



From the community-For the community / Uit die gemeenskap-Vir die gemeenskap

**NPC**

(A company incorporated in terms of section 10 of the Companies Act of 2008 (Act 71 of 2008)  
(Old Section 21)

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## **GARSCOM**

### **COMMUNITY SECURITY STRATEGY**

**1. VISION: TO BE AN OPEN, SAFE, FRIENDLY AND INVOLVED COMMUNITY.**

**2. SERVICE AREA:** Pretoria, Garsfontein Ext 10 & 11 and Pretorius Park.  
Borders: North – Atterbury Rd: East – Woodhill Residential Golf Estate:  
South – Moreleta Spruit: West – Solomon Mahlangu Rd.  
Approximate number of households – 2600

**3. CRUCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY**

Numerous studies indicate that for successful, long term and sustainable community security, the involvement of the community and collaboration with a dedicated and proactive security company is essential.

**4. BACKGROUND:**

During the decades of 1980, 1990 and 2000, crime rate in the Garsfontein Police precinct was extremely high, so much that the area was dubbed as the “Wild West”. The GarsCom area bore the brunt of regular shootouts leading the community to take steps to improve the security and safety of the residents. In 2000 residents volunteered to form the GarsCom Community Association.

**5. ACTION STEPS:**

**5.1 REACTIVE MODEL**

Over a period, negotiations took place with security companies. Three companies were engaged, rendering reactive security services one after the other.

The reactive security services rendered, consisted of the supply of an alarm system, monitoring and responding to any alarm that went off.

It turned out that in this reactive model, the companies were not interested in the community, patrol officers were changed regularly, preventing them from getting to know the area and it’s residents.

The fact that no patrols were done in an effort to prevent crime and that patrol officers usually waited in the shade for an alarm to go off, they got nick-named as the “Shade Buddies”.

The Association came to the conclusion that the prevention of crime and safeguarding the interests of the residents did not feature in the reactionary security service plan.

**5.2 PROACTIVE MODEL**

The failure of the reactive security model to curb the crime rate, which increased substantively, prompted the GarsCom Association to consider alternatives and to set specific requirements that

would enable any security company to serve the GarsCom community effectively and efficiently. This entailed:

- The company must render a dedicated security service to prevent crime and safeguard the personal safety and property of residents.
- Patrols in the area must be done on a 24/07/365 basis.
- Patrol officers must be dedicated to the area, learn the area and get acquainted with residents' needs.
- Where necessary provide home escort service to residents.
- Where necessary avail medical services and support to residents who call for assistance.

## **6. DEVELOPMENT OF THE GARSCOM DEDICATED PROACTIVE COMMUNITY SECURITY STRATEGY**

**6.1** On the basis of the requirements set out in paragraph 5.2 GarsCom approached several security companies to partner in ensuring the security and safety of residents. However, GarsCom received a flat "Not Interested" replies every time.

**6.2** After evaluating the potential benefits for both the company and the community, Chubb (currently National Security & Fire – further referred to as National in this document) was the only security company which was prepared to embark on the project to develop a dedicated proactive community security strategy.

**6.3** The first dedicated 24/7/365 patrol vehicle was availed to the community in acknowledgement of the number of GarsCom residents who were National clients. Due to the success of the project and the collaboration between GarsCom and National, the number of National clients increased substantively. In response, a second dedicated patrol vehicle was posted to the GarsCom area.

**6.4** As the number of National clients continued to grow and thereby enabling GarsCom to qualify for a third dedicated patrol vehicle GarsCom did not take the vehicle. Instead GarsCom and National negotiated and decided that it would be more cost effective, beneficial in the crime prevention and service to the GarsCom community to establish a control room and install CCTV cameras at strategic points in the GarsCom area.

**6.5** A control room was established. GarsCom took responsibility for the premises and services. GarsCom, being a Section 10 (Old Section 21) Company decided not employ anyone but may make use of contractual services. Consequently, National agreed to employ the control room operators on the National pay roll. The operators have the same benefits as other National employees. However, GarsCom refunds these salaries to National.

**6.6** National donates R 42.00 per month to GarsCom for the running of the control room.

**6.7** Apart from the GarsCom computer and communication equipment installed in the control room, National has also installed specialized equipment for the proper running of the control room and to enhance control, management and communication.

## **7. GARSCOM COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITIES**

**7.1** GarsCom is a Section 10 (Old Section 21) NPO (Non Profit Organization). The directors and all project leaders of a vast number of community projects are all volunteers.

**7.2** Since 2005 GarsCom manages an organized residents' patrol system (Green light patrols) consisting of ten night teams and one day team. The patrollers are all volunteers and patrol with their own vehicles at their own cost. They are unarmed and serve as the eyes and ears in the community.

**7.3** A close relationship has developed between the National patrol officers and the GarsCom patrollers as the latter are dependent for their safety on the dedicated support of the National patrol officers.

## **7. SUCCESS EVALUATION**

- 7.1** Over a period of almost two decades the GarsCom Dedicated Proactive Community Security Strategy has proved to be most successful.
- 7.2** The most important measurement tool of success of a community security operation is the crime rate. GarsCom has an almost zero crime rate compared to neighboring communities.
- 7.3** A vast number of community projects are organized during the year and National is always involved with support for the projects.

## **8. CHALLENGES**

- 8.1** The running and maintenance of the control room and cctv cameras are quite costly. Unfortunately less than 20% of the GarsCom residents are contributors to the GarsCom community security operations. Fact of the matter is that all residents benefit from the GarsCom / National proactive strategy although quite a number are clients of other reactionary security company service providers.
- 8.2** The GarsCom / National safe zone developed over almost two decades is targeted by other security companies with ludicrous offers to residents for reactive security services. In a meeting it was stated by a security company offering only reactive security services that creating income is the main goal and it could not care about the community. This approach is echoed by some other reactive security companies too.

## **9. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

- 9.1** Why are the two entrances to GarsCom not boomed off?

75 % of about 2600 households must give written approval. 18 Municipal departments must approve an application which can cost up to R 70 000.00 and it must be renewed on request of the municipality from time to time. Approximately 14 000 vehicles travel through the two entrances daily, creating a total impossible situation, should booms be installed.

- 9.2** Why are other security companies not involved in the GarsCom Proactive Security Service Model?

In paragraph 6 above the proactive security service model is explained as well as the financial and service support rendered by National. Although the control room is run by GarsCom it is dependent on National equipment and support.

To expect that another security company must be accommodated in the current operation does not make sense and may bring confusion. It can almost be compared to a situation to expect Pick & Pay to allow Checkers to operate from its premises.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1** During the development of the GarsCom/National dedicated proactive community security strategy various specialists in the academic, criminology and community environment were consulted. This has resulted in the shift from a reactionary strategy to the current Proactive strategy that has been implemented with great success.
- 10.2** At an open day arranged by the Garsfontein Policing Forum (GPF) on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2018 for the security companies and the communities, Professor Rudolph Zinn from UNISA and Dr Johan Burger of the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) evaluated security models and found that the GarsCom/National model is the most successful and that it is being widely copied.
- 10.3** On request of GarsCom, Colonel Hein Visser, a specialist in community security services did an intensive study and evaluation on community security models. At a presentation on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at the GarsCom monthly community meeting he gave feedback and indicated that the GarsCom/National proactive strategy is the most successful and that no reactionary service can compare with it.