

**1506. Mr Y Cassim to ask the MEC responsible for Community Safety:**

*With reference to the article titled “Two suspects escape from Cookhouse Police Cells”, broadcasted on Algoa FM News on Friday, 05 December 2025:*

- (1) How many prisoners have escaped from police custody in the (i) 2022/23, (ii) 2023/24, (iii) 2024/25 and (iv) 2025/26 financial years as at the latest specified date for which information is available;

**Response :**

- 2022/23 - 43
- 2023/24 - 58
- 2024/25 - 36
- 2025/26 - 30 (From April till to date)

- (2) what is the geographic breakdown of where these prisoners escaped police custody as per the aforementioned financial years as at the latest specified date for which information is available and can he kindly provide the relevant details in this regard;

**Response:**

- **2022/23**

District	Station	Number of escapes
Alfred Ndzo	KwaBhaca	01
Amathole	Keiskamahoe	01
	Ngqamakwe	01
	Kei Mouth	04
	Peddie	01
	Middledrift	01
Buffalo City	Mdantsane	01
	East London	04
	Dimbaza	02
Chris Hani	Cacadu	01
	Queenstown	02
	Cofimvaba	01
Joe Gqabi	Nqanqarhu	01
	Lady Grey	02
	Jamestown	01
Nelson Mandela Bay	Kariega	01
OR Tambo	Madeira	07
	Libode	01
	Lusikisiki	01
	Qumbu	07
Sarah Baartman	Pearston	01
	Willowmore	01

**- 2023/2024**

District	Station	Number of escapes
Alfred Ndzo	KwaBhaca	03
	Ntabankulu	01
	Afsondering	02
	Matatiele	01
Amathole	Centane	01
	Keiskamahoeck	02
	Adeilade	01
	Stutterheim	01
	Kwamaqoma	01
Buffalo City	Zwelitsha	01
	Kwenxurha	01
	East London	01
	Tamara	01
	Qonce	01
	Cambridge	01
Chris Hani	Cofimvaba	04
	Dodrecht	01
	Queenstown	04
	Bolotwa	01
	Khowa	01
	Nxuba	01
Joe Gqabi	Aliwal North	01
	Burgersdorp	01
	Lady Grey	01
	Nqanqarhu	01
Nelson Mandela Bay	Chatty	01
	Kariega	01
	Motherwell	01
	Walmer	02
OR Tambo	Madeira	01
	Mthatha	02
	Bityi	02
Sarah Baartman	Willowmore	01
	Port Alfred	01
	Patensie	01
	Wolwefontein	01
	Paterson	02
	Grahamstown	01
	Nqweba	05
	Addo	01

**- 2024/2025**

District	Station	Number of escapes
Amathole	Alice	02
	Butterworth	01
	Dutywa	01
	Qumra	01
Buffalo City	East London	02

	Buffalo Flats	01
	Dimbaza	01
	Gonubie	01
	Zwellitsha	01
Chris Hani	Whittlesea	01
	Cofimvaba	01
	Cala	01
	Ugie	03
	Ezibeleni	01
Joe Gqabi	Burgesdorp	01
	Khowa	01
	Nggayi	01
Nelson Mandela Bay	Mount Road	01
	Walmer	01
	Kariega	01
OR Tambo	Libode	01
	Tsolo	01
	Mthatha	01
	Madeira	04
	Ngqeleni	01
Sarah Baartman	Graaff Reinet	02
	Paterson	01
	Patensie	01

**2025/26 (From April to 2025-12-17)**

District	Station	Number of escapes
Alfred Ndzo	Maloti	01
	Matatiele	01
	Maxebiseni	01
Amathole	Keiskamahoeck	01
	Qumra	01
	Steve Vukile Tshwete	01
Buffalo City	East London	02
	Qonce	01
	Cambridge	01
	Mdantsane	01
Chris Hani	Tarkastad	01
	Ngcobo	01
	Nxuba	01
	Komani	01
Joe Gqabi	Aliwal North	01
OR Tambo	Mthatha	01
	Madeira	03
	Tsolo	02
	Qumbu	05
Sarah Baartman	Cookhouse	02
	Graaf Reinet	01

- (3) how many prisoners were rearrested in the above-mentioned financial years as at the latest specified date for which information is available;

**Response:**

Re-Arrested prisoners

- 2022/23: 21
- 2023/24: 32
- 2024/25: 19
- 2025/26: 13

- (4) how long did it take to rearrest the escaped prisoners and can he kindly provide the relevant details in this regard;

**Response:**

- Some prisoners were rearrested within 24 hours and others beyond 24 hours.

- (5) how many prisoners are currently still at large and can he kindly provide the relevant details in this regard;

**Response:**

Prisoners currently still at large:

- 2022/23: 22
- 2023/24: 26
- 2024/25: 17
- 2025/26: 17

- (6) what were reported to be the major causes of escapes from police custody in the financial years mentioned above as at the latest specified date for which information is available;

**Response:**

- Wrongful release
- Escapes during transportation
- The negligence amongst the members is also one of the causes of escape from police custody.

- (7) whether his Department has taken any disciplinary action as a result of these escapes from police custody; if not, why; if so (a) how many, (b) what was the outcome and (c) how many are still pending as per the abovementioned financial years as at the latest specified date for which information is available and can he kindly provide the relevant details in this regard;

**Response:**

2022/2023

- (a) 39
- (b) 1x Final Written Warning and Counselling
- 15x Not Guilty
- 4x Suspension
- 8x Final Written Warning

- 4x Written Warning & Counselling
- 4x Corrective Counselling
- 1x Withdrawn
- 2x No Departmental Steps Recommended
- (c) Pending – 0

2023/2024

- (a) 32
- (b) 5x Final Written Warning
- 10x Not Guilty
- 5x Suspension
- 5x Written Warning
- 1x Verbal Warning
- 1x Dismissal
- (c) Pending – 5

2024/2025

- (a) 17
- (b) 1x Final Written Warning
- 2x Suspension
- 6x Not Guilty
- 1x Written Warning
- 2x No Disciplinary Steps Recommended
- (c) Pending – 5

2025/2026

- (a) 7
- (b) 3x Suspensions of salary
- (c) Pending - 4

- (8) (a) what measures has his Department put in place with a view to ensuring the security of prisoners and (b) whether these measures can be deemed successful; if not, why?

**Response:**

(a)

- Police Safety meetings are conducted quarterly during which Risk & Integrity Management provide risks of escape.
- Resource requirements such as handcuffs, leg irons, padlocks for vehicles are identified.
- Monthly PCCF meetings are held during which escapes are discussed and consequential management is highlighted.
- For transparency purposes, every case of escaping is followed by a case of aiding so that circumstances can be thoroughly investigated.
- The National Plan to prevent escapes in police custody as well as the Provincial Order was communicated again during 2025.

(b) The measures can be deemed successful.