PSIRA (Mkhulisi, 2010). It is important to note that it is difficult for PSIRA to tell the difference between legal and illegal security companies given the size of the private security industry and PSIRAs workforce (Kole, 2015:46). According to PSIRA (2012:48), its total personnel count, from top management to contract workers, was 232 in 2012. Clearly, PSIRA is not adequately resourced to deal with an industry of this magnitude.

Table 2: Growth of private security companies from 2009 until 2012

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>2009</td>
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(Source: PSIRA, 2010 & 2012).
THE IMPACT OF THE PRIVATE SECURITY INDUSTRY IN SELECTED COUNTRIES

Other countries have their own private security industries that render crime prevention services – including countries that are experiencing internal conflicts such as civil wars – and these companies’ clients range from rebel organisations to despotic leaders. (Bosch & Maritz, 2011:72). In some instances, this protection comes in the form of “warlordism” because of the failure of some states to protect their citizens, thus making these citizens vulnerable (Asmal, 1999: viii). According to Gummedze (2007:4), generally, PSI renders their services in the form of private security companies and private military companies. The latter are quite prominent in regions that are troubled by civil wars; for example, DRC, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Liberia, Angola and Mozambique (Gummedze, 2007:5). This places private security in the forefront of conflicts where they are vulnerable and are thus encouraged to become armed (Bosch & Maritz, 2011:80). Bearpark and Schulz (2007:73) state that, in Africa, private security reaches where the state does not, so it is an important partner in combating crime, even though the clients must pay for this service. This means that some people cannot access these services as they cannot afford to pay for them.

In 2007, the population of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was estimated at 62 636 000. At the time, this country had already been exposed to civil wars for an extended period (Democratic Republic of Congo, 2008:69). In Botswana, on the other hand, thefts out of motor vehicles increased from 114 in 2012 to 125 in 2013 (Botswana Police Service, 2014: np). The latter is the kind of crime that happens largely at shopping malls and tends to be committed within a very short period due to the sophistication of the criminals. Research conducted by Spies (2012: np) in South Africa indicates that it takes about 10 seconds to steal from a vehicle parked at a shopping mall. The omnipresence of security personnel and the availability of CCTVs go a long way towards preventing and deterring potential criminals from committing such crimes. Crime in some SADC countries is complicated by inadequately trained and poorly resourced police forces (De Goede, 2008:40). These make citizens to feel unsafe and those who can afford to do so turn to private security companies for protection. Most private security companies in DRC render security services predominantly in urban areas even though the country consists largely of rural areas (De Goede, 2008: 42). This could be attributed to high crime rates in urban areas in contrast to rural areas, as is the case in many other countries. The main function fulfilled by these companies is crime prevention through the patrolling of facilities, the monitoring of alarm systems and the provision of armed response. In addition, they respond to accident scenes and render first aid where this is needed (De Goede, 2008:43).

During the period 2000 to 2007, Swaziland experienced crime levels that could not be left to the police alone and, consequently, this led to the evolution of the private security industry as was also the case in many other countries (Kole, 2015: 49). It was during the 1930s that private security got involved in the safety and security needs of Swaziland (Simelane, 2007: 155). Simelane (2008:599) further states that from 1968 when Swaziland gained its independence and fell under the rule of the monarchy and up until today the country has used the same private security system as that used by their predecessors. As is the case in South Africa, Botswana and other countries, the need for private protection on the part of Swazi citizens comes with its own challenges because only those who can afford to pay for private security services can use them (Simelane, 2008:599). People in the urban areas of Swaziland are more likely to be able to pay for private security services than are people in the rural areas. While the latter also need protection, they must resort to volunteering at the Community Forums which, in turn, offer them protection (Kole, 2015: 49).
In Lesotho, some Basotho have lost confidence in the ability of the police regarding prevention of crime, though a similar situation does exist in other countries (Dzimba & Matooane, 2005: 4). Stock theft is a common crime in Lesotho and, according to Dzimba and Matooane (2005:4), it is committed by groups of criminals from across the borders of Lesotho. This has necessitated the utilisation of private security by people who can afford to protect their livestock in this way.

In the United Kingdom, the Machinery and Technical Transport (MAT) organisation was initiated by a businessman called Arnold Kunzler in 1926 to safeguard goods such as cash and property and to protect courier services as well as goods being transported by road, rail and air (South 1988:21). Kole (2015:56) states that this organisation was a security company – its ‘real’ operations disguised by the use of the word “technical” in place of the word “security” so as to protect it from people with criminal intent. This view can also be inferred from South (1988:21) who states that, even in 1988, MAT was still operating in the UK as an international security company. According to Wakefield (2003:18), access to private property led to the owners of such property to want to protect it and this strengthened the need for private security services. The use of private security service gives the owners what South (1988:16) calls “private peace”. In addition to this, South (1988:20) states that the general strike of 1926 led to The Times newspaper utilising some of its employees as in-house security guards to protect the vehicles being used to deliver newspapers. The onus was on the owners of the company to protect their property (Wakefield, 2003:18).

Another security initiative in the UK was the establishment of the Night Watch Services in 1935 to render patrol services. These security officers, who were on bicycles to enable them to move quickly from one area to another, mainly protected properties against destruction (Johnston, 1992:19). They were also provided with whistles that they blew when they saw a crime being committed to get support and to deter the culprit. Kole (2015:58) states that a similar practice is also used in Rosebank, Sandton, Parkview and other suburban areas of Johannesburg. The only difference is that their security officers are also provided with panic buttons, pepper sprays, batons and two-way radios. They fall under PSIRA, which regulates the private security industry so as to rid it of criminal elements and to ensure that the PSI operates within the set standards and practices (Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority Annual Report and Accounts, 2012:1).

According to Fischer and Green (1992: 10), the police in the USA were ineffective, ill-trained and corrupt in the 19th century. This triggered a need for private protection by private security concerns. According to Burstein (1994: 2), private security was first used 1855 when Allan Pinkerton of the North West Police Agency was contracted to protect railroads in the county using night watchmen and charged clients for the services provided. This was followed by the first burglar alarm company which was established by Edwin Holmes in 1858 and by the American Daily Telegraph (ADT) in 1874 (Burstein, 1994:2; Fischer & Green, 1992:10). The original security company that dealt with security alarms to prevent crime was established by the William J. Burns Detective Agency in 1909 (Burstein, 1994:2).

In Taiwan the emergence of the private security dates back to the 17th century (Sheu, 19995:183). Such services were utilised in different ways, such as the hiring of people to render escort services to transport delivering clothes to different places. In this regard, business people saw a great need to hire people for this specific function and Sheu (1995:183) states that, in some instances, people proficient in martial arts were rendering escort services to people writing examinations to be employed in the public sector.
THE BENEFIT OF PARTNERSHIP POLICING
According to Morabito and Greenberg (2005:3), the partnership between the police and private security can make it possible for both parties to learn from each other. Private security could act as agencies of the police in crime prevention (Post & Kingsbury, 1991:29). Irish (1999:8) states that the withdrawal of the police from areas that they were initially responsible for – such as the guarding of national key points – along with the high cost of the services provided by some big private security companies, gave rise to a space that was left unoccupied. According to Minnaar and Ngoveni (2004:44), this unoccupied space provided for the emergence of small security companies to close this gap as people were looking for relatively affordable security companies. Although this has had a positive effect in terms of the job creation and economic empowerment, it has also created several challenges as it has given rise to fly-by-night companies that do not comply with the law and that, for the most part, are not registered with PSIRA.

MANAGING PARTNERSHIPS TO REDUCE CRIME
Simonsen (1998:96) justifies the need for the police and private security to work together by stating that both parties are responsible for the maintenance of law and order in their respective areas in that the police prevent crime in the country at large while private security companies prevent crime on individual properties and within the companies that contract them. This means that the private security industry ensures the safety and security of its customers while the police ensure the safety and security of all the inhabitants of the country. This indicates the similarities between what the police and the private security do in terms of crime prevention. It is for this reason that the Security Industry Alliance (SIA) and the South African Police Service signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2009. This MOU was mainly focused on ensuring that the PSI and the police would work together to achieve their common goal of protecting the society (Müller, 2010:32). However, looking at the way these two organisations are still operating, one gets the sense that this has not crystallised into an effective and efficient partnership. This invokes some questions as to what is preventing this from happening or on what impediments are being encountered in making this partnership effective and efficient. According to Rogers (2006:35), the delay in materialising an effective partnership between the police and private security is caused by the very people who are entrusted to drive implementation.

For an effective and efficient partnership to exist between the police and the private security industry, Kole (2015:84) states that there is a need for certain guidelines to be in place to regulate the partnership and to ensure that both parties know what their and each other’s roles and expectations are. These sentiments are also shared by Knutsson and Clarke (2006:6) who state that partnerships in crime prevention should be created only when roles have been clarified. Although, in practical terms, people report crime to the police, where the police station is far from communities and security officers are posted closer, people normally inform security officers about crimes and these security officers, in turn, facilitate the reporting of the crime to the police who then send a patrol vehicle for the initial investigation and the recording of such crime. Partnership policing is not a new phenomenon exclusive to South Africa as it has been applied and proven successful in other parts of the world such as Brazil, the United States of America and Britain. Bhanu and Stone (1997:5-6) state that, in 1997, Sao Paulo in Brazil started a public-private partnership initiative to fight crime. This partnership consisted of academics, community groups, business associations, private security, and the media. This formation reduced crime drastically and, over a period of two years, about 2 500 criminal activities were recorded based on the operations of this partnership which had a call centre to facilitate the reporting of crimes to the police.
In 1995 a public-private partnership initiative was established in New Orleans, USA. It consisted of 20 people who were heading different organisations in the community, including representation from the private security industry. The formation proved successful because it decreased crime locally and people were attracted to the area since it was safer than before. This formation worked closely with the office of the Mayor and the police department (Bhanu & Stone, [sa]: 6-7).

Kole (2015:86) states that different partnership policing structures can exist in one country, such as in Britain. According to Wakefield (2003:193-194), the collaborative partnership between private security and the police at one of the centres (the Arts Plaza) in the UK was entered in order to reduce crime. There was a cordial relationship in this partnership that was largely attributed to the manner in which this partnership was managed by the Security Manager and the Police Superintendent who were tasked with this responsibility. The only concern from the police side was that members of the private security company involved depended more on the police to deal with crime at the Arts Plaza.

The other collaborative partnership in Britain, as indicated by Wakefield (2003:195) is that of the Quayside Centre where police officers would normally pass through the private security point and share information in an effort to update one another about the crime situation in the area. This partnership revealed that some police officers did not know how private security operates since they would request CCTV footage of an incidents that had happened a year previously. According to standard private security operational procedures, such old recordings are no longer stored in the system. Nonetheless, in such cases the police officers concerned get to know these dynamics, something that illustrates the importance of partnership policing between the police and the security industry.

FACTORS AFFECTING THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PRIVATE SECURITY INDUSTRY IN CRIME PREVENTION
The private security industry, like any other industry, has its own challenges when it comes to effective crime prevention. According to South (1988:88), the following are some of the challenges that private security firms are faced with: private security, at times, use maximum force where it is not warranted; they sometimes fail to follow the regulations in place; some security officers are poorly trained; and operating standards in the industry are poor. Kole (2015:88) states that these are some of the challenges that the PSI needs to address for effective functioning with the police in crime prevention. According to South (1988:88), the root cause of these challenges is competition among private security companies.

PROBLEM STATEMENT
South Africa has high crime levels as indicated in table 3 below and this is evidence that the South African Police Service cannot succeed in winning the fight against crime on their own. The need for partnership policing is also emphasised by the National Crime Prevention Strategy that was developed in 1996. The National Crime Prevention Strategy was designed to address crime that instils fear in the hearts of the people and prevent them from taking their rightful place in the development and growth of the country and it is premised on the fact that successful crime prevention can be achieved by effective collaboration amongst various stakeholders (NCPS, 1996:48). Schönteich (1999:16) states that the growth of private security in South Africa came about as a result of the inability of the state to combat crime.
Although crime levels a few crime categories are decreasing or fluctuating, crime levels overall remain unacceptably high and this further illustrates the need for partnership. It must be noted that the selected crimes relate to those crime categories where private security can make a direct contribution to their reduction. Kole (2010:28) states that it is important to note that some crimes may decrease in incidence but increase in financial impact. This suggests that people will be convinced that crime levels have decreased and are under control only when there is a decrease in crime incidence and in the financial impact of crime.

This article aims to investigate the role of private security in helping the South African Police Service to prevent crime and it does so by outlining the barriers that hamper effective partnership between the South African Police Service and the private security industry and by identifying various services currently being provided by the security companies that could be effective in combating crime in South Africa. The information in this study could guide the government on measures that are needed for an effective and efficient partnership between the police and the private security.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to enable the researcher to collect as much in-depth and diverse information as possible. Triangulation was used to ensure that what one method could not uncover might be uncovered by the other method. The data obtained was coded and inputted on datasheets in order to group and categorise themes. One-on-one interviews were conducted with the management of selected private security service providers and the management of the South African Police Service. Twenty (20) police stations and 20 security companies participated in the study. Open-ended questions were used to interview 37 police officials from the level of Station Commander to crime prevention commanders as officials at these levels are involved in the operational decision-making of the South African Police Service. Thirty (30) security officials, from the level of Chief Executive Officer to Operational Manager, were also interviewed as they are involved in the operational decision making of their respective companies.

Four focus group discussions consisting of 15 and 16 members per group were conducted so as to gain more understanding on the topic and in order to help the researcher to formulate the research questionnaire and the interview schedule. The participants, who are members of the South African Police Service and Private Security Industry, were purposefully selected for the focus group discussions. These focus group discussions were conducted as follows: The first group consisted of 15 police officers; the second group had 15 security officers; the third group had 16 members (eight police officials and eight security officers); and the fourth group had 16 members...
as well (eight police officials and eight security officers). Different members were used in each focus group discussion meaning that participants needed to participate in the focus group discussions only once. The researcher used a digital recording system to record the interviews and these were later transcribed. In these focus group discussions, participants were free to share their experiences, their feelings and opinions, as alluded to by De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011:360). The collected data was coded and categorised into themes.

Survey questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data. According to Davies, Francis and Jupp (2011:63), questionnaires can be used for both quantitative and qualitative studies and it normally depends on the way questions are asked by the researcher. The importance of making use of a questionnaire is that it helps the researcher to ask the same question in the same manner to all the respondents (Davies et al, 2011:63). A survey questionnaire was designed and distributed to the selected private security service providers and the members of South African Police Service. The study took place in Central Johannesburg, South Rand, West Rand, East Rand and North Rand in Gauteng. Three hundred (300) questionnaires were distributed to identified operational members of the South African Police Service and another 300 to identified operational members of private security companies. The response rate from the South African Police Service (SAPS) was 173 (57.7%) and 163 (54.3%) from the Private Security Industry.

The collected data was collated, prioritised, clustered into themes and interpreted in order to make sense out of them. The data collected through the questionnaires were coded and then entered an Excel spreadsheet for further statistical analysis and data capturing. The services of an experienced statistician were used for the statistical analysis of the coded data. The information obtained through coding of the data was also entered on Excel spreadsheet. The researcher then interrogated specific points to come up with possible explanations.

FINDINGS
The response rate from the security officials on the barriers to effective partnership was 74.2 percent. Of these, 21.6 percent attributed barriers to effective partnership to lack of communication between the police and the private security; 15.5 percent attributed it to inadequate training of security officers; 15.5 percent attributed it to different authority/powers bestowed on police officers and security officials; 14.7 percent indicated that additional authority/powers were needed by private security officers; and 6.9 percent attributed it to the lack of trust between the officials of the South African Police Service and the officials of the private security industry. This lack of trust is re-emphasised by Respondent 10, a member of top management in the private security industry, who stated that:

“Unless you are a friend to a member of the South African Police Service you get no co-operation from them. For example, two weeks ago one of our guards gave us information on the crime that was going to take place at our site. We suggested to the members of the South African Police service that they should arrest all the security guards to protect the identity of the guard who gave us the information. They told the arrested guards that one of my guys was their ‘impimpi’ [meaning that he was the one who gave out information leading to their arrest].
On the other hand, 77.6 percent of the operational police officers who responded to the question on the barriers to effective partnership indicated them as follows: 22.3 percent attributed it to the lack of communication between the PSI and SAPS. Their answers could be based on the fact that there are no formal communication channels or structures between the police and private security in a given policing precinct and 22.3 percent attributed it to the lack of adequate training of security officers. This could also be inferred from the complaints about the manner in which private security manages crime scenes when they are the first to arrive at such scenes. This might be indicative that private security officers do not have sufficient expertise to preserve crime scenes until they are handed over to the police. The long-time taken by the police to arrive at crime scenes, as indicated by 5.2 percent of respondents from the PSI, could be one of the factors that expose their inability to preserve crime scenes properly. One of the police station commanders indicated that, in terms of their rules, the response time to a complaint should be 7 to 10 minutes, but most operational police and security officials indicated that this response time was not achieved. Respondent 2, a member of PSI top management, emphasised this by stating that:

“the issue is the response time of the SAPS to crime scenes since they even take over an hour to get to the crime scene. It seems they respond according to the crime that is committed. Areas also play a role in that areas known to be rough are the ones mostly experiencing more delays from the police side”.

This was re-emphasised by Respondent 10, also a member of PSI top management who stated that “at one stage we reported crime from the site in the morning (about 9:00) and they only came at 15:00”; 15.2 percent mentioned the lack of trust from both parties (SAPS members and the PSI members) as a barrier to effective partnership. This lack of trust is exacerbated by the perception of 5.2 percent security officers that the police undermine them. To reiterate the fact that some members of the South African Police Service are undermining the security officers, Respondent 19, a member of the top management of the private security industry stated that “The police call anyone who is not a police [officer] a “haas” [hare/rabbit]”. Haas runs away when seeing a dog, so they regard security officers as haas men/women who cannot do police work and are untrained according to the police”. Of the respondents, almost ten percent (9.8%) mentioned the shortage of resources as a barrier. According to the respondents, the shortage of resources arises from the failure of the SAPS personnel to continually attend security forum meetings and the fact that most sectors are allocated only two police vehicles. If a sector is big, this leads to long response times. In addition, eight percent mentioned the lack of basic knowledge of the law on the part of some private security officers as a barrier.

All of the 163 officers, from within the private security industry, who were asked whether the current training of private security officers was adequate, requisite and of acceptable standard, the 147 (90.2%) who responded indicated the following: 76.7 percent indicated the level of training as adequate, requisite and of acceptable standard; while 13.5 percent indicated the level of training as not adequate, requisite and of acceptable standard. A large number of security officers, who indicated their training as adequate, might be people who do not compare their training with any other training but basing their assessment on the extent to which the training that they receive equips them to perform their work. While the small percentage that indicated the training as inadequate might be people who had come from the SAPS and the South African National Defence Force. This could mean that they compare the training that they receive with the training received from their previous employers and did not necessarily look at it in terms of their task at hand. The
current practice is that, even if one has a policing or military background, one still must study security management courses to be qualified in this area of work.

Of the 173 respondents from the South African Police Service, only 152 (84.9%) responded to the question of the training of security officers. Their response contradicts that of the PSI in that 37.5 percent were of the view that the training provided to the private security personnel is effective and adequate while 62.5 percent were of the view that the training is not adequate. This response might be based on the perceived performance of security officers on crime scenes as indicated above, a lack of understanding as to what security officers are expected to do, or lack of knowledge on what the training of security officers entails.

Of the 30 top management of the private security industry who were questioned on the training offered to security officers 16 (53.33%) responded as follows: 43.75 percent indicated that the training undergone by security officers is not adequate while 56.25 percent indicated that it is adequate. Respondent 3, a member of PSI top management, emphasised the adequacy of training offered to security officers by stating that:

“I do not think that training in the PSI is geared to being a solution to any crime problem everywhere. I think it is geared to specific objectives of different companies catering for specific client’s needs. The clients are the ones setting standards. They are the ones paying us and we just implement what the clients want. Based on this the current training is sufficient.”

This is supported by Respondent 12 of the SAPS top management who stated that:

“Their level of training allows them to perform their job properly, so it is adequate to enable them to perform their tasks. For example, at Chris Hani Baragwanath there is a security company that we work with and they are competent. They arrest suspects and call us. The only thing they cannot do is to register a case and they rely on us for that.”

Corruption in the certification of some security officers could be contributing to the perception that the training of security officers is not up to standard, based on the manner in which some training centres operate and enable easy access to security certificates as clearly captured by Respondent 14, a member of PSI top management: “We know that after two weeks a guy staying at home can get a security certificate with Grade E – Grade A without having gone through the necessary training. A guy can just pay R200.00 or R300.00 and have a security certificate.”

Kole (2015:170) states that this can be detected because, once such people are hired, most of them cannot perform the work they are hired to do. Respondent 15, also a member of PSI top management, stated that “Some security training institutions do not do justice to the system. Sometimes you find a guy has a Grade A but can’t even read or write.” So, it is more about other people taking advantage of the loopholes in the PSI and tarnishing the image of the industry (Kole, 2015:170).

Of the 37 respondents from the top management of SAPS, 17 (45.94%) responded to the question on the training of security officers as follows: 46 percent indicated that the training of private security officers is not adequate while 32 percent pointed out that they did not have any idea about the training of private security officers while only 14 percent agreed that the training of private security officers is adequate. This indicates that most operational and management officers of the SAPS are of the view that the training offered to the security officers is inadequate.
RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important for the PSI to look at the training that private security officials receive. Though the training per se might not necessarily have problems, continuous checks and balances on the training should be made. The PSI should have a body that continuously looks at the effectiveness of the training provided so as to determine whether it equips security officers with the required knowledge and skills. To be in line with the changing nature of crime, it is also important that the training of security officers embodies in-depth theoretical and practical lectures on crime scene management as well as a sound grounding in some aspects of criminal law and criminal procedure that are applicable to their field in order to enhance their effectiveness in partnership policing.

Security companies should use the already established crime-combating forum meetings of the SAPS to share crime information with the police in their respective precincts. This will enhance the fight against crime and establish solid collaborations that could lead to safer neighbourhoods. Regular interactions of this nature could dispel some of the misconceptions that one party has regarding the other and help to build a trusting relationship as each party will get to know the abilities and capabilities of the other.

The PSI should vet its employees because they are entrusted with protecting the clients and their properties that is why background checks into their employees is essential to ensure that they do not employ people with criminal records.

Members of the South African Police Service should avoid using offensive words such as ‘matshengelane’ or ‘haas’ [hare/rabbit] when referring to members of the private security industry because this offends them and is not conducive to building a trusting relationship. It is important to note that the word ‘matshengelane’ was used to refer to uneducated security officers during the inception of the private security industry.

Police management should continuously monitor response times to complaints so as to ensure that responses are within the allocated time and should investigate any response that is not within this timeframe in order to establish the root cause of each delay and take remedial measures. They should not wait to receive complaints on individual response rates from the public as that cannot be a true indication of the general response rate of the police. This will ensure that the public is aware of realistic response times from the police and that operational police officers will know that their response time is monitored and that they will have to provide valid reasons in cases where they fail to adhere to the stipulated timeframe.

CONCLUSION

Effective crime prevention needs an effective and efficient partnership that includes private security because the latter provide protection to a significant number of people who can afford to pay for their services. This will help in consolidating the resources that these two parties (South African Police Service and the private security industry) have towards effective crime prevention. For such a partnership to be effective it should be based on solid guidelines or parameters that should be understood by both parties. Of critical importance is for both parties to work on factors that have, in the past, hamstrung the effective and efficient partnership between the police and the private security.

Institutional barriers that must be urgently attended to are the late arrival of the police at the crime scenes and the vetting of the private security officers. Based on the fear of crime or insecurity by most people in the country, and on the perceived ineffectiveness of the police in dealing with it, those who can afford the services of private security companies will continue to enlist their services. This will not necessarily guarantee the safety and security of all people in the country because many South Africans cannot afford these services.
LIST OF REFERENCES


Focus group interviews

Focus group interview No. 1. 2012. SAPS officers from different police stations in Gauteng. 15 participants. Pretoria, 21 April.
Focus group interview No. 2. 2012. Private security officers from different security companies in Gauteng. 15 participants. Pretoria, 21 April.
Focus group interview No. 3. 2012. SAPS officers from different police stations in Gauteng and PSI officers from different security companies in Gauteng. 16 participants. Pretoria, 21 April.
Focus group interview No. 4. 2012. SAPS officers from different police stations in Gauteng and PSI officers from different security companies in Gauteng. 16 participants. Pretoria, 21 April.