Policing A Changing Society in South Africa: Challenges for the Police Officer

ABSTRACT

During the early 1990s, up until the new democratic government took office in 1995, there was widespread criticism directed at the South African Police. Much of the criticism was directed at the external and internal environments of the police force. A great deal of this criticism came from academics and researchers. However, much of this was aimed at assisting the new South African Police Service being rationalised, restructured and amalgamated into one police service. A policing service that would enjoy legitimacy among all the communities of South Africa, and not only by a privileged minority. Since 1995, the police were involved in policing a changing society. According to De Vries (2008:133), as far as guidance towards continued democratic policing is concerned, it was necessary that the leaders of the police department should have developed clear policies to address the criticism. The time has come to take stock of what happened since 1995 to date, in relating to these criticisms. The article traces the history of the criticism by examining the external and internal environments of the policing milieu, looking at facets such as politics, social, economics, international, technology, culture, ecology, restructuring, community policing and crime prevention, service style of policing, training, displacement of goals, bureau pathology, closed structure, charter for human rights, doctrine of minimum force, and police accountability. Some of the important criticisms were drawn from the different facets and compared to the existing situation in the South African Police Service. The author used focus groups from the crime prevention, detective and support services, and carried out purposive interviews while he was Area Commissioner at Area Marico in Rustenburg (South African Police Service). A literature review into the research of many modern-day academics and researchers, who have carried out research on specific aspects within the external and internal environments of the South African Police Service, was also completed. Being a former police officer with extensive policing experience, the author drew his own conclusions on the challenges facing the modern day police officer.

INTRODUCTION

The last decade has seen many challenges for policing, caused by aspects influencing the internal and external environment of the police service. One of the greatest challenges faced by the South African Police Service was the need to change its perceived role from that of the strong arm of an unrepresentative government to a legitimate police service that is professional and fulfils the policing needs of all people in a democratic context. The South African Police Service (SAPS) formally came into being in 1995 with the appointment of a National Commissioner, and a proclamation on the rationalisation of the SAPS on 27 January 1995, which created the rationalisation, reorganisation and consolidation of the Service with the enabling organisational and post structures (De Vries, 2008: 125-126).

The vision of the South African Police Service is to create a safe and secure environment for all the people in South Africa. Its mission is to create this by participating in endeavours to address the root causes of crime in all communities, as well as working to prevent any action which may threaten the safety and security of any community or person and finally to investigate incidents of crime in order to bring the perpetrators of such action to justice.

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The police service is constantly involved in a process of interaction with its superiors, colleagues and other role-players from the internal organisational environment and the community and other groups and organisations from the external environment. This interactive process results in mutual influences, which may have either a positive, or a negative influence upon attitudes and perceptions. This paper will analyse both the internal and external environments; look at what was expected of the new policing service, since its inception in 1995 and discuss the challenges in policing a changing society.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The objective of this study was to obtain an understanding of the challenges for the police officer.

An empirical research design was used to investigate the challenges facing a police officer. This design worked well in this study, as the researcher collected data in the form of written and spoken language, and analysed the data by identifying and categorising them into generalised themes. This also allowed the researcher to study selected issues in depth, openness and detail. The research was flexible, data collection was less structured and easier, the researcher was able to make adjustments.

Due to financial, time and other constraints, the researcher was not able to study the entire police service. Since all police officers undergo the same training, follow the same career paths and promotion systems, and function according to the same policy and standards nationally, the researcher decided to choose the South African Police Service, Area Marico for his study. The researcher used a qualitative approach, involving a multi-method research process, combining literature study, purposive interviews, focus groups and experience. The sampling was purposive. The researcher used the Data Analysis Spiral to organise and analyse the collected data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 161)

KEY CONCEPTS

Policing
Policing can be defined as that form of coercive action, within the structure of formal social control, which is directed at the maintenance of internal order in conformity with the principles of legal jurisdiction and the constitutional rights of the individual (Van Heerden, 1982:18).

According to a sociological perspective, the police have the job of identifying and arresting offenders, discovering breaches of the law and maintaining public order (Smith & Natalier, 2005: 83).

Management
Management is a process through which humans and other resources are used as effectively as possible to fulfil specific needs and to achieve set goals (Smit, 1991: 1).

Change
Change is a voluntary or involuntary dynamic process, which has specific consequences on individuals, groups and environments (Smit, 1991:2)

POLICE MANAGEMENT IN A CHANGING SOCIETY
Police officers are constantly involved in a process of interaction with the internal and the external environments. This interactive process results in mutual influences, which may have either a positive or a negative effect upon attitudes (Van Heerden, 1982:81). It is therefore imperative for police officers to design strategies to manage challenges both in the internal and
Generally, police managers have to do an external environmental analysis to identify opportunities and threats, and an organisational assessment to determine strengths and weaknesses within the internal environment. This analysis/assessment function is important when exercising management functions such as policymaking, planning, organising, leadership/motivation and control/evaluation. It is also necessary to consider environments when making decisions, communicating, bargaining and when managing change and conflict (Fox, Schwella & Wissink, 1991:18).

**EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT (MACRO)**

Police members operate in a macro environment over which they have no control and little influence. Globalisation, politics, social, economics, and cultural norms, technology, demographics and legislation all impact on policing at a macro level. Although police officers have a role to play, their influence on the macro environment is minimal. However, they need to know and understand how it functions and how it impacts on effective policing.

The external environment varies from rural to urban communities, affluent neighbourhoods to slum areas. It is clear that the external environment poses a great challenge to the police officer in a changing society. My discussion will focus around politics, social, economics, international, technological, cultural and ecological aspects, each with its own exceptional influence on policing.

**Political factors**

Democratic and accountable policing are regarded as important hallmarks of democracy. In a healthy democracy, a police officer exists to protect and support the rights of the community, not to repress or curtail freedom and ensure power for the governing regime. Holding the police accountable for their plans, actions and decisions provides the necessary balance to the exercise of professional discretion by these officials. Accountability also provides a means by which the relationship between the police and the state can be kept under scrutiny – a way of providing insulation against internal and external interference with the proper functioning of the police (Montesh & Dintwe, 2008: 163).

During 1991, public institutions were profoundly influenced by national power structures, and processes such as political parties, pressure and interest groups, political policy, governmental laws, acts and regulations as well as political and executive authorities (Fox et al 1991: 19). Many South Africans regarded the police as a political instrument. Much of the social disorder experienced by the South African society during the early 1990s hinged on the issue of political legitimacy. This had a great deal to do with the capacity of police officials as agents of the government (Radelet, 1977:429) and (Du Preez 1991:3). Such a legitimacy crisis had an adverse effect on policing. Because of this legitimacy crisis, the police officer was caught between those who desire change and those who resist change. The big question was, to what extent would, the South African Police Service be de-politicised and how would it be kept out of the political arena (Smit 1991: 10-12). According to Van Eyk, (1993: 36), although the police service strived to improve its credibility by rendering an unbiased, professional service to all people in South Africa, he concluded that this has to be solved in the political realm and not by the South African Police itself.

Van Eyk, (1993: 39), argued that to enable the police officer to deliver an efficient service to the public, a ban had to be placed on membership in a political party for all police officials. During the recruitment process, everything possible had to be done to ensure that the applicants did not
have radical political views. The police had to realize that such people would be obstacles in its mission to render a nonpartisan service.

According to De Vries (2008:135) during April 1997, the National Commissioner of the SA Police Service and the Minister for Safety and Security clashed about political interference. The clash was never resolved. After the general elections, both leaders were removed from their positions, but the development and execution of the policy between 1998 and 1999 was certainly affected and delayed by these tensions between the minister and the national commissioner. An example was the failure to implement the White paper on Safety and Security of 1998. This major policy document for the Police and the Secretariat indicated, inter alia, that the accountable officer for the budget of the Department of Safety and Security, including the budget for crime prevention and policing, should rest in the hands of the Secretariat of Safety and Security and no longer in the hands of the National Commissioner of the South African Police Service (Department of Safety and Security, 1998: 29 & 32). It was never implemented.

According to Pike (1985:155)), neither politicians nor pressure groups may tell the police what decisions to take or what methods to employ; whether to enforce the law or not in a particular case; or how to investigate a particular offence. The exercise of police judgment has to be independent as the exercise of professional judgment by a doctor or lawyer, if it is not, the way is opened to manipulation and abuse of the law whether for political or private ends.

The question to be asked is: “Does the South African Police officer have enough operational independence to be held accountable for their actions, or is it still a challenge?” The respondents found this to be a challenge.

**Social factors**

The police as a subsystem are mutually related to society and together they form a larger functional system. The police may be regarded as a mixed social system in which people and resources are integrated to attain an objective (the maintenance of social order) (Smit (1989: 11). In 1992, it was predicted that the population in South Africa will increase to about 80 million in the year 2020. The present rate of urbanisation will result in a population explosion by the end of 2000. The result of sicknesses like aids, revolutionary action and war were difficult to predict (De Kock 1992: 4). Changes such as urbanisation, demographical tendencies, unemployment, and lack of employment opportunities, the high rate of illiteracy and the influence as well as the power of the undisciplined youth are all causes of a dramatic escalation in crime. Since the South African Police Service does not always have sufficient human resources to deal with unrest and the rising crime rate, the national police has to increase by 229 000, which is almost twice the present total of the day, in order to police the future population(Van Eyk, 1993: 36-37).

According to Pretorius (2008: 81), South Africa currently experiences high crime rates, which include murder, rape, hijackings as well as the violent assault and mutilation of victims. The increase in crime rates is ascribed to, amongst others, the high unemployment rates and its accompanying social problems that are associated with poverty and despair. There is also a general perception amongst the population, that illegal immigrants from politically unstable and war-torn African countries are involved in the crime wave which is devastating the country.

The South African Police Service Act of 1995 created the Community Police Forums (CPF)s, with the functions of inter alia; monitoring, advising and evaluation of the Police Service. In April 1997 the Department of Safety and Security published its formal policy on Community
policing: framework and Guidelines. Unfortunately, community policing has been implemented simply as an “add on” function to other responsibilities for the police (Pelsers, 1999:111).

At the beginning of 1999, the South African Police Service personnel consisted of 129 000 members, which included about 19 000 civilian employees. In March 2007, The South African Police Service had approximately 163 416 personnel at its disposal to combat crime (Devries, 2008:130).

Reducing violent crimes and the expectations of the CPFs in reducing crime, is still to be seen in many police station areas. The personnel are however increasing in the South African Police Service, but the question is: are the personnel being employed with a profile to do policing or is it to create employment opportunities. Experience has shown, that many people join the SAPS with different types of unrelated qualifications to policing, and leave soon after they have found alternative employment suitable to their skills. These are some of the social challenges still facing the SA Police Service. The respondents found this to be a challenge.

**Economic factors**

During 1995, many people were of the view that in the forthcoming years, South Africa would face high crime rates, increased strikes, heavy taxation, and drastic inflation rates and experience a drop in living standards. The perception was that the middle class citizen would be the hardest hit. The middle class would pay for all the upliftment programs of the lower class citizens (taxation). This would result in fraud and other crimes of dishonesty being committed mainly by middle class citizens, trying to cope in maintaining their lifestyles. Affirmative action programs at work places would also contribute to frustration and low work morale among the prejudiced groups. The workplace profiles would in all probably change; more ladies and black persons would be employed in top management positions. This would create a climate for conflict and stress.

In 1991 Prof. Clifford Shearing, from the University of Toronto, shared his view on affirmative action at a police conference in Graaff-Reinet, Eastern Cape, wherein he stated that “to start with, you have to get as many blacks and women as possible into the South African Police Service; then you can start thinking about what sort of standards are required” (De Vries, 2008: 131).

In research carried out on house robberies by Zinn (2008: 56), official statistics showed that since 2002, when the South African Police Service started reporting on house robberies, house robberies continued to increase on an annual basis. Pretorius (2008: 84) found in his research on armed robbery, violent assault and perceptions of personal insecurity and society at risk, that a common comment from most respondents was, that it was impossible not to be aware of crime, as the newspapers report on a daily basis on corruption, crime and violent assault experienced by South Africans. Furthermore, he found that doubt exists over the competence of the state and the police to do something about the country’s crime situation. The attitudes and perceptions of insecurity are reflected in the extension of the security measures in and around the houses of the respondents, as well as their anxiety to freely move around. The increase in these crime rates is ascribed to, amongst others, the high unemployment rates, and it’s accompanying social problems that are associated with poverty and despair.

Economic white-collar crime costs South Africa about R150 billion a year according to the White Collar Crime Task Group operating within the Asset Forfeiture Unit in South Africa, while the national treasury says up to R80 billion is laundered through the country each year.
South African government agencies are negotiating with many of the world’s tax havens in a bid to crack down on white-collar criminals, crime syndicates and tax dodgers (Piliso & Naidu, 2009).

Research carried out on occupational stress, ill health and organizational commitment of members in the South African Police Service by Jorgensen and Rothman (2008:1-12), found that physical and psychological health; the perceived commitment from the organisation to the member; the large amount of time spent on travelling and poor colleague relationships were the major outcomes of the perceived stressors. They recommended that improved recovery strategies be put in place to allow effective recuperation from trauma and stress.

Pelser (1999: 9) stated, that affirmative action in the South African Police Service not only left the police service without sound management to drive the transformation in general, but also with a shortage of police practitioners.

The increase in economic crimes and the capacity to investigate such crimes in the South African Police Service poses a problem. Respondents saw this to be a challenge.

**International factors**

During the 1990s Smit (1991: 10) stated that the South African Police Service needed to become internationally involved, to be measured against international standards. The British and Canadian governments had also shown willingness to assist the South African Police Service with its training needs. There was not enough direct interaction between international police agencies and the South African Police Service regarding fugitives, cross border crimes and organized crime. However, there was limited social interaction through organisations called the International Police Association (IPA), International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and Interpol. The communication network with Interpol needed to be expanded for cross border investigations and the prevention of international crimes such as drug trafficking etc.

Since 1995, the South African Police Service had made huge strides in expanding relations through mechanisms such as the South African Regional Police Chiefs Committee (SARPCCO), the International Police Networks such as INTERPOL, the United Nations Drug Law Enforcement Agency (UNDLEA), the Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and an host of other international police agencies. This relation was built over the years by members of the South African Police Service with the support of police management.

Many members who underwent internationally sponsored training, did not perform operational duties; as a result they were not given an opportunity to implement their learning by performing day to day policing with operational members. The implementation of international experiences, knowledge and skills in the South African operational context was seen as a challenge by the respondents who had not been for the international operational training, but had to implement guidelines sent to them by those office bound members who had undergone the training.

**Technological factors**

In the early 1990s Fox et al, (1991:20) stated that interaction between the technological environment and public service personnel would help discern patterns as well as the impact of changes and patterns on functional areas. The most important component out of this environment for the South African Police Service was technology for information management. Management information and the development of the computer would have exceptional impact on the styles of management and individual police officials. Police managers should be aware of technology
development and how they can utilise it to scan the environment and apply it as a management tool to make decisions, communicate with employees and stakeholders and analyse crime trends (Reynecke in Reynecke & Fourie, 2001: 17).

Bosman in Reynecke and Fourie, (2001: 37), stated that aligning new information technology with the needs of the South African Police Service is increasingly becoming the responsibility of everyone in the police, and not just of the information technology specialists. Easy to use systems, online tutorials, rapid improvement in technology, declining costs, and powerful but user friendly programmes, shifted responsibility into the hands of the end user.

Eloff and Prinsloo (2009: 25) in their research entitled “Spatial technology with emphasis on remote sensing applications for safety and security for macro level analysis “found that the utilisation of spatial technologies by the South African Law Enforcement agencies is virtually unheard of. It is hypothesised that this technology will give an understanding of the environmental profile which can assist in implementing improved safety and security strategies to eliminate security risks and curb crime in specific areas. Lack of access to internet and other technological resources to plan operations, investigations, do linkage analysis etc., is seen as a challenge by the respondents.

Cultural factors
Without ignoring individual differences, it seems that the roots of the studies on diversity can be found in culture. It is generally accepted that culture plays a role in social behaviour patterns. Not only are there significant differences from one society to the next, but the various groups within that society will, for instance, also have different views on the respective roles of the members of a family (Fourie in Reynecke and Fourie, 2001: 219).

According to Van Heerden (1982:82), the South African society consists of communities and groups with conflicting cultural concepts. Cultural differences can introduce complexities of a special nature and give rise to conflicts between individuals and groups. To overcome this problem, training should reflect on local community requirements and focus on the day to day aspects of policing together with knowledge of the local community (Pike, 1985: 181). According to Van Eyk, (1993:37), in the early 1990s the South African Police Service had to combat unrest that was aimed at the authorities, but the unrest will in future take on a new dimension. The police will have to prepare themselves to police inter-ethnic and cultural violence.

Since 1995, the South African Police Service statistics showed that the communities displayed a high level of ethnic and cultural tolerance. On-going diversity workshops for members of the South African Police Service had also supported members to proactively handle such conflicts. Serving in a heterogeneous society, with different service delivery needs and using different languages is seen as a challenge to police officers.

Ecological factors
The protection of primary strategic resources such as air, water and food, among other things is the responsibility of the police. The minimising and contamination of these resources can give rise to conflict, which then becomes a problem for the police (Smit, 1991:15). As democracy becomes more entrenched within our communities, society’s demands will increase. If the demands for strategic resources are not easily met, it can lead to confrontation and conflicts between the supplier and the clientele. Therefore, it is essential for police officials to manage conflicts in the most amicable way. Managing conflict and confrontation between the supplier
and the community due to poor service delivery of ecological resources is seen as a challenge by police officers.

**INTERNAL OCCUPATIONAL ENVIRONMENT (MICRO)**

As an open system, the police organisation continuously receives inputs from its environment. These inputs are converted into outputs and returned to the environment in the form of products and services. This implies that the organisation is dependent on the environment for its existence (Reynecke in Reynecke and Fourie, 2001: 15).

Van Heerden (1982:105) refers to this environment as the organisational milieu. The management approach of the police and the external environment has an exceptional influence on the principles, nature, mission, vision, and policy of the organisation. A changing society demands a change in management approach. This results in certain challenges for the police official. This discussion will focus on issues impacting on the internal occupational environment inter alia; restructuring, community policing and crime prevention, service style of policing, training, displacement of goals, bureau pathology, closed structure, charter for Human rights, doctrine of minimum force and police accountability.

**Restructuring**

Organisational restructuring was not being done with the needs of society in mind. The South African Police Force was seen by the majority of South Africans as being paramilitary, centralised, secretive, substantially unrepresented in structure and predisposed to the use of force to achieve its objectives (Smit 1989: 8).

Before 1995, **geo-political policing** (KwaZulu and Lebowa police agencies; homeland policing (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei); **differentiated policing** (Traffic and Military policing); **parallel policing** (private security), and the South African Police Force was cause for concern (Du Preez, 1991: 8). Of importance was the amalgamation of all the policing agencies and structures throughout South Africa to establish one police service with unified standards for recruitment, promotion, discipline, training, salary and allowances. This amalgamation was bound to have specific political, economic and social implications (Smit, 1991:11). A paramilitary structure, characterised by a central control structure, downward one way communication in the form of instructions, inflexible subordinate superior relations, impersonality, conservatism, unconditional obedience, and the related institutional conditioning processes, established an internal relationship pattern which served as a model for interaction with the public (Smit, 1989:8). Policing revolves around the management of relations. The manner in which internal relationships are managed, determines the way in which external relationships (police- public relations) are managed by the individual police officer (Botha, 1992: 68). The continuity of the South African Police force is ensured by means of a system of rules and routines e.g.; department regulations, standing orders, etc. Individual initiative and discretion are limited by and subordinate to the procedural prescriptions. Due to conservatism, the organisation failed to keep pace with changes in the external environment, thus adversely affecting goal attainment (Van Heerden, 1982:107-116). According to Du Preez (1991:16), abandoning the traditional paramilitary structure was not only a necessity but also a great challenge to the police official. To provide for this change, there was a need to alter the conventional paramilitary model to one that ensures the development of the organisations’ human resources. Police officials should recognise the need for a more open, flexible organisational structure.
Since 1995, the present South African Police Service went through several restructuring processes. The resolution seven (7) restructuring process during 2003, carried out under the leadership of the National Commissioner and his top management, inhibited service delivery through the centralisation of specific policing functions inter alia, Local Criminal Record Centres. The biggest disaster in this process was the closing down of specialised units inter alia; South African Narcotics Units, Vehicle Theft Units, Child and family Violence units etc. This action was tantamount to taking away policing from the people, thus leaving more and more demotivated personnel at different levels of the organisation and an increase in crime levels. During 2006, further restructuring under the same leadership resulted in the closing down of remaining specialised units and the Area Structures. The South African Police Service had not yet found a workable solution to substitute all the responsibilities that were being performed by Area Structures. Some of the functions governed by legislation had not been attended to inter alia; certification of metro police officials by Area Commissioners to perform peace officers functions. Officers in the South African Police Service are still recovering from this restructuring process. Research on occupational stress, ill health and organisational commitment of members of the South African Police Service in the North West Province, identified two aspects of organisational commitment, namely commitment of the individual to the organisation and perceived commitment of the organisation to the individual. They defined “Organisational commitment” as a state in which an employee identifies with an organisation and its goals and is willing to exert effort on behalf of the organization and wishes to maintain membership of the organization, as well as the extent to which members are loyal and dedicated to the organisation. The researchers found that police officers working relationships in the organisation were affected when many members were placed at new units in terms of Resolution 7’s (seven) restructuring policy, which was implemented to close specialised units to improve service delivery (Jorgensen and Rothman (2008:10-12).

The restructuring process led to temporary placement of members, causing uncertainty for the future planning of members and their families, hence a demotivated workforce. This posed a challenge for the police officer to work amongst demotivated members.

**Community policing and crime prevention**

Attempts to list modern day initiatives aimed at improving the crime prevention capacities of the police, invariably places community policing at, or near, the top of the list. Indeed, in the United States and most of the western world, community policing has emerged over the past ten to fifteen years as a major thrust of police activity. At the same time, the idea of community policing has begun to take hold in countries across the world – from emerging democracies to highly regimented states. Community policing should be viewed as an extension of attempts to build cooperative relations between the police and members of the public. In virtually every country there are programs and initiatives that seek out citizen input and assistance in dealing with crime and other social ills. Programs such as neighbourhood watches, education programs aimed at young people, physical security improvements for homes, targeted police patrols appear in many countries under many different headings other than “community policing”. At the same time, most crime prevention programs rely on the input and support of police personnel. The difference between crime prevention and the “new” community policing is often little more than a change in the name and the explicit inclusion of the police in the process. The goals and techniques of community policing may be substantially the same as past prevention initiatives (Lab & Das, 2003: xv).
Research carried out by Pretorius (2008:81-89) on armed robberies, violent assault and perceptions of personal security and society as a risk; found that South Africa experienced, during the last decade, an unprecedented increase in crime rates. The findings of this investigation show that, as far as it concerns these respondents, their feelings of security after an incident of robbery or violent crime, was replaced with feelings of insecurity and a view that you stand the risk of being victimised in your own house as well as on the street.

Pelser (1999:9) argues that police management weeded out some of the bright and qualified police officers with experience, hence leaving the organisation without police practitioners to implement community policing. Community policing was enhanced with a new strategy called “Sector policing”. This strategy could not be fully implemented due to inadequate resources. Respondents saw this as a challenge.

Service style of policing

The police are, fundamentally and historically, a civil service and not a military force (Smit and Botha, 1990:39 ). According to Van Heerden (1982:106) the military style of policing based on “Hopkins War Theory” has an obvious affinity with the quasi-military nature of policing and the belief that the police are the first line of defence against the criminal. The military style has always been associated with the South African Police Force because of its structure, training and weapons.

The reactive and coercive approach should be substituted by a persuasive approach by means of a service style of policing. The true philosophy of policing includes the idea of giving support and assistance to all, and is not directed per se at negative prohibition and punishment. The police official can no longer merely be a suppressor of crime, but he needs to be the social worker of the community as well (Du Preez, 1991:17).

In considering the violent nature and the general increase of contact and property related crimes during the past decade, respondents saw the implementation of the service style of policing to be a challenge for the police officer.

Training

Trained incompetence, which is the direct result of excessive conservatism, is directly connected to the stereotype of incompetence. A stagnant system of training in which outmoded training methods and curricula are used to train members to act incompetently in a changed environment is closely related to this stereotype (Van Heerden, 1982:114). In the future, there should be great emphasis on training and a comprehensive program oriented towards efficiency for every police official should be put into action. Training should concentrate on establishing at the individual level the principle of an “apolitical”, neutral and professional police service. Existing syllabuses, periods of training and the nature of training has to be completely revised. In the new training environment great emphasis should be placed on personal skills and on the handling of conflict (Van Eyk, 1993: 38).

Since 1995, a lot has been done to improve training in the South African Police Service. International support was given to revise the training programs at all levels, establishing a Detective Academy at Silverton in Pretoria and providing international training to trainers and police officials from specialised units to combat organised crime and other crimes effectively. Respondents found that the major challenge for experienced police trainers was the appointment of inexperienced police officers and civilian personnel with high police ranks, who did not understand the training needs of operational police officials and the changes that had had taken
place in police training since 1995, to bring it to international standards. Police management began to replace the new training programs with training curricula that were discarded in the past. This had led to the scrapping of many new training programs. The Detective Academy in Silverton, Pretoria was shut down by the new Police Chief, who later opened a new Detective and Crime Intelligence Academy in Hammanskraal. This institution is about sixty (60) kilometres away from the police head office in Pretoria. During this process many experienced police trainers were replaced with police officials with little or no operational background or training experience. Respondents also saw a challenge to fulfil the “on the job training” need at station level, which was growing daily. Furthermore, the challenge of offering needs oriented training at Provincial level had been inhibited by budgetary constraints thus compelling police officials to travel long distances for training without any accommodation or travelling costs. In many instances Community Service Centre vehicles were used to attend training courses, thus leaving the community Service Centre with a shortage of vehicles. This had demotivated members to attend training programs. The challenge was still there to provide a needs driven training program to police officials to enhance service delivery, which had not happened for a long time.

New members brought into the South African Police Service were drawn into a contractual obligation of two years inter alia; with low remuneration levels (stipend payments), without housing, union representations etc. Owing to these problems, new members did not do their best to improve service to the communities, as they were obligated to landlords, money lenders and employment agencies for new jobs, thus exposing themselves to corrupt activities. This made it very difficult for these newcomers to concentrate on their field training, which was the last phase of their two year training programme, before they were appointed permanently in the South African Police Service. Furthermore, the field training of new members was inter alia; hindered with resource and infrastructure problems. In many instances, trainees are used to substitute permanent members, whenever there is shortage of personnel at station level. Respondents saw this as a challenge to the police officer.

Displacement of Goals
Displacement of goals emphasises a shift from the primary aim of maintaining law and order to reinforcing secondary and administrative functions. This has always been a practice in the South African Police Service; therefore, we still have trained police officials performing administrative functions, which should have been done by civilian personnel. Many officers in the police are still of the view that once they are promoted to a commissioned rank, e.g. Captain, they will have to perform administration duties. To add to this, the South African Police brought in lateral appointments with no police training, police experience or related qualifications and gave them senior management positions with police ranks to manage experienced police officials performing the core business of policing, instead of giving them civilian support service appointments with applicable salaries. They were given strategic tasks, for example, restructuring the police service and to support policing with operational plans etc. Many of them left the service prematurely, on discovering that their strategic decisions had impeded service delivery and demotivated police officials in the policing environment. This in my own experience turned out to be a disaster. Many respondents suggested privatisation of support services together with the lateral appointments and placing those fully trained police officials, most of them very senior in rank back into the functional stream of policing. The respondents felt this would benefit the communities at large to increase the number of police officers on the ground. This would contribute to the open systems approach; whereby civilian input will become
an important part of organisational decision-making, which to my knowledge is lacking at this stage.

Working with people with no police training and experience poses a challenge to police officers.

**Bureau pathology**
The Police Service need not succumb to terminal bureaucracy simply because it is old and rational. In the police, excessive conformity has taken the form of bureaucratic virtuosity. This is a situation in which the rules and regulations are given such priority that there is no possibility of meeting the needs of most of the clientele, and most of the subordinate members of the organization (Van Heerden, 1982: 114).

Crozier (as cited in Holden, 1986: 136-137) identified five conditions leading to pathological organisations:

1. **Rules**: the organisation provides rules for every conceivable situation
2. **Centralization**: attempts made to centralize control of the organization
3. **Isolation**: each hierarchic level, as well as each unit, operates in isolation from the other
4. **Acceptance of isolation**: as each hierarchic level or unit continues to operate in isolation, it consolidates itself into a team, whose leadership generates pressure to accept isolation for the sake of power
5. **Resultant power struggle**: in its most sinister form, hierarchic levels or units attempt to steal functions and responsibilities from other hierarchical levels or units. Resulting in centralized structures enforcing nationalization at the expense of the communities at large. This power struggle results in moving policing away from the people to national positions of power far from the communities who need the service. For example; closure of the recent Area structures and specialized units by the top management of the South African Police Service.

The daily challenge for the police official at station level is to conform to the bureaucratic virtuosity and still concentrate on day to day policing, doing his/her best to satisfy the communities at large.

**Closed structure**
Bureaucratic structures are regarded as closed structures, which are independent of individual attitudes, either in the organisation itself or in the environment and which is unaffected by changes in the external environment. Because of the organisational hypersensitivity, to all forms of criticism, whether internal or external, it intensifies secretiveness, and there is further loss of contact with the external milieu and the individual in the organisation (Van Heerden, 1982:115).

According to De Vries (2008: 135), the effect of all negative developments from a personnel and motivational point of view, can only be assessed through a scientific internal climate study. The last organisational climate study in the SA Police Service on a national level was done in 1997, since then not repeated, and not allowed to be repeated. The challenge is to make the organisation transparent and accountable to society, both to its personnel and the stakeholders.

**Charter for Human Rights**
The Charter is there to safeguard an individual against any practice that degrades a citizen’s status, restricts freedom or annoys or harasses any person. It should serve as a guarantee against unlawful search and seizure of property, against unlawful arrest, imprisonment or detention and
enforced confessions or the obtaining of admissions through illegal methods. The Charter should stand as a beacon to guide police officials in protecting personal rights, and in so doing, help preserve democratic values (Du Preez, 1991:19).

It is a challenge for the police official to ensure that he/she functions within the ambits of the rule of law, after years of draconian authority.

**Doctrine of Minimum Force**

The police are fundamentally and statutorily bound to the principle of minimum force (Du Preez, 1991:20). Public opinion will be turned in favour of the police, if they show great restraint in difficult circumstances (Pike, 1985:111). According to Du Preez (1991: 20) the doctrine of minimum force remains a key behavioural element of professional policing. A strict adherence to this important doctrine by the police will be vital. It must be accepted that the rule of law remains supreme.

It is clear from recent media reports that meeting violence with violence only reinforces a violent culture among criminals, which leads to panic and loss of innocent lives. In contemporary policing, where the police are forced to engage in firepower against criminals, the application of the doctrine of minimum force becomes a challenge. The call for deadly force by police management is also a challenge for police officers.

**Police accountability**

The police should not solely be responsible for policing themselves, nor should they be placed directly under the control of the ruling party, as was the case in South Africa. This will further worsen the legitimacy crisis in the South African Police Service (Pike, 1985:161-176). Du Preez (1991: 21) states that police accountability should be seen as a process consisting of judicial and parliamentary control linked to societal control. According to Pike, (1985:160) there should be a relationship between the independence of the police and their accountability to the public or democratically elected bodies. Legitimacy, operational independence, use of discretion and police accountability is still a challenge to police officers.

**CONCLUSION**

In a changing South Africa, the role of a politically neutral police service has become even more important. The challenges facing the South African Police Service are massive and there is little chance that the South African Police Service would be able to reduce its reliance on community support. There is widespread concern about the quality of service and the overall professional conduct of the police service. The public view is that the police are incompetent, corrupt and poorly trained, and that the criminal justice system is in turmoil. This leads to mistrust and lack of confidence in the ability of the police to deal effectively with society’s concerns (Van Rooyen (2008: 1). The new Gauteng Provincial Commissioner, Mzwandile Petros, soon after taking up the post (he had been the Provincial Commissioner in the Western Cape) stated that tough talk just detracts from police work. Power to use deadly force to solve crime is delusional. Public trust can help the police to achieve their challenging task (SAPA, 2010).

In conclusion, the ultimate challenge for the police official should be to create a culture of service to humanity, so that the South African Police Service can be perceived by all its citizens as a legitimate and professional policing service, which fulfils the policing needs of all the people in a democratic context.
LIST OF REFERENCES


