

The Shoprite Group secures over 1 700 years in prison time for criminals

The Shoprite Group's crime fighting efforts have resulted in a year-on-year decline in armed robberies and burglaries, and its successful prosecution of criminals has ensured sentences totalling 1 384 years and three months – including 24 life sentences – in the past three years.

In addition, suspects still awaiting trial – where the Group successfully opposed bail – have to date been in custody for the equivalent of 395 years and 8 months.

“Our top priority remains creating a safer environment for our customers and our employees,” explains Oswald Meiring, Head of Group Security and Loss Prevention. “Securing arrests and sentences are therefore critical to deter and ultimately reduce crime.”

Operating from the Group's Command Centre, established in 2018, a specialist team of investigators, data and crime analysts and law experts work tirelessly to protect customers and employees by using technology, AI and a vast intelligence network.

Community members play an instrumental role in helping the Group to track down criminals. “South Africans are tired of crime and want to play their part in bringing offenders to book. Calls to our tip-offline with information about ‘persons of interest’ regularly assist us with tracking down repeat offenders who elude law enforcement,” says Meiring.

The Command Centre monitors a vast range of business assets, including over 3 000 stores and a fleet consisting of 1 000 trucks and 1 500 truck trailers. Predictive and historical analysis of crime data, live information on strikes and protests, as well as security devices which can be triggered remotely are just some of the ways in which criminal operations are foiled.

The necessary arrests are affected by working closely with the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA). The Group shares intelligence with them to ensure that bail is successfully opposed, and it has employed an expert criminal law lawyer to assist with the successful prosecution of criminals. Data and crime analysts testify in support of aggravating circumstances during sentencing.

“In an operating environment marked by high unemployment, frequent protest action and loadshedding, the safety of our customers and employees is of the utmost importance. We will continue to use all available tools and resources to identify, track down and prosecute offenders,” concludes Meiring.

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