



DA SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE STATION COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

Audit Report by the Democratic Alliance

June 2026

Updated 16 July 2026

1. Introduction

The Democratic Alliance undertook to call every police station in South Africa (insofar as contact details were available) to determine whether stations answered their phones. The calls were done in two sets of audits. Audit 1 was conducted over two weeks, whereas Audit 2 was conducted over five days, where each day every station was contacted per day.

For both audits, around 1,025 police stations were called, many with two numbers that we found, across all nine provinces. As will be noted in the Research Methodology below, what became apparent immediately is that **no updated official list of every police station and contact number exists, and thus, we gather all police stations and contacts from various sources.**

The audit found key issues with reaching the police, with a high frequency of calls being dropped or engaged, and many police stations not answering both contact numbers sourced. The most shocking of these findings was in Limpopo in Audit 1, where out of the 87 numbers called, only 9 answered one of their contacts, while 87 did not answer at all.

Many calls were dropped, engaged, or simply just rang. Where stations did answer, they did so generally within 10 seconds.

This report will detail how the DA went about this operation, provide a thorough analysis of the findings, and, by way of conclusion, propose follow-up steps.

The DA intends to submit this audit to the Minister of Police and the National Police Commissioner and will work with them to ensure action is taken based on these findings.

Importantly, every phone that is not answered reflects a person who could be in crisis, needing the assistance of the SAPS; it is thus vital that the Minister and the Commissioner address these findings.

2. Research Methodology

For the purposes of compiling a station-level police calling report, a sample size of 1,025 SAPS Community Service Stations was called, also referred to as police stations.

Police stations in all nine South African provinces were called, across rural, urban, and metropolitan policing districts.

Contact numbers for stations were sourced from the website of the South African Police Service and Provincial governments in each province where such a list was available. Further, a policing portal designed by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) was utilised as it provides a breakdown of crimes affecting each police station and their respective contact details.¹

¹ Contact numbers were gathered from the following sources:
"Find a Police Precinct," Crimehub, accessed June 15, 2026, <https://crimehub.org/my-police-station>.
Western Cape Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety, "SAPS Provincial Directory: Police Station and District Commanders," June 2025, <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/communitysafety/files/wcg-blob-files?file=2025-06/know-your-sc-telephone-nr-saps-updated-june-2025.pdf&type=file>.

To emphasise, no conversations were entered into with stations that answered; callers merely confirmed whether they were calling a specific station, thanked the officer, then hung up.

The data was recorded in an Excel document, which was broken down by provinces, and recorded the name of the police station, the contact numbers, the time of the call for each contact number, the outcome of each call, and the time for which a call rang (if it did at all).

Once all 1,025 police stations were called, the raw dataset was saved, and a copy of the dataset was produced to clean the information. The dataset was then analysed by the DA Research Unit, with the assistance of a closed-source AI tool, NotebookLM, which is an AI-powered research and analysis platform. This was specifically used to capture trends in the dataset and metrics.

Audit 1

Police stations were called by phone at various times from 2 June 2026 to 12 of June 2026. Calls were undertaken between 8 am and 5 pm during working hours, Monday to Friday. Each contact number for a station was called once.

Calls were marked according to the following categories:

Yes	Answered by a police officer
No	Rang but was not answered
Call Dropped	No dialling tone; “number does not exist”; technical glitches, poor signal strength, etc.
Engaged	The line was busy or unavailable at the time of the call; unable to reach the station line

Audit 2

Every station in the sample was called daily on the 7th; 8th; 9th; 10th; 13th July. Calls were undertaken between 8 am and 5 pm during working hours. Each contact number for a station was called once. If a station answered one of their contact numbers, it was marked as answered.

Calls were marked according to the following categories:

ANSWER	Answered
Busy	Busy
DCN	Disconnected
NDE	Number does not exist
NoAns	No Answer; Auto Dial

South African Police Service, “SAPS Research,” accessed June 15, 2026, <https://www.saps.gov.za/services/research.php>.
 Free State Department of Police, Roads and Transport, “Contact List of Police Stations in the Free State Province,” May 2012, <https://www.policeroadtransport.fs.gov.za/wpcontent/uploads/2012/05/Police-SAP-Stations.pdf>.
 KwaZulu-Natal Department of Community Safety, “Third Quarter Report 2025/2026,” 2026, <https://www.kzncomsafety.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/2025-2026 - 3rd Quarter WEB.pdf>.
 South African Police Service, “North West Provincial Contact Details,” accessed June 15, 2026, <https://www.saps.gov.za/contacts/provdetails.php?pid=8>.

NOS	No One Spoke
NoTone	No Tone
VM	Answering machine
WN	Wrong number

3. Analysis and Findings

Audit 1

Overall picture – who answered and who did not

The audit involved calling 1,025 police stations across South Africa. Around 481 of these stations had two contacts recorded.

The breakdown of the 1,025 stations by provinces is as follows:

Province	Number of Stations	Stations with two numbers
Eastern Cape	116	41
Free State	110	71
Gauteng	117	61
KwaZulu- Natal	183	50
Limpopo	87	7
Mpumalanga	86	82
Northwest	85	38
Northern Cape	88	24
Western Cape	153	107

Out of the 1,025 police stations that were contacted, 571 did not answer, and 454 answered one or both of their contact numbers.

**That means 55.7% of police stations called could not be reached – that is more than half.
Only 44.3% answered.**

Broken down by province, the worst offenders can be seen:

Province	No. of Stations	No. that did not answer	No. that did answer	Reachability percentage
Eastern Cape	116	63	53	45,7%
Free State	110	76	34	30,9%
Gauteng	117	57	60	51,3%
KwaZulu- Natal	183	115	68	37,2%
Limpopo	87	78	9	10,3%
Mpumalanga	86	52	34	39,5%
North West	85	45	40	47,1%
Northern Cape	88	47	41	46,6%

Western Cape	153	38	115	75,2%
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Western Cape and Gauteng were the only provinces to answer more calls than not. However, it must be pointed out that Gauteng only achieved this through three additional calls answered, whereas the Western Cape's reachability score sits at 75,2%. That said, every unanswered phone could be an emergency. Every other province failed to answer the majority of calls. **Limpopo had the highest failure rate, with around 89% of the stations failing to answer any calls. Free State was the second worst, with 69.1% of the stations not answering.**

A significant finding is that of the **National Priority Stations** contacted, being a priority did not guarantee that they would answer their phones. Priority stations are given greater resources due to high crime rates in the area.

- In **Gauteng** - Hillbrow, Akasia, Ivory Park, Johannesburg Central, Kagiso, and Moroka stations were unreachable.
- In **KZN** - Umlazi, Plessislaer, Pinetown, Phoenix, Inanda, and Chatsworth stations were unreachable.
- In the **Eastern Cape** - Aberdeen, Addo, Adelaide, Afsondering, Algoa Park, Alice, Alicedale, and Balfour stations were unreachable.
- In the **North West** - Boitekong and Rustenberg stations were unreachable.
- In the **Western Cape** - Atlantis, Elsies River, Harare, Khayelitsha, Kleinvlei, Lentegeur, and Nyanga were unreachable.

Looking closely at stations with two contact numbers

As noted above, of 1,025 stations, 481 had two contact numbers. A trend noted in the data analysis was that having two contact numbers did not guarantee that a call would be answered.

Of the 481 stations where two numbers were recorded, only 102 stations answered both numbers (21.21%); while 159 stations answered one of the numbers (33.06%); and shockingly, the majority of these stations, 220 stations, answered neither (45.74%).

Breakdown of reasons for not answering

The DA called a total of 1493 unique numbers across all stations. Across all attempted calls nationally, the main reason for a call not being answered was due to the call dropping. This was recorded 510 times across all attempted calls. The second reason across all calls made was the line being engaged – 226, and the third was the line simply ringing, which accounted for around 203 of the total numbers called.

Turning to the provincial picture for why calls failed, the following key data was discovered:

Province	Total calls failed	Notes
Eastern Cape	92	The primary factor was ringing with no answer.
Free State	136	The primary factor was calls dropped.
Gauteng	98	The primary factor was calls dropped.

KwaZulu- Natal	148	The primary factor was lines engaged.
Limpopo	85	The primary factor was calls dropped.
Mpumalanga	127	The primary factor was calls dropped.
North West	76	The primary factor was lines engaged.
Northern Cape	68	The primary factor was calls dropped.
Western Cape	109	The primary factor was calls dropped.

This indicates that technical issues (i.e., a call dropping) was the primary reason across most provinces for why a station could not be reached.

Time to answer

Of the police stations that did answer, the response time was relatively quick. The average time nationally for a police station to answer was 11.74 seconds.

Broken down provincially, the following was recorded for average answer times.

Province	Average time
Eastern Cape	13,25 seconds
Free State	14,67 seconds
Gauteng	16,07 seconds
KwaZulu- Natal	5,2 seconds
Limpopo	15,78 seconds
Mpumalanga	18,20 seconds
Northwest	14,68 seconds
Northern Cape	11.57 seconds
Western Cape	8,39 seconds

Audit 2

For Audit 2, the main focus of analysis was on the overall national picture, which can be broken down as follows:

Date	No. Stations called	Unreachable %	Reachability score
7 July 2026	1019	60.9%	39.1%
8 July 2026	1021	56.2%	43.8%
9 July 2026	1021	57.0%	43.0%
10 July 2026	1020	58.4%	41.6%
13 July 2026	1021	57.0%	43.0%

Compared to Audit 1, the unreachability percentage has increased from 56% to 58,18% average over the five days, reaching a peak of 60% on the 7th of July 2026.

The primary reasons a station did not answer, averaged over the five-day period, are as follows:

Reason	Average percentage	Range
No tone	22.0%	14% to 26%
No Answer	21.4%	18% to 26%
Number does not exist	11%	7% to 16%

These results indicate that the numbers publicly available are outdated or inaccurate, that there are technical or infrastructure issues with SAPS station numbers, and that officers are not answering calls, possibly due to capacity or officers not monitoring phones.

4. Conclusion

The DA will submit the findings of this audit to the Minister of Police and the National Commissioner. SAPS leadership must urgently account for how a police service can fulfil its constitutional mandate when more than half of its stations cannot be reached by the public.

DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE

16 July 2026