



*Privaatsak/ Private Bag X 30*

Verwysing	
Reference	3/1/5/1/174
Navrae	
Enquiries	Brig Gibson
Telefoon	
Telephone	(012) 400 6335
Faks	
Facsimile	(012) 400 5552

THE DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER  
OPERATIONAL RESPONSE SERVICES  
PRETORIA  
0001

20 December 2011

- A. All Provincial Commissioners  
South African Police Service
- B. All Provincial Heads  
Operational Response Services

## USE OF FORCE DURING CROWD MANAGEMENT INCIDENTS

- A+B 1. In recent months a great number of crowd management incidents, have occurred, ranging from labour disputes to service delivery issues, where large numbers of rubber rounds have been used.
2. In most cases the rubber rounds were used either to disperse crowds acting unlawfully or to contain situations of public violence. In a high proportion of these incidents Public Order Police (POP) Unit members also acted together with members of Visible Policing and the Metropolitan Police.
3. In a few of these incidents negative publicity resulted in both the print and visual media, raising questions regarding the use of rubber rounds in crowd management situations, especially where participants are injured in the upper body.
4. As part of the police's response in situations where the escalation of force may be necessary, rubber rounds as stipulated in Standing Order (General) 262, may only be used as a last resort. In spite of this, and that the charges of some rubber rounds have already been reduced, serious injury still result from the use of rubber rounds.
5. **The use of rubber rounds and shotguns must be stopped with immediate effect.** Less lethal methods to manage crowds must be implemented. Negotiations is still the first resort. A gradual response such as the use of pyrotechnics, water canon and the 40mm launcher must then be used. The purpose of offensive actions must be to de-escalate conflict with the minimum level of force to accomplish the goal. The degree of force must be proportional

## USE OF FORCE DURING CROWD MANAGEMENT INCIDENTS

to the seriousness of the situation and the threat posed in terms of situational appropriateness. The use of force must always be reasonable in the circumstances and force must be discontinued once the objective has been achieved.

6. In addition members are reminded that in crowd management situations the senior South African Police Service (SAPS) member trained in crowd management must take operational command.
7. Please ensure that this instruction is disseminated to all stations, units and members under your command. Your assistance and support in this regard is appreciated.



**DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER: OPERATIONAL RESPONSE SERVICES  
E MAWELA**

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL**

**OPERATIONAL RESPONSE SERVICES**

**E MAWELA**

