

PRESS RELEASE BY ALBERT FRITZ
WESTERN CAPE MINISTER OF COMMUNITY SAFETY
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WCLA Update: A day in the life of a liquor inspector

The Minister of Community Safety, Albert Fritz, notes that the Western Cape Liquor Authority (WCLA) has investigated 171 cases in which liquor vendors allegedly contravened the National Disaster Risk Management Act's regulations between 27 March 2020 and 2 October 2020.

Of the 171 matters, 70 section 71 matters were placed on the Liquor Licensing Tribunal (LLT) case roll, of which:

- 49 licences were suspended;
- 20 applications were dismissed; and
- One application is pending.

Minister Fritz said, "The inspectors of the Western Cape Liquor Authority (WCLA) are the backbone of the institution as they work hard to reduce alcohol harms in the province. These inspectors travel long distances, work erratic hours and attend to detailed administrative work to ensure the safety of residents in the province. It's important that we share their story."

A day in the life of a WCLA Inspector

Inspector Leroy Nolan has shared his story of a day in the life a WCLA inspector. In a past life, Leroy worked as a police officer and as a station commander. He has accrued a wealth of knowledge and expertise on the Western Cape Liquor Act. According to Leroy, "I enjoy my work very much. No two days are the same."

Leroy works according to an operational plan based on various areas. He works across the Metro, East and West Coast and at the various district municipalities in between. "On Monday, I may be attending to a complaint in Nyanga, and on Tuesday I might attend to the LLT request in Citrusdal," said Leroy.

However, his work hours are not set in stone as he works weekdays and weekends at all hours, monitoring license holders' compliance with by-laws relating to trading hours. This means that if there are complaints in the early hours of the morning, Leroy will work outside of his operational plan to attend to these.

On a day to day basis, Leroy may receive complaints from the public and requests from LLT which he will attend to by inspecting the premises in terms of whether it is completed and developed according to its business plan; liaise with neighbours; and provide training to license holders, where necessary.

Additionally, Leroy monitors for whether there are children or pregnant women drinking on premises, and whether there are enough security measures inside and

outside the premises including lighting or security personnel. "The licensee must at all time ensure that no weapons or dangerous objects are brought into the premises", said Leroy. He will assess whether the facility has additional rooms or areas not included on its business plan. If there are additional and unaccounted for rooms, the vendor will be issued with a compliance notice to ensure that they apply for an extension in terms of floor plan.

In terms of off-consumption premises such as bottle stores, Leroy monitors for the resale of alcohol to unlicensed liquor holders. Where an unlicensed vendor buys alcohol from a liquor vendor, the liquor vendor will be issued with a section 76(1)(e) notice requesting that the license holder refrains from selling alcohol to unlicensed premises. If it is found that the license holder at a later stage sold liquor to unlicensed premises, a section 20 report will be compiled and forwarded to the internal prosecuting authority. By doing so, Leroy reduces related harms as the sale of alcohol to unregulated and ultimately unsafe institutions is curbed.

Leroy's workday does not stop at inspections. He then returns to the office to complete administration, reports to internal prosecution authorities, and compiles reports for the LLT who then decide whether a hearing will take place or a fine will be issued to the offending license holder.

Leroy works very closely with SAPS and often receives calls or requests for assistance. In many instances, he will attend to a complaint together with SAPS. He will closely monitor whether institutions are promoting binge drinking by speaking to the liquor vendor. He is very concerned by vendors who sell large amounts of alcohol near closing time as this encourages binge drinking and issues notices accordingly.

Leroy stresses that where there is criminal activity on a licensed premise, he will submit a section 71 report to the LLT requesting the license to be suspended until there is a section 20 hearing. This is to ensure the safety of those at the premises. "I was once asked to visit a premise, together with SAPS, after it was reported that suspects involved in a double murder and killing of a police officer hid in a Wesbank tavern. The liquor license was subsequently revoked by the LLT", said Leroy.

When asked about his words of wisdom, Leroy urges license holders to promote safe practices around alcohol consumption by, for example, ensuring that they do not sell a lot of alcohol before closing hours, do not allow children or pregnant women to drink on-site, and ensure effective security to safeguard inside and outside the premise. Importantly, Leroy asks license holders to ensure that they do not sell liquor to people who are drunk and disorderly on their premises.

Attention broadcasters, please English Audio clips: <https://clyp.it/vag2afks>

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