



WESTERN CAPE MURDER RATE

Period: 2003/2004

Abstract

Expressing murder per 1000 of the population (murder rate) singles out De Doorns police station (8.1 murder rate) in the Boland policing area. Nyanga and Redinghuys follow with 2.7 and 2.4 respectively. The general trend seems to be one murder for every 1000 people in the province. Murder rate provides a fair indication of the murder level in a given police station service boundary because murder is expressed in relation to the specific population of that police station service area.

1. Introduction

Priority stations in the Western Cape Province are determined based on number of recorded crime figures per police station service boundary. Little attempts have been made to determine crime-ridden stations on based of crime rate ie crime per population, let alone murder rate, yet murder rate gives an accurate and reliable measure of violence in any given police service boundary. People feel obliged to report murder and police record murder cases almost 100% percent accurate (Leggett, 2003:2). Murder is therefore not underreported.

In the province little attention has been given to murder rate to determine areas of concern. The reason is firstly attributed to the fact that population figures are not always accurate, Statistics South Africa claims 17% undercount in the population. Secondly, there is a lack of official population data aggregated into police station service boundary. Role players which include SAPS (Management Services), Stats-SA, area commissioners and station commissioners have aggregated the 2001 population into police station service boundary and agreed that it gives a fair indication of the population in a given service area. This report is an attempt use murder rate to determine worse-off stations. The hypothesis held by the Head of Department is that the stations defined as priority stations are not necessarily the station with high murder rate.

2. Methodology

The population used in this report is the population that the South Africa Police Service aggregated into the police station service boundaries. The population was expressed per 1000, and then used to calculate the murder rate for the province. The recorded murder figures for 2003/2004 which is the latest for all station were used to calculate the murder rate (murder per 1000 of the population. All four policing areas in the province were subjected to the same calculations.

3. Results

3.1 East Metro

The murder rate per station in the East Metro is ranked from the highest to the lowest. The police stations with highest murder rate in this policing area are shown below (figure 3.1). Two of the JCS stations feature in the top list, namely Khayelitsha and Kuils river. Based on the population Khayelitsha and Strand are the highest in East Metro. Both stations show that for every 1000 people, there was one person murdered in 2003/2004.

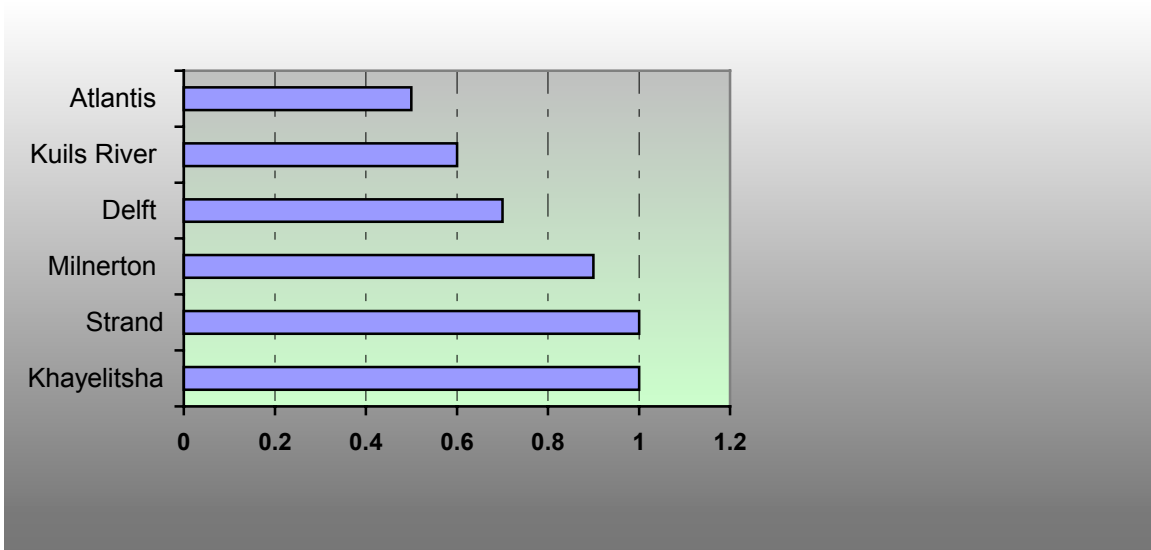


Figure 3.1 East Metro: Murder per 1000 of the population

Source: SAPS CIAC and Statistics SA



3.2 West Metro

The total recorded number of murder in West Metro in 2003/2004 is 884. Thirty six percent of the cases were recorded in Nyanga and Gugulethu. It should be noted that the population for Nyanga police service area and Gugulethu is almost the same. In 2003/2004 the former (Nyanga) had the highest murder rate (2.7 murder per 1000) in the policing area. Gugulethu follows with 1.3 murder per 1000 people and Langa accounted for 1.2 murder per 1000 people.

Comparative analysis shows that the murder rate for Khayelitsha with 358 recorded murders for 2003/2004 is one and that of Nyanga with 325 murder cases is 2.7. Such results show Nyanga residents face higher chances of being victims of murder than Khayelitsha's. Interestingly, the murder rate of the affluent suburbs appear to be a force to be reckon particularly at Hout Bay and Ocean View with 0.8 murder rate respectively.

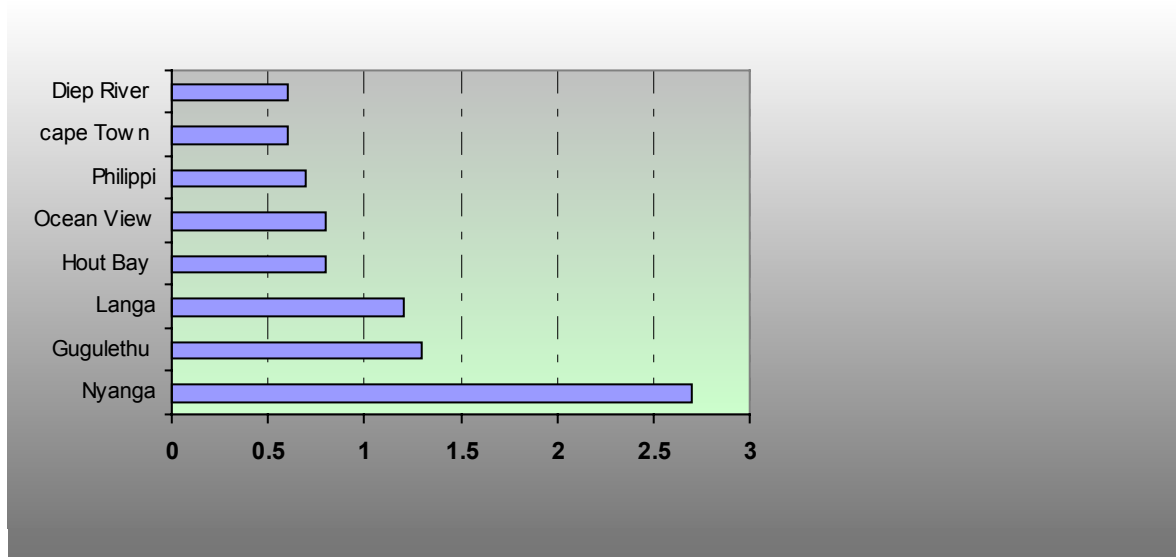


Figure 3.2 West Metro: Murder per 1000 of the population

Source: SAPS CIAC and Statistics SA

Though crime in general has been decreasing in Philippi the murder rate is still relatively high at 0.7 per 1000 people. Cape Town is characterized by the criss-crossing of people who come to town for various reasons. Furthermore, it houses the central business district. It recorded 24 murders and the murder rate is 0.6.



Interestingly only 2 murder case were reported in Diep River but, like Cape Town, for every 1000 people 0.6 people are killed in the area.

3.3 Southern Cape

The total number of murder cases reported in the Southern Cape is 266 (The Southern Cape total include the 15 murder cases reported by the provincial office as the crime statistics for George was not on the internet). Fifteen percent of these cases were reported at Knysna. Both Thembalethu and Plettenberg Bay accounted for 9%. However in terms of murder rate Groot Brak River and De Rust had the highest murder rate i.e. 1.4 and 1 murder per 1000 people respectively (Figure 3.3). The remaining top stations' murder rate range from 0.6 to 0.9. It appears that all the top station in the Southern Cape recorded one murder for every 1000 of the population.

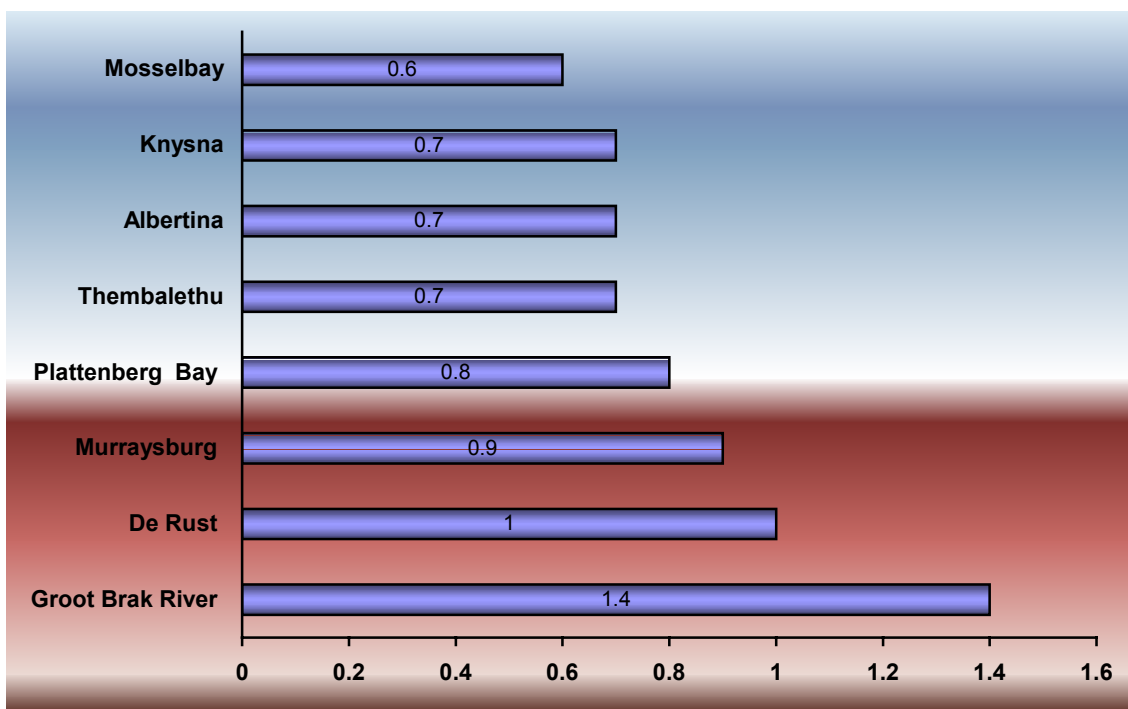


Figure 3.3 Southern Cape per 1000 of the population

Source: SAPS CIAC and Statistics SA

3.4 Boland

De Doorns in Boland policing area shows dominance in terms of murder rate. The



station recorded 23 murders (the highest in the Boland policing area and in the province) and had 8.1 murders for every 1000 people in the policing station service boundary. This happens to be the station with the highest murder rate in the province. Redelinghuys follows with 2.4. Comparatively, De Doorns' murder rate is eight times higher than Khayelitsha which is one for every 1000 of the 349 227 population and almost four times higher than Nyanga where the murder is 2.7 per 1000 of the population.

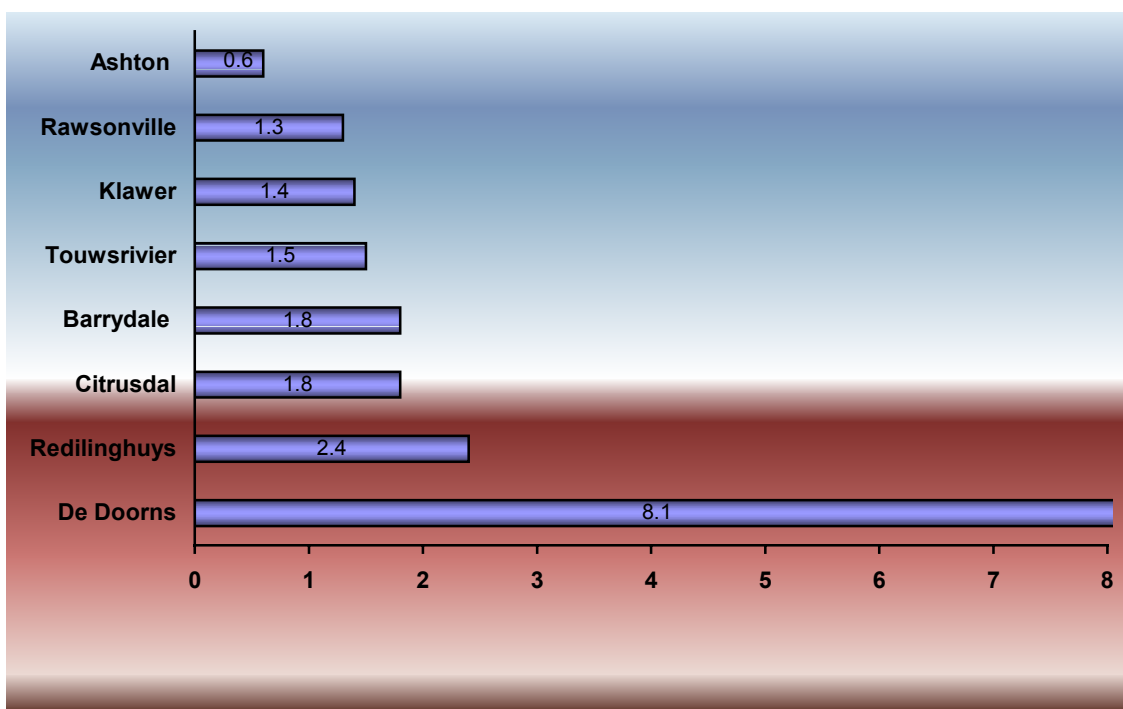


Figure 3.4 Boland: Murder per 1000 of the population

Source: SAPS CIAC and Statistics SA

4. Surprise Findings: Top stations

The analysis revealed that De doorns (Boland policing area) is the station that could be singled out as 'murder capital' (8.1 murder per 1000) in the province. The station service area has a population of 2853 and has registered 23 murders for the 2003/2004. This means that for every 1000 people in the area there were 8 people were killed in 2003/2004. Nyanga and Redelinghuys follow De Doorns with a murder rate of 2.7 and 2.4 respectively. The top stations in terms of murder rate per 1000 of the population are from Boland policing area (Table 4.1). Indeed, table 4.1



indicates that there are other stations that are not classified as priority areas, but have a high murder rate.

Table: 4.1 Top stations in terms of murder per 1000 of the populations

Rank	Station	Policing area	Population/1000	Murder	Murder/1000
1	De Doorns	Boland	2.853	23	8.1
2	Nyanga	West Metro	120.703	325	2.7
3	Redelinghuys	Boland	2.079	5	2.4
4	Citrusdal	Boland	9.811	18	1.8
5	Barrydale	Boland	2.789	5	1.8
6	Touwsrivier	Boland	6.009	9	1.5
7	Klawer	Boland	6.634	9	1.4
8	Groot Brak River	S. Cape	5.622	8	1.4
9	Gugulethu	West Metro	118.375	154	1.3
10	Rawsonville	Boland	15.581	21	1.3
11	Langa	West Metro	48.793	57	1.2
12	Khayelitsha	East Metro	349.227	358	1
13	Strand	East Metro	76.155	76	1
14	De Rust	S. Cape	2.359	3	1
15	Milnerton	East Metro	36.536	32	0.9
16	Murraysburg	S. Cape	6.359	6	0.9
17	Hout Bay	West Metro	20.364	17	0.8
18	Ocean View	West Metro	21.497	17	0.8
19	Plettenberg Bay	S. Cape	28.975	23	0.8
20	Phillipi	West Metro	47.755	34	0.7
21	Delft	East Metro	116.123	77	0.7
22	Thembalethu	S. Cape	335.00	25	0.7
23	Albertinia	S. Cape	5.387	4	0.7
24	Knysna	S. Cape	55.308	39	0.7
25	Cape Town	West Metro	38.548	24	0.6
26	Diep River	West Metro	3.229	2	0.6
27	Ashton	Boland	15.904	9	0.6
28	Kuilsriver	East Metro	199.563	115	0.6
29	Mossel Bay	S. Cape	69.228	41	0.6
30	Macassar	East Metro	30.413	16	0.5
31	Ravensmead	East Metro	52.78	26	0.5
32	Atlantis	East Metro	67.568	35	0.5

Source: Author 2004



5. Murder rate per policing area

The below-mentioned table shows that the Metro account for 66.2% of murders committed in the province in 2003/2004. The number of murder per 100 000 for the Cape Metro outweighs the other policing areas as it is in the region of 60 (Table 5.1). Regardless of the different population the murder rate in the province appears to be the same in all four police areas. The increase in murder rate in the rural area could be attributed to the increase use of alcohol and drugs in the rural areas, which in turn is linked to gangs who are active in the rural areas building the criminal economy.

Table 5.1: Murder rate per policing area 2003/2004

Policing Area	Murder	% Province	Population	Murder/1000	<i>Murder/100 000</i>
East Metro	979	34.5	1 621 243	0.6	60
West Metro	884	31.1	1 407 161	0.6	62.8
Boland	685	24.1	1 175161	0.6	58.2
S. Cape	266	8.8	532 824	0.5	49.9
TOTAL	2799	98.5	4 736 399	0.6	58

Note: The latest SAPS crime statistics 2003/2004 does not have the recorded crime statistics for George. The Provincial office has recorded 15 murders in the area for the period and that figure has been added to the Southern Cape total.

Gangs are relocating to the rural areas, because of continuous police operations in the urban area. Furthermore, gangs move to rural areas because they found a niche for business as rural areas has a ready-made market. Gang leaders have a tendency of bringing more resources, which could be in the form of alcohol and drugs to the local people (Community Safety Monitor, 2002).



6. Population and murder

Considering murder in relation to the population gives a true picture of the level of murder at a given police station service area. The main challenge is the accuracy of the population data. If the population is skew, the murder rate will also be incorrect. Should the regional population be underestimated, the murder in a specific region will appear worse than it really is. On the other hand, overestimation of population could result in lower than real crime rate (Honey, 2003:24). Thus far, Stats- SA official population data is not aligned with police station service boundaries. It is presented according to suburbs at times police station service boundary cuts across suburbs making it difficult for one to determined an accurate and standard population for a given police station service boundary. The latest initiative by SAPS management in conjunction with other stakeholders has seen population being aggregated into police station service boundary.

7. Conclusion

Recorded figures alone, indicate increasing murder level in certain station, but taking the population into consideration shows that there are a number of stations that have low level of recorded figures but high crime rate. In 2003/2004, Khayelitsha for instance, had the highest (358) murder level in the province, it was five times more than Strand (76), but the rate at which people are killed is the same. The analysis shows that there are stations that have murder rate that deserves undivided attention to reduce the murder rate.

Murder is well reported to the police. Using the population figures in relation to murder eliminates the tendency of detaching the number of people killed from the total population of a given area. However, the main challenge is the accuracy of the population figures used as these figures determine whether the area is worse off or not.

Although the JCPS stations are singled out as the worse off stations in the province, the analysis (based on the murder rate) revealed other station that deserved



attention. Calculating murder base on population is just but one method where stations are compared on the basis of one common denominator. Such comparison is commonly known as comparing 'apples with apples' scenario.

8. Reference

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