



AN SDP POLICY PAPER

CAPE SAFE

A Cape Town Violence Intelligence and Prevention System

SEE THE VIOLENCE.
UNDERSTAND THE NETWORK.
REMOVE THE GUN.
PROTECT THE CHILD.
BUILD THE CASE.
MEASURE THE RESULT.



AN SDP POLICY PAPER

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OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

Cape Town does not need another crime-fighting slogan. It needs a system capable of detecting violence quickly, understanding what is driving it, mobilising the right response and learning from every incident.

Gang-related shootings on the Cape Flats are not simply a policing problem. They are a failure of detection, intelligence, prevention, firearm control, investigation, prosecution, community protection and institutional coordination.

Technology cannot solve that problem on its own. It can, however, fundamentally change the speed, accuracy and accountability with which government responds to it.

The Service Delivery Party proposes **CAPE SAFE**, a targeted Violence Intelligence and Prevention System for Cape Town. It would combine modern sensor technology, acoustic gunshot detection, CCTV, aerial surveillance, community intelligence, firearm and ballistic intelligence, violence interruption, child protection and focused enforcement within a single accountable operating model.

CAPE SAFE rests on the City's constitutional duty under **Section 152(1)(d)** to promote a safe and healthy environment, and on its developmental duty under **Section 153(a)** to structure its administration, budgeting and planning to give priority to the basic needs of the community. Safety from gunfire is one of those basic needs.

CAPE SAFE would not be a city-wide surveillance programme. It would be a **targeted violence-prevention system**, deployed initially in three high-violence areas where its effectiveness can be independently measured, delivered in partnership with SAPS and the National Prosecuting Authority and governed by a public Delivery Contract in each zone.

Its purpose would not be to watch everyone. Its purpose would be to know enough about serious violence to stop it.

Technology must serve prevention, evidence and accountability. It must never become a substitute for them.

PART ONE

The Case for CAPE SAFE

01

The Problem

A gunshot is not a statistic. It is a child who does not come home.

For too many Cape Flats families, a gunshot is not an abstract crime statistic. It can mean a child killed on the way home from school. A young person caught in crossfire. A parent afraid to let children play outside. A shopkeeper closing early. A community learning to distinguish



between the sound of fireworks and the sound of a firearm.

Government cannot accept this as normal. The objective of public safety policy must therefore be more ambitious than responding to crime after it occurs. It must be to **prevent the next shooting**. That requires a different set of questions.

INSTEAD OF ASKING

How many arrests did we make?

GOVERNMENT SHOULD ASK

How many shootings did we prevent?

INSTEAD OF ASKING

How many firearms did we confiscate?

GOVERNMENT SHOULD ASK

How many firearms were removed from circulation and how many crimes were prevented because of it?

INSTEAD OF ASKING

How many cameras do we have?

GOVERNMENT SHOULD ASK

How many violent incidents did our technology help detect, prevent, investigate and successfully prosecute?

This is the difference between **activity** and **outcomes**.

02**The Cape Town Opportunity**

The City already owns significant capability. The gap lies after detection.

Cape Town already possesses significant technological capability. The City reports that its CCTV network detected 41,005 incidents between July 2025 and June 2026, contributing to 541 arrests during the year. The City is also expanding its body-worn camera programme from 2,250 to 3,000 cameras and says officers can stream live feeds to its operations centre to augment drone and CCTV footage.¹

These investments are valuable. The City's own breakdown of those arrests, however, is revealing. The largest categories were drug possession, traffic offences, drug dealing and vehicle theft. Firearm and murder cases do not feature among the categories the City chose to highlight.¹ Roughly one arrest flowed from every 76 detections.

The existence of technology does not automatically create an effective violence-prevention system. The critical question is what happens **after detection**. A camera may record a shooting. An acoustic sensor may detect it. A drone may observe the aftermath. A body-worn camera may record the response. None of these things, by themselves, removes the firearm, identifies the network behind the shooting or secures a conviction.

The gap between detection and consequence is one of the central problems CAPE SAFE is designed to close.



03

The SDP Principle

Government should not buy technology. Government should buy outcomes.

Every technology investment must have a defined public outcome, a named owner, measurable indicators and a public reporting obligation.

Technology procurement should therefore begin with the problem rather than the product. The City should not ask which drone it should buy. It should ask what technology can help it reduce shootings, remove illegal firearms, protect children and build prosecutable cases.

The answer may involve drones. It may involve acoustic sensors. It may involve artificial intelligence. It may involve technologies that do not yet exist. The procurement framework must therefore remain technology-neutral while specifying the outcomes Cape Town requires, consistent with Section 217 of the Constitution, which requires public procurement to be fair, equitable, transparent, competitive and cost-effective.

PART TWO

The Constitutional Mandate

04

Sections 152 and 153: Safety Is a Municipal Obligation

The SDP treats these sections as binding, justiciable duties with measurable delivery standards.

Public safety is often described as a national competence that the City may assist with if it chooses. The SDP rejects that framing. The Constitution places direct obligations on the City of Cape Town, and CAPE SAFE is designed to discharge them.

Constitutional provision	What it requires	How CAPE SAFE gives effect to it
Section 152(1)(d)	Promote a safe and healthy environment	Measurable reductions in shootings, firearm deaths and child victims in each Violence Prevention Zone
Section 152(1)(a)	Democratic and accountable government for local communities	Public Delivery Contracts, a named owner per zone, quarterly public reporting and an independent evaluator
Section 152(1)(e)	Encourage the involvement of communities in local government matters	Community Oversight Panel, anonymous Intelligence Line and an open Violence Observatory
Section 152(2)	Strive to achieve these objects within financial and administrative capacity	A 90-day audit of existing assets before any new spend and a pilot sized to proven capacity

Constitutional provision	What it requires	How CAPE SAFE gives effect to it
Section 153(a)	Structure administration, budgeting and planning to prioritise basic community needs	CAPE SAFE written into the IDP and budget as a priority line for the most violence-affected wards
Section 153(b)	Participate in national and provincial development programmes	A formal intergovernmental protocol with SAPS, the NPA and the Western Cape Government

The same Bill of Rights frames every design choice. Section 12 guarantees freedom and security of the person, including the right to be free from all forms of violence from public or private sources. Section 28(2) makes a child's best interests paramount in every matter concerning the child. Section 14 protects privacy. CAPE SAFE must advance the first two without sacrificing the third.

A City that knows where children are being shot and does not act is not merely failing politically. It is failing a constitutional duty.

05

The Limits of the Municipal Mandate

An honest plan names what the City controls and what it must secure through partnership.

Under Sections 205 and 206 of the Constitution, policing is a national function performed by SAPS, with oversight roles for provinces. The City's Metro Police operate under Chapter 12 of the South African Police Service Act 68 of 1995, with a mandate centred on traffic policing, by-law enforcement and crime prevention. Forensic ballistics sits with the SAPS Forensic Science Laboratory. Prosecutions are the responsibility of the National Prosecuting Authority. Witness protection is administered nationally under the Witness Protection Act 112 of 1998.

CAPE SAFE does not pretend otherwise. The City cannot instruct SAPS to investigate, cannot fast-track a ballistic report and cannot prosecute anyone. What it can do is build and operate the detection, verification, child-protection and data infrastructure, fund the people who interrupt violence, light and design public spaces under its Schedule 5 functions, and enter binding cooperation agreements under Section 41 of the Constitution and the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act 13 of 2005.

The CAPE SAFE Intergovernmental Protocol

Before the pilot starts, the City should conclude a written protocol with SAPS, the NPA and the Western Cape Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety. It should specify:



- evidence handover standards for City-generated footage and data
- agreed turnaround targets for ballistic comparison of firearms recovered in the zones
- a named SAPS and NPA counterpart for each zone
- joint response protocols for each alert category
- data-sharing terms compliant with POPIA
- a dispute-resolution route and quarterly joint review

Where a partner does not meet an agreed standard, the Delivery Contract will say so publicly. Accountability does not stop at the City's boundary simply because the competence does.

PART THREE

What the Evidence Tells Us

06

International Lessons

CAPE SAFE draws lessons from several approaches rather than copying any one country.

6.1 Fogo Cruzado: Make Violence Visible

Brazil's Fogo Cruzado Institute combines technology, community reporting and open data to produce verified real-time information about shootings across several metropolitan regions, and publishes extensive indicators about armed violence.

Its experience also provides an important warning. In Greater Rio in 2025, the institute recorded 2,315 shootings, the lowest level of armed violence in its series since 2017. Police operations nonetheless accounted for 39% of those shootings, the highest share it had ever recorded, and for close to half of the people shot.²

A reduction in shootings therefore does not automatically mean that the underlying model is healthy. CAPE SAFE will consequently measure both **violence outcomes and the manner in which government responds to violence**.

6.2 Pacto pela Vida: Government Coordination Matters

Research evaluating Pernambuco's Pacto pela Vida security reform found a reduction of about 16 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants following implementation. More than 80% of the estimated effect came from men aged 15 to 39 and from homicides on the street, and the authors identified reduced firearm availability as an important channel.³

The lesson is not that Cape Town should copy Pernambuco. It is that serious reductions in violence can require **coordinated government systems rather than isolated policing initiatives**.

6.3 Focused Deterrence: Concentrate on the Violence Producers

A Campbell systematic review of 24 evaluations found that focused deterrence strategies produced an overall reduction in crime, including interventions aimed at criminally active gangs, groups and high-risk individuals.⁴ This is particularly relevant to the Cape Flats.



Government should not treat every resident of a high-crime community as a potential offender. It should not spread limited resources evenly across a large population either. The objective should be to identify the relatively small number of people, groups, locations and firearms responsible for a disproportionate share of serious violence.

Target the producers of violence, not the communities in which they live.

6.4 Hot-Spot Policing: Concentrate Resources Where Violence Concentrates

A Campbell review covering 65 studies and 78 tests found statistically significant reductions in crime and disorder when police resources were concentrated in high-crime hot spots, and found that surrounding areas were more likely to share in the benefit than to absorb displaced crime.⁵ This supports a geographically focused pilot. CAPE SAFE will therefore begin with a limited number of carefully selected **Violence Prevention Zones** rather than immediate city-wide deployment.

6.5 The South African Lesson

Cape Town has its own experience to draw on, including community violence-interruption work on the Cape Flats, the Western Cape Safety Plan and the jointly funded Law Enforcement Advancement Plan (LEAP). The lesson the SDP draws is that good programmes cannot prove their worth, or secure stable funding, without published baselines, independent measurement and a single accountable owner. CAPE SAFE builds those three things in from the start.

07

The Brazilian Warning

Force without precision displaces violence. It does not dismantle it.

Brazil also provides perhaps the most important caution. The experience of Rio's pacification model shows that government can deploy substantial resources and sophisticated operational capability without dismantling the networks that produce violence. CAPE SAFE must therefore reject an occupation model.

THE OBJECTIVE IS NOT

Find a violent neighbourhood and put more force into it.

THE OBJECTIVE IS

Understand the violence-producing network and intervene precisely enough to dismantle it while protecting the community.

Technology must make intervention more precise, not more indiscriminate.



PART FOUR

The CAPE SAFE Model

08

Eight Layers, One System

Seven operational layers supported by an eighth governance layer.

CAPE SAFE is organised as a single operating chain. Each layer has a defined purpose and is set out in the sections that follow.

01 DETECT Identify potential violence fast (s9, 12, 13)	02 VERIFY Confirm before escalating (s10)	03 UNDERSTAND Turn an event into intelligence (s11, 14, 15)	04 INTERVENE Match the response to the problem (s17, 18)
05 PROTECT Children as a distinct priority (s19)	06 BUILD THE CASE Design for the evidentiary chain (s20, 21)	07 LEARN Every incident improves the system (s22)	08 GOVERN Oversight, rights and evaluation (Part Five)

09

Detect

Identify potential violence as quickly as possible.

Potential inputs include:

- acoustic gunshot detection
- CCTV
- thermal imaging
- drones
- body-worn cameras
- emergency calls
- community reports
- incident databases
- other lawful sensor technologies

The system should be capable of receiving information from multiple sources rather than relying upon a single technology. Acoustic sensors must be specified to detect impulsive sounds such as gunfire only. They must not record or retain conversation.

10

Verify

Not every signal is a shooting. Not every runner is a suspect.

Not every acoustic signal is a gunshot. Not every person running from a location is a suspect. Not every vehicle leaving an incident is involved. CAPE SAFE must therefore use multiple sources to verify incidents before escalating responses. This reduces false positives and prevents technology from becoming an automated generator of suspicion. Verification accuracy will be published as a performance measure in its own right.



11

Understand

The purpose is to turn an event into intelligence.

Once an incident is verified, the system should establish:

- where and when it occurred
- what type of incident occurred
- whether people were injured
- whether children were involved
- whether a school or other child-sensitive location is affected
- what vehicles were present and what routes were used to leave
- whether the location is associated with previous incidents
- whether a firearm may have been used
- whether similar incidents have occurred elsewhere

12

Persistent Aerial Surveillance

Rapid aerial capability, not permanently hovering drones.

CAPE SAFE should investigate aerial surveillance as one component of its technology architecture. The objective is not to create a fleet of permanently hovering drones over communities. It is to provide an aerial capability that can be rapidly deployed when an incident is detected or when an authorised operation requires aerial observation. Potential applications include:

- confirming an incident
- observing an active scene
- supporting emergency response
- maintaining awareness while responders approach
- documenting an incident
- observing vehicle movement
- supporting search and rescue
- protecting emergency personnel
- monitoring specific high-risk locations during defined operations

South African aviation law must be treated as a design constraint from the beginning. The South African Civil Aviation Authority requires registration and appropriate approvals for non-private unmanned aircraft operations under Part 101 of the Civil Aviation Regulations, and restrictions apply near airports, schools, police stations, crime scenes, strategic installations and other locations.

CAPE SAFE should therefore establish a dedicated **Aviation and Drone Compliance Protocol** before deployment. No drone should be acquired first and legal approval sought afterwards. Each flight should carry a logged purpose, an authorising officer and a footage-retention rule.

13

Sensor Fusion

The most important technological principle in CAPE SAFE.

A modern violence-prevention system should not treat each sensor as a separate island. Consider a hypothetical incident:



- **22:17:03** An acoustic sensor detects probable gunfire.
- **22:17:06** CCTV identifies movement near the location.
- **22:17:15** The control room verifies the incident.
- **22:17:30** Aerial surveillance is deployed where legally authorised.
- **22:18** Responders receive a common operational picture.
- **22:20** A vehicle associated with the incident is identified.
- **Later** A recovered firearm is forensically examined.
- **Days later** Ballistic evidence links the firearm to another shooting.
- **Investigation** The incidents become part of a common intelligence picture.

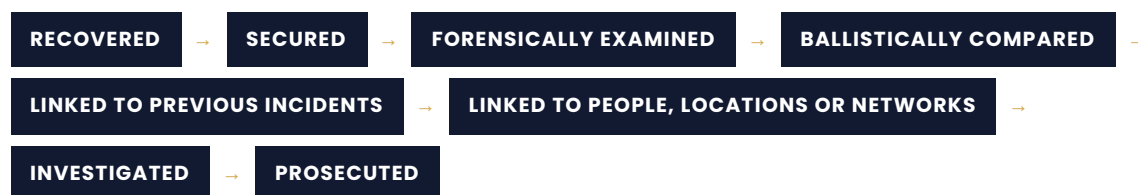
The technology has done something far more valuable than recording an event. It has helped create a **chain of intelligence**.

14

Firearm Intelligence

A firearm should become an intelligence asset, not a storeroom statistic.

CAPE SAFE should make illegal firearm removal one of its primary objectives. Every recovered illegal firearm should enter a defined intelligence chain:



Forensic examination is a SAPS function, so the chain depends on the Intergovernmental Protocol in Section 05. The protocol should set a published turnaround target for ballistic comparison of firearms recovered in the zones, and the Delivery Contract should report performance against it. Firearms traced to legal sources through loss or theft should be referred for action under the Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000, since leakage from legal stock is part of the supply problem.

The measure of success should not simply be the number of firearms seized. It should include:

Indicator	Why it matters
Firearms removed from circulation	The core prevention outcome
Firearms forensically examined	Tests whether the intelligence chain is working
Firearms linked to previous crimes	Reveals networks and repeat use
Firearms generating new investigative leads	Converts recovery into intelligence



Indicator	Why it matters
Firearms contributing to successful prosecutions	Converts intelligence into consequence
Median days from recovery to ballistic result	Exposes forensic backlogs publicly

15

The Human Intelligence Network

Technology sees only part of the picture.

People living in affected communities often know things that sensors cannot detect. They may know:

- who supplies firearms
- where firearms are stored
- where gang meetings occur
- which individuals are escalating conflicts
- where children are being recruited
- which locations are becoming dangerous
- which disputes are likely to turn violent

The system must therefore establish a trusted mechanism for anonymous reporting: the **CAPE SAFE Intelligence Line**.

Tell us what you know. We do not need your name.

Anonymous reports should be independently managed, securely recorded and assessed against other intelligence. The line should operate in English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans, accept reports by voice, text and messaging application, and be designed so that the operator cannot identify the caller. The objective is not to replace police intelligence. It is to create another channel through which information can enter the violence intelligence system.

16

Community Intelligence Must Not Become Vigilantism

Residents provide information. Professionals act on it.

CAPE SAFE must establish a strict boundary. Residents provide information. They do not conduct surveillance operations. They do not confront suspected gang members. They do not carry weapons on behalf of the programme. They do not decide who is guilty.

Information enters a professional verification and investigative process. No report, on its own, may trigger coercive action. Every report should be tested against at least one other source. Deliberately false reports used to settle scores should be investigated. This protects both communities and the integrity of investigations.



17

Intervene

The response must match the problem.

CAPE SAFE must distinguish between different forms of intervention. An alert should not automatically produce a police raid. Depending on the circumstances, the appropriate response may involve:

- emergency medical response
- SAPS
- Metro Police
- LEAP
- traffic management
- school safeguarding
- social services
- violence interrupters
- youth workers
- community organisations
- investigators
- specialised firearm or organised-crime units

Intervention also includes the physical environment. Street lighting, municipal roads and public places are municipal functions under Schedule 5 of the Constitution. Repeat-shooting locations should trigger an environmental review covering lighting, sightlines, derelict structures and safe routes, delivered by the line departments that own those assets.

Violence interrupters and youth workers should be contracted for the full pilot period with performance terms, so that prevention is not the first line cut when budgets tighten. This is the essence of **focused intervention**.

18

Response Integrity

Every alert category must have a defined response protocol.

CAPE SAFE should establish a formal **Response Integrity Framework**.

Alert category	Defined response
Confirmed shooting	Immediate emergency and law-enforcement response
Shooting near a school	Emergency response plus the child protection protocol
Suspicious firearm intelligence	Investigative assessment rather than automatic public confrontation
Gang conflict escalation	Focused deterrence and violence interruption alongside intelligence-led enforcement
Anonymous report	Verification and intelligence assessment

For every category the framework must specify:

- who receives the alert
- who decides the response
- what information is provided
- how quickly action should occur
- what evidence must be preserved
- what happens afterwards
- who is accountable if the response fails

This is the difference between a technology platform and a government delivery system.



19

Protect the Child

Section 28(2): a child's best interests are paramount.

Children must be treated as a distinct protection priority. CAPE SAFE should map:

- schools
- early childhood development centres
- sports facilities
- youth centres
- transport routes
- playgrounds
- other locations where children regularly gather

Incidents involving children or occurring close to child-sensitive locations should trigger enhanced protocols, including:

- immediate medical response
- school safeguarding
- safe reunification
- witness protection where required
- child-friendly reporting
- trauma support
- evidence preservation
- follow-up monitoring

These protocols should be aligned with the SDP's Cape Town Child Safeguarding Standard and the Children's Act 38 of 2005, and coordinated with the Western Cape Education Department for school-related incidents. Children interviewed as witnesses must be interviewed only by trained professionals.

A child should never become merely another data point on a crime dashboard.

20

Build the Case

Detection without prosecution eventually loses public confidence.

CAPE SAFE must establish a formal investigative pathway. The system should help investigators answer:

What happened?

Who was there?

What firearm was used?

Where did it come from?

Has it been used before?

Who was connected to it?

What other incidents are connected?

What evidence exists?

Can that evidence be lawfully presented in court?

The system should therefore be designed around the evidentiary chain from the beginning. Every piece of City-generated footage or data should carry a tamper-evident record of who captured, accessed and handed it over, so that admissibility is not lost at the point where it matters most.



21

No Automated Criminal Verdicts

Technology can recommend. A legally accountable human being must decide.

Artificial intelligence may assist with:

- detection
- classification
- pattern recognition
- prioritisation
- correlation
- anomaly detection
- search
- information retrieval

It must not independently determine that a person is a criminal, that a person should be arrested, that a person should be searched or that a person is guilty. Any coercive action must remain subject to lawful human decision-making.

Two further safeguards apply during the pilot. Live facial recognition will not be used, and no individual will be assigned an automated risk score. Either capability could be considered later only after public consultation, a privacy impact assessment and a decision by Council in an open meeting.

22

Learn

Every incident should make the next response better.

CAPE SAFE should record, for every incident:

- what was detected and when
- when it was verified
- when responders were notified
- when responders arrived
- what intervention occurred
- whether a firearm was recovered
- whether ballistic analysis was completed
- whether a suspect was identified
- whether a case was opened
- whether the case reached court
- what the outcome was

What can we learn from this incident that could prevent the next one?

This creates a continuous delivery loop.

PART FIVE

Accountability and Rights

23

The Cape Flats Violence Observatory

An independent public evidence base on violence in Cape Town.

CAPE SAFE should establish an independent **Cape Flats Violence Observatory**, hosted outside the City administration, for example by a university or a consortium of research institutions, under a multi-year agreement that the City cannot terminate for publishing unwelcome

findings. Subject to lawful privacy protections, it should publish:

- shooting locations
- shooting trends
- deaths and injuries
- child victims
- firearm recoveries
- response times
- repeat locations
- repeat incidents
- ballistic linkages in aggregate
- prosecution outcomes
- intervention outcomes
- displacement indicators

Fogo Cruzado demonstrates the value of independent, open and collaborative violence data rather than reliance on official statistics alone. Cape Town should build its own model suited to South African law and institutions. The Observatory must not become a political propaganda instrument. Its credibility depends on its independence.

24

Independent Evaluation

Appointed before the pilot begins, with the right to publish.

The evaluator must have the contractual right to publish findings regardless of whether they support the programme. The evaluation should examine:

Domain	Measures
Safety outcomes	shootings, murders, attempted murders, firearm-related injuries, children killed or injured
Enforcement outcomes	firearms recovered, ballistic matches, arrests, cases opened, cases reaching court, successful prosecutions
Operational outcomes	detection time, verification time, response time, evidence recovery, system uptime, false-positive rate
Community outcomes	fear of crime, trust in institutions, willingness to report, perceptions of safety, complaints
Rights outcomes	privacy incidents, unlawful surveillance, unauthorised access, discriminatory patterns, misuse of technology, use-of-force incidents
Displacement outcomes	changes in violence in areas bordering each zone, distinguishing displacement from diffusion of benefit
Economic outcomes	cost per shooting prevented, cost per firearm removed, cost per successful prosecution, total cost per life protected

25

Privacy and Civil Liberties

Section 14 of the Constitution and POPIA are design requirements, not afterthoughts.

CAPE SAFE must be designed around the constitutional right to privacy. The Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 establishes conditions for lawful processing, including accountability, processing limitation, purpose specification, further processing limitation,



information quality, openness, security safeguards and data-subject participation. The Information Regulator enforces the Act. Accordingly, CAPE SAFE should establish:

- a published privacy impact assessment before go-live
- clearly defined purposes
- minimum necessary data collection
- strict access controls and audit trails
- retention schedules with defined deletion procedures
- automatic deletion of non-incident footage after a short, published period
- secure storage
- lawful information-sharing protocols
- independent oversight
- breach reporting to the Information Regulator and affected persons
- procurement requirements for privacy by design
- data held on infrastructure under South African jurisdiction

The system should collect what is necessary to prevent violence, not everything that technology makes it possible to collect.

26

Community Oversight

The community must be able to ask: is this system making us safer?

CAPE SAFE should establish a Community Oversight Panel in each Violence Prevention Zone, drawn from ward committees, community policing forums, school governing bodies, faith and civic organisations and residents selected by open nomination. Its role would not be to access operational intelligence. Its role would be to scrutinise the system. It should be able to examine aggregate information concerning:

- alerts
- false positives
- response times
- interventions
- complaints
- privacy incidents
- geographic distribution
- system failures
- outcomes

Government must be required to answer the Panel in writing, and the Panel's quarterly findings should be tabled at the relevant subcouncil.

27

The Principle of Proportionality

No surveillance in poorer communities that wealthier communities would not tolerate.

The system should operate according to four principles:

Principle	Test
Necessary	There must be a legitimate violence-prevention purpose.
Proportionate	The intervention must be appropriate to the risk.
Lawful	Every action must have a lawful basis.



Principle	Test
Accountable	Every significant use must be auditable.

PART SIX

Delivery

28

The Pilot

Twelve months of operation, three zones, comparison areas from day one.

CAPE SAFE should begin as a **12-month operational pilot**, preceded by a preparation phase. It should not initially attempt to cover the entire Cape Flats. Three Violence Prevention Zones should be identified using objective, published criteria such as:

- shooting frequency
- firearm-related murder
- child exposure
- gang conflict
- repeat incidents
- existing infrastructure
- operational feasibility

Zone selection should be done on data, published with its method and confirmed by the independent evaluator, so that no zone is chosen or excluded for political reasons. The pilot should include matched comparison areas and should monitor bordering areas, to establish whether reductions are genuinely associated with the intervention rather than wider changes in crime or simple displacement.

29

The Pilot Begins With a Technology Audit

Know what the City already owns before buying anything new.

Before purchasing new technology, the City should conduct a 90-day audit of existing capabilities. The audit should establish:

What technology already exists?

Where is it deployed?

Who operates it?

What does it detect?

What happens after detection?

How often does detection result in intervention?

How often does intervention produce evidence?

How often does evidence produce a case?

How often does a case result in prosecution?

This prevents government from buying expensive new equipment to compensate for failures elsewhere in the system. The audit findings will be published.



30

The Pilot Architecture

Each zone receives a defined combination of four components.

Component	Elements
Technology	acoustic detection, existing CCTV integration, selected new cameras where justified, aerial surveillance capability, thermal capability where appropriate, secure communications, a common operating picture, incident-management software
Intelligence	anonymous reporting, firearm intelligence, ballistic intelligence, historical incident mapping, network analysis
Human intervention	SAPS, Metro Police, LEAP where appropriate, violence interrupters, social workers, youth workers, child-protection services, community organisations
Accountability	independent evaluator, community oversight, public dashboard, audit logs, privacy governance

31

The Delivery Contract

Service Delivery Government applied to public safety.

Each Violence Prevention Zone should have a public **Delivery Contract** specifying:

Term	Content
Constitutional anchor	Sections 152(1)(d) and 153(a): a safe environment and priority for basic needs
Problem	Gun violence in the designated zone
Baseline	The measured level of violence over at least the preceding 36 months, published before intervention
Outcome	A defined reduction in shootings and firearm-related deaths, set after the baseline is published
Owner	A named senior official, with named SAPS and NPA counterparts
Budget	A defined, ring-fenced 12-month allocation
Critical path	Technology, legal approvals, operational integration and community participation
Milestones	30, 60, 90, 180 and 365 days
Reporting	Monthly operational reporting and quarterly public reporting
Correction	Formal intervention if milestones are missed



32

Funding the Pilot

Costed after the audit, not before. Ring-fenced once approved.

The SDP will not publish an invented headline figure for CAPE SAFE. Section 152(2) requires the City to act within its financial and administrative capacity, and an honest budget can only be built once the 90-day audit has shown what the City already owns. The budget should then be built bottom-up from the following cost lines:

- acoustic sensors and integration
- new cameras where justified
- aerial capability and compliance
- control-room staffing
- violence interrupters and youth workers
- child-protection capacity
- the Intelligence Line
- the Violence Observatory
- independent evaluation
- community oversight support

Funding should come first from reprioritising existing safety and security spending in line with Section 153(a), supplemented by co-funding under the Western Cape Safety Plan. Independent funding for the Observatory and evaluator, including from philanthropic or academic partners, is welcome provided it carries no editorial control. The approved allocation must appear as a distinct line in the IDP and the municipal budget so that it can be tracked and cannot quietly be reallocated.

33

Implementation Timeline

From commitment to a decision in under two years.

Phase	Period	Key deliverables
Preparation	Months 1 to 3	Technology audit, intergovernmental protocol, independent evaluator appointed, zone selection method published
Design	Months 4 to 6	Baselines published, privacy impact assessment, Aviation and Drone Compliance Protocol, Response Integrity Framework, procurement, Community Oversight Panels constituted
Operation	Months 7 to 18	Twelve-month pilot in three zones, monthly operational and quarterly public reporting
Decision	Months 19 to 21	Independent evaluation published, Council decision to scale, amend or stop



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Risks and Mitigations

Naming the risks is part of managing them.

Risk	Mitigation
Partner agencies do not perform	Written protocol with named counterparts and public reporting against agreed turnaround times
Violence is displaced, not reduced	Monitoring of bordering areas and evaluation of displacement and diffusion
False alerts erode trust	Multi-source verification and a published false-positive rate
Mission creep into general surveillance	Defined purposes, the facial-recognition and risk-score exclusions, Panel scrutiny
Retaliation against informants	Caller-blind Intelligence Line and referral to witness protection where required
Vendor lock-in	Open data standards, City ownership of data and outcome-based contracts
Data breach	Access controls, audit logs, breach reporting and South African data jurisdiction
Political interference	Independent Observatory and evaluator with guaranteed publication rights

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The Decision at Twelve Months

Scale, amend or stop, on the evidence.

The pilot ends in a decision, not a press release. Once the independent evaluation is published, Council should take one of three decisions in an open meeting:

Decision	When it applies
Scale	Shootings and firearm deaths fell measurably against comparison areas, rights outcomes were acceptable and cost per life protected is defensible
Amend	Some layers worked and others did not. Retain what worked, redesign the rest and re-test
Stop	No measurable effect, or rights harms that cannot be corrected. Redirect the budget to what the evidence supports



CONCLUSION

Lives Saved

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What CAPE SAFE Is Not

- a military occupation programme
- a city-wide population surveillance system
- an autonomous policing system
- a replacement for SAPS
- a replacement for community organisations
- a drone procurement programme
- an AI policing experiment
- a justification for indiscriminate searches
- a substitute for social investment
- a promise that technology will eliminate gang violence

It is a **targeted violence-prevention and intelligence system**.

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What Success Looks Like

Everything else is secondary.

Outcome	Measure
1. Fewer shootings	The number of shooting incidents falls.
2. Fewer people killed	The number of firearm-related deaths falls.
3. Fewer children harmed	The number of children killed or injured by firearm violence falls.
4. Fewer illegal firearms	Illegal firearms are removed and their origins and use are investigated.
5. More prosecutions	Better intelligence becomes better evidence and better cases.

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The Ultimate Test

A successful CAPE SAFE system should eventually make it possible to say:

*A shooting occurred at 22:17. The system detected it within seconds. The incident was verified. Responders were alerted. The community was protected. Evidence was preserved. The firearm was recovered. The weapon was forensically examined. It was linked to previous crimes. Investigators identified the network. The perpetrators were prosecuted. The incident became part of the intelligence picture. The system learned from it. **The next shooting was prevented.***



That is the standard. Not the number of cameras. Not the number of drones. Not the number of arrests. **Lives saved.**

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The SDP Position

The Service Delivery Party believes that Cape Town should become a leader in the responsible use of technology to prevent violent crime. Cape Town should not, however, attempt to become a surveillance city. It should become a **safer city because government has become better at seeing, understanding and preventing violence.**

The difference matters. Technology without accountability can become oppressive. Technology without intelligence can become expensive. Technology without intervention can become pointless. Technology without community trust can become dangerous.

Technology combined with evidence, lawful intervention, community intelligence, professional investigation, child protection and measurable accountability can become something different. It can become a public service, and the means by which the City finally meets its Section 152 duty to promote a safe environment for every community, not only some.

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The SDP Commitment

An SDP government would establish a CAPE SAFE pilot within its first term, subject to the necessary legal, procurement and intergovernmental processes, and would write it into the IDP as a Section 153(a) priority. It would:

- begin by auditing what Cape Town already owns
- conclude a written protocol with SAPS, the NPA and the Western Cape Government
- identify three high-violence zones on published criteria
- establish baselines before setting targets
- integrate technology rather than simply purchase more of it
- build a firearm intelligence chain
- establish anonymous community reporting
- protect children as a distinct priority
- create an independent Violence Observatory
- appoint an independent evaluator
- publish measurable results

Where an intervention failed, it would change it. The purpose of government is not to demonstrate that its programmes are working. The purpose of government is to make them work.



THE CAPE SAFE PRINCIPLE

**SEE THE VIOLENCE.
UNDERSTAND THE NETWORK.
REMOVE THE GUN.
PROTECT THE CHILD.
BUILD THE CASE.
MEASURE THE RESULT.**

*Technology does not replace policing.
Technology makes violence prevention more precise, more measurable and more
accountable.*

SERVICE DELIVERY PARTY

A government that plans. A government that delivers. A government that accounts.

SOURCES

Evidence Notes

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- 4 Braga, A.A., Weisburd, D. and Turchan, B. (2019), *Focused deterrence strategies effects on crime: a systematic review*, Campbell Systematic Reviews 15(3).
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- 6 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, Sections 12, 14, 28, 41, 152, 153, 205, 206 and 217 and Schedule 5. South African Police Service Act 68 of 1995. Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000. Witness Protection Act 112 of 1998. Children's Act 38 of 2005. Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act 13 of 2005. Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013. Civil Aviation Regulations, Part 101.