



**DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON
KWAZULU-NATAL**
“Building a United Front Against Crime”

**MEC Willies Mchunu Inaugurates GPS-Based Hand Held System
Empowering Communities to Work with Police and Emergency Services**

South Africa's efforts towards creating safer communities took a major step forward today with the launch of a hand held high-tech tracking device for use by community safety activists. Developed for the KwaZulu Natal Department of Community Safety and Liaison by Gracan Communications and Saab Security and Aviation Systems, the system was inaugurated by KwaZulu-Natal Transport, Community Safety and Liaison MEC Willies Mchunu in Durban.

Roughly the size of a standard cell phone, but without a keypad, the device named Enfora is carried by members of the Volunteer Social Crime Prevention Project as they go about their daily duties in the community. When a button is pressed, the device automatically sends a message to the Volunteer Communication and Tracking Management Call Centre in Durban, identifying the volunteer and – using a built in GPS capability and Google Earth – his or her exact location. This allows the Call Centre to direct police or emergency services to respond rapidly to incidents, preventing or stopping crimes or fights, or attending to other emergencies.

The phone function on the handset allows the Call Centre to initiate voice communication with community safety volunteers wherever they are dealing with an incident, whether a tavern, on the street, or elsewhere. Software integrated into the Call Centre allows all calls to be logged, mapped, and tracked for use in further emergency action, investigations or prosecutions.

“This device, which already covers 1100 volunteers in Durban and the Jozini area up to the border with Mozambique, really empowers community safety activists to work closely with the emergency services and the SAPS,” said MEC Mchunu. “As we gather experience in its day to day use we are establishing standard operating procedures and we will seek to roll the project out in other appropriate areas in the province.”

“This is an important technological step forward which will assist us in bringing peace and stability to our communities,” said MEC Mchunu. “VSCPP volunteers serve as the ‘eyes and ears’ of their communities and compliment the efforts of our local emergency services, law enforcement, and crime prevention agencies. They help improve safety and security by maintaining an active presence in their neighbourhoods and liaising with members of their community.”

Besides enabling communications from community safety volunteers, the Khoisan Civil Command and Control System allows the Call Centre to track the whereabouts of the volunteers, assuring that they are active in their allotted patrol areas. An integrated battery ensures that the device cannot be switched off by the volunteers, and that they are traceable at all times while on duty. Volunteers are expected to patrol independently on foot or – in the case of field supervisors – by car.

“Saab has been very pleased to work closely with our colleagues in Gracan Communications in developing this particularly user friendly solution to a specifically South African challenge,” said Saab Security and Aviation Systems General Manager Sisa Tanda. “It is another important step on the path to safer communities using technologies developed and integrated locally in partnership with government.”

“Initial experience with the system shows that it can make a real difference in empowering communities to support the police in fighting crime and to help the emergency services in providing assistance in critical situations, sometimes over vast areas,” said Gracan CEO Pieter Meyer. “The excellent working environment and support the KwaZulu Natal Department of Community Safety and Liaison has created continues to be crucial to the success of this very important pilot project, which we are confident will lead to expansion of the system nationally.”

The KwaZulu Natal pilot project will run for two years.

More about the KwaZulu Natal Department of Community Safety and Liaison and MEC Willis Mchunu please contact:

Bhekisisa Mncube, Media Liaison on 079 699 5755.

Or visit

www.kzncomsafety.gov.za

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