



GUN FREE SOUTH AFRICA Making South Africa safer

ANNUAL REPORT

2018 – 2019

CONTENTS

Acronyms	2
Letter from the chair: Gun control key to safe communities	3
2018-19 highlights.....	5
Partnerships to build safer communities	6
#YouthActivism: Amplifying youth voices	6
#DisarmDomesticViolence: Know the law, use the law, save a life	13
#StopPoliticalViolence: Free and safe elections	14
#GunRisk: Guns ineffective for self-defence	15
#GlobalAction: Act against gun violence	15
Using the law to build safer communities	17
ConCourt rules gun ownership a privilege	17
Stockpile management stops illegal guns and gun use	18
Private security guns must be controlled	20
How we work.....	22
Evidence-based	22
In partnerships	24
Strategic communication	24
Governance.....	28
Organisational development	28
Financial report	30
Donors	31
Conclusion	32



ACRONYMS

ConCourt	Constitutional Court
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CRF	Children's Radio Foundation
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FCA	Firearms Control Act (2000)
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GFZ	Gun Free Zone
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IANSA	International Action Network on Small Arms
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ISS	Institute for Security Studies
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IT	Information technology
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MP	Member of Parliament
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SA	South Africa
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SaVI	Safety and Violence Initiative, University of Cape Town
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UN PoA	United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspect
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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR: GUN CONTROL KEY TO SAFE COMMUNITIES

In his State of the Nation address on 20 June 2019, President Ramaphosa identified five “fundamental goals” to be achieved in the next 10 years. One of these, that “violent crime will be halved, if not eliminated” is a call to action for us all.

To halve crime by 2030 we need to prevent a range of crimes – predatory crimes such as robbery and hijacking, interpersonal violence, domestic violence, violence against children, political violence, gang-related violence, taxi-related violence, farm attacks, wildlife poaching, fraud and corruption.

Increasingly, these crimes involve guns.

This was not always the case: When the Firearms Control Act (FCA) was passed into law in 2000, guns were the leading cause of murder in South Africa, with 34 people shot and killed a day. By 2009 this number had halved to 18 a day as stricter controls regulating guns and gun ownership were put in place.

However, since 2010 gun-related violence has steadily increased again. Currently 23 people are shot and killed a day.

Stop, and consider for a moment... People killed as a result of guns are not just numbers. In a recent newspaper article, Gun Free SA named 21 women and girls killed by guns to represent the number shot and killed each week in SA. Smiling faces, full of life and promise. It was a chilling read. Every one of the photos was once a person, alive and loved by family and friends.

Since 2010 the Red Cross Children’s Hospital in Cape Town has seen a rising number of children injured and killed due to guns: From 15 in 2010 to 38 in 2019.

As in the 1990s, guns have replaced knives as the leading cause of murder in SA. The unique nature of firearms makes them very desirable to criminals. They are small, light, easy to use, easy to conceal and enable killing from a distance. A gun is 18 times more lethal than a knife; 1 in 3 people who are shot will die, in contrast 1 in 55 people who are stabbed will die.

The evidence in support of the link between strong firearms control and lives saved is well documented in South Africa and globally.

The World Health Organization, which has been at the forefront of violence prevention globally, uses a public health approach to violence prevention. This distinguishes between violence-related risk and protective factors at four levels: Individual, relationship, community and society.

Evidence shows that reducing risk factors and/or strengthening protective factors at these four levels helps prevent violence and crime. However, this can be challenging, as many of these interventions, which include early-childhood development, creating employment opportunities, social support programmes and justice reform, are often long-term and require substantial resources and investment to yield positive results. Moreover, when levels of violence are as high as in South Africa, it is extremely difficult to roll out these interventions as people’s lives are in immediate danger.

Within this situation, limiting firearm availability is recognised as being one of the quickest ways to break the chain, especially the lethality, of violence.



To halve crime by 2030, we need immediate stronger gun control to reduce the availability of guns in our communities. We have significantly reduced violent crime before, including halving the number of people that are shot and killed from 34 to 18 people a day. We can do it again.

Yolande Baker
Chairperson

21 WOMEN SHOT & KILLED EVERY WEEK IN SOUTH AFRICA

3 a day (2018 stats)

SYMBOLISING THE

 <p>Name: Sinazo Kleinbooi Age: 14 Girl shot at point blank range while walking home from school in Motherwell</p>	 <p>Name: Xolile Mnana Age: NA Man kills ex-girlfriend, wounds her sister before killing self</p>	 <p>Name: Chanty Duvies Barnard Age: NA Woman killed along with Mary Abbott Coetzee by an unknown gunman on a motorbike in South Hills, Johannesburg</p>
 <p>Name: Tasneem Simons Age: 22 Pregnant 22 year old shot in head, killed in crossfire while taking down the washing</p>	 <p>Name: Thandiwe Mavaneni Age: 33 Police officer shot, dies in domestic dispute</p>	 <p>Name: Mary Abbott Coetzee Age: NA Woman killed along with Chanty Duvies Barnard by an unknown gunman on a motorbike in South Hills, Johannesburg</p>
 <p>Name: Jessica Kuhn Age: 24 Woman killed in Benoni roadside shooting after bakkie runs out of fuel</p>	 <p>Name: Sadiqah Newman Age: 26 Young pregnant woman shot in Manenberg walking to the shops to buy electricity</p>	 <p>Name: Dawny Philile Mhlongo Age: 30 Woman's body found dumped in field with multiple gunshot wounds after family reports her missing</p>
 <p>Name: Francina Raphokwane Age: 42 North West teacher gunned down while waiting for transport to school</p>	 <p>Name: Candice Williams Age: 35 Attacked and shot dead while sleeping at home</p>	 <p>Name: Sharon Islam Age: 37 Woman shot and killed during robbery in Musina, Limpopo</p>
 <p>Name: Chuma Sinethemba Mhuluhulu Age: 28 Young pregnant woman shot and killed by unknown gunman in Kwadwesi, PE</p>	 <p>Name: Barbara Haines Age: 34 Professional nurse murdered in front of children by husband</p>	 <p>Name: Sandra Schwartz Age: 39 Brakpan mother allegedly used husband's gun to shoot 2 daughters, son & herself</p>
 <p>Name: Zingisa Nobandla Mabandla Age: NA Ward councillor shot by her husband, Chief of the Amabhele clan in Tsolo</p>	 <p>Name: Martha Gama Age: 43 Husband kills wife, a mother of 3, and then himself</p>	 <p>Name: Lee-Ann Schwartz Age: 16 Brakpan mother allegedly used husband's gun to shoot 2 daughters, son & herself</p>
 <p>Name: Fezeka Ncgobo Age: 17 Durban school mourns pupil's death after alleged murder-suicide</p>	 <p>Name: Elma Davis Age: 51 Murder-suicide: Husband shoots globally recognised bowls player</p>	 <p>Name: Sheree Schwartz Age: 19 Brakpan mother allegedly used husband's gun to shoot 2 daughters, son & herself</p>



Gun Free SA's #WillNotBeNext campaign called on the police to immediately remove a gun from domestic violence



2018-19 HIGHLIGHTS

This report covers the period 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019. This two year period has seen a significant change in how Gun Free SA works, as we have focused on building youth activism and partnerships to build safer communities.



- **Youth mobilisation against gun violence:** We have partnered with young people across SA to help make their communities safer, more secure and free from gun violence
- **Toolkit for safe communities:** Designed for youth, our online [Guide to building safe communities](#) includes gun-related facts, myths and ideas for actions that young people can take to make their communities safer
- **Gun ownership a privilege:** As *amicus curiae*, we contributed to the Constitutional Court ruling that gun ownership is not a right but a privilege regulated by the FCA; we have subsequently been admitted as amicus by the Supreme Court of Appeal after the North Gauteng Court interdicted the police from acting on the ConCourt's judgement in relation to firearm licence renewals
- **Mapping gun violence reduction plan:** Our report [Gun control and violence: South Africa's story](#) maps gun control and violence in SA over 25 years, identifies tried and tested interventions that have saved lives in the past and which can do so again
- **National firearms amnesty:** After years of lobbying government on the effectiveness of amnesties to remove excess, unwanted and illegal guns and the conditions for a successful amnesty, the Minister of Police declared a six-month national firearms amnesty starting on 1 December 2019
- **Organisational growth:** In line with our strategic focus on partnering with youth activists to build safer communities, 2018-19 saw various changes to our board and staff composition – we have a new Chairperson, new board members and additional young staff members; we also have an office in Alex where staff and volunteers can work and meet



PARTNERSHIPS TO BUILD SAFER COMMUNITIES

Gun Free SA partnered with a range of activists, communities and organisations to raise awareness of the risks of guns and to empower action to reduce gun violence.

#YouthActivism: Amplifying youth voices

Arising from a two year community safety project with the Children's Radio Foundation (CRF), Gun Free SA partnered with youth activists in three communities, starting in Alexandra (Gauteng) in 2018-19 we worked with activists in Alex, Atlantis (Western Cape) and KwaZakhele/Zwide (Eastern Cape) to help make their communities safer, more secure and free from gun violence.



Partnership with Children's Radio Foundation



In mid-2017 Gun Free SA partnered with the CRF on a two year project funded by the European Union to raise awareness of violence, particularly gun violence in communities. The partnership supported young radio reporters to build safer communities through broadcast and outreach activities.



An independent review of the project's impact found that youth reporters, facilitators and listeners all gained gun violence prevention knowledge as a result of the project. Radio station staff reported that they had established partnerships with local stakeholders as a result of their involvement in the project, while youth reporters were inspired to become agents of change by playing a more active role in community safety issues, including successfully advocating for gun free and safer schools.

Youth reporters “thought that gun violence had nothing to do with them but when we brought it into the curriculum, they realised they can talk about it with their peers, at home and at school and so they became ambassadors of community safety.”

CRF Trainer



Xolani Kondile, SA Programme Associate at CRF and Mary-Ann Nobeke, Youth Projects Officer at Gun Free SA and a local facilitator for CRF, presented a paper *Using radio to support youth engagement and advocacy in building community safety at the SaVI Violence Prevention and Peacebuilding: Evidence to Action* conference held in November 2019

Youth activists work mainly with schools in their community. They use Gun Free SA's *Guide to building safe communities* to engage learners, educators and the broader school community on issues related to gun violence prevention.



Toolkit for safer communities



Gun Free SA's Toolkit *Your guide to building safe communities* was designed for young South Africans aged 18–25. Using infographics and engaging activities, the Toolkit's six modules give an overview of gun violence in South Africa, as well as ways in which all community members, in particular youth, can prevent and reduce gun violence and create safer communities — from the highest level of influencing policy to community level, including local activism and civic engagement.

The six Toolkit modules, which include facts and figures, dispel myths and list action steps for youth activists to build safer communities are:

1. Gun control in SA: The gun law in South Africa and how it has saved lives
2. The role of policy: How policy is made and how you can get involved in the process
3. Men and guns: How gun violence affects men in South Africa and what can be done to reduce the demand for guns
4. Youth and guns: The impact of gun violence on youth in South Africa and what can be done to address it
5. Women and guns: How gun violence affects women in South Africa and what can be done to prevent it
6. Gun free zones: How to create GFZs in your community

The Toolkit was launched at MC Weiler primary school in Alexandra on 20 March 2018 to celebrate Human Rights Day. It has been printed and distributed and is also available online at www.safety.toolkit.org.za. The online version of the Toolkit includes Facts & Figures, Myths, and Take Action tabs for each of the modules.

Gun Free SA has been engaging with national and provincial departments of basic education to have the Toolkit included in schools. In April 2019 we were invited to present our Toolkit and our approach to working with learners at the Gauteng School Safety Summit attended by almost 5,000 delegates including educators, school governing body representatives, and government officials from the provincial departments of basic education, police and social development. At a follow up meeting with the national department of basic education it was agreed that we should work with provincial school safety coordinators in the provinces in which we are active to develop a programme to introduce the Toolkit to primary school learners, with a focus on grades 6 and 7.



Amplifying youth voices

In addition to working in schools, youth activists undertake a range of community outreach and awareness raising activities.

Using radio to fight gun crime

Every week a group of teenagers working with CRF crowd into radio studios to play hip-hop and discuss issues affecting their neighbourhoods – HIV and Aids, environmental damage and gun crime – on their community radio shows: Bigger Than Life on Alex FM, YouthReloaded.Com on Radio Atlantis and LiveWire on Nqubela FM. These weekly slots create space for awareness raising, discussion, networking and action by youth reporters and listeners.



GFSA youth facilitators Tumi Tsheola from Alex, Monique Hansen from Atlantis and Thembela Booie from Zwide attending the annual Youth Radio awards in 2019

Marching for safety

Inspired by the youth of 1976 who marched for change forty-two years earlier, on 16 June 2018 Gun Free SA in partnership with the Bigger Than Life team mobilised the Alexandra community to join a peaceful walk to the Alex police station where a petition with a list of demands for #ASaferAlex was handed over.

“We believe increasing police presence and removing illegal guns in circulation in our community will make Alex safer.”

Tumi Tsheola, youth reporter from Alex FM and one of the organisers of the 2018 #SaferAlex march



Escorted by the JMPD, walkers made their way to the Alex police station to hand over a petition calling for action to make Alex safer for all



Silencing guns through sport

In 2018 and 2019, Gun Free SA and the Bigger Than Life team hosted a sports day for the youth of Alex to keep youth off the streets, thereby helping to protect them from crime and violence.



Youth taking part in various sporting codes at the annual #FreedomFromFear sports day in Alexandra



Alex youth using the power of cricket to campaign for their security which is threatened by the proliferation of deadly weapons in the township. This was a partnership with other NGOs in Alex namely ADAPT, Lifeline and CRF



Shooting for the stars



To inspire young people to aim for their goals and dreams instead of aiming a gun, the YouthReloaded.Com team in Atlantis photographed children using props to shoot for the stars and visualise a future without gun violence



“Instead of just talking and giving information on guns and gun violence that these youngsters would probably forget, the children did something that they will forever keep in their minds, and share wherever they are.”

Monique Hansen, youth activist, Atlantis



Don't groom for violence



In the lead up to the 2019 holiday season and Christmas and in partnership with *Sonke Gender Justice*, youth activists urged parents and caregivers to not groom children for violence by supporting a toy gun free festive season



“Guns won’t teach your kids any valuable lesson but to be violent, but educational toys for our kids encourage them to be active instead of shooting each other.”

Tweet from Nkululeko in support of a toy gun free SA



#DisarmDomesticViolence: Know the law, use the law, save a life

With intimate partner violence being 12 to 18 times more deadly when a gun is involved, a key area of work for Gun Free SA is raising awareness of how the law, specifically the Domestic Violence Act and FCA, can be used to stop guns in domestic violence.

FEELING UNSAFE IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP?

HELP IS HERE.
Join us for a live chat with:
Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre

TIPS ON HOW TO:

- ✓ Remove a gun from your home
- ✓ Get a protection order

Send a DM or join us live with any legal questions you have about safety in relationships

12pm to 1pm 14th Feb 2018 @GunfreeSA @endGBV

For Valentine's Day 2018, Gun Free SA partnered with the Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre for a live twitter chat on how to get a protection order against someone

For international women's day 2019, the Sunday Times newspaper supported our #IWillNotBeNext campaign by profiling 21 women and girls who had been shot and killed in intimate partner violence to give a name, a face, a story to the approximately 21 women who are shot and killed, most often by an intimate partner, every week in South Africa. The campaign included a call for the police to immediately remove guns from domestic violence.

Gun Free SA participated in the 2018 #TotalShutdown march, joining thousands of women across the country demanding an end to violence against women



#StopPoliticalViolence: Free and safe elections

In partnership with the Human Sciences Research Council, Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and the Society, Work and Politics Institute, Gun Free SA ran a six-month campaign in the lead up to the sixth democratic elections in SA on 8 May 2019 to #StopPoliticalViolence.

The campaign started with a workshop entitled Monitoring and Responding to Political Violence, which was held in October 2018 to examine the nature and extent of political violence nationally as well as identify interventions to reduce risk and lethality. Based on analysis undertaken by Gun Free SA showing that 94% of political party killings from 2016 were gun-related, a key recommendation was urgent action to reduce the availability of guns.

Thereafter, partners undertook a range of activities to #StopPoliticalViolence, ISS launched an app called Protest Reporter to document protests and violence and partners raised awareness of SA's Electoral Code of Conduct and the process to report transgressions.

We also urged government to declare all polling stations as Firearm Free Zones under Section 140 of the FCA.



Free and Fair Voting on 8 May

#StopPoliticalViolence

No weapon of any kind may be carried or displayed

The Stop Political Violence Partnership formally requested that government declare all polling stations as Firearm Free Zones under the FCA

Protest Reporter app

The Institute for Security Studies has developed a free smartphone application, Protest Reporter, which allows members of the public to report incidents directly to its Protest and Public Violence Monitor database.



SA's Electoral Code of Conduct

Leaders of the 48 parties contesting the #2019SAElections signed a pledge, committing themselves, their parties, candidates and supporters to the Electoral Code of Conduct, which prohibits:

- Language which provokes violence
- Intimidation of candidates or voters
- Carrying guns or weapons at political meetings



#GunRisk: Guns ineffective for self-defence



Gun Free SA engaged with respected fact-checker Africa Check on its finding that “*there is no recent, reliable data*” to back a claim made in advertising agency Havas’ Gun Safe Cities campaign that you are four times more likely to have your gun used against you than be able to use it successfully in self-defence.

In our engagement we highlighted that there is *reliable* data from South Africa; research undertaken by Antony Altbeker in 1999 showed that you are four times more likely to be shot at if you use your gun in self-defence, and while this is dated, it is supported by more *recent* global data showing that you are 4 to 5 times more likely to be shot (not just shot at) if you have a gun in your possession when attacked, compared to someone not carrying a firearm at the time.

“It is not necessary to constantly prove the same thing. That is not how science works. For example you may have noticed that there is a dearth of recent and reliable studies on the existence of gravity. Unless there is more recent evidence to DISPROVE Altbeker’s findings then they still stand.”

Richard Matzopoulos, Gun Free SA board member

#GlobalAction: Act against gun violence



Gun Free SA remains an active member of the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA).

Being part of IANSA provides us with the opportunity to highlight successes and impact and learn from other countries and actions around the world aimed at reducing gun violence.

The IANSA secretariat plays an important role in keeping members informed about latest developments on small arms control matters at the UN and its various agencies such as the UN Office on Disarmament. In addition, IANSA coordinates action on global campaigns such as the Wear Orange campaign to honour those who have lost their lives to gun violence and the annual Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence.

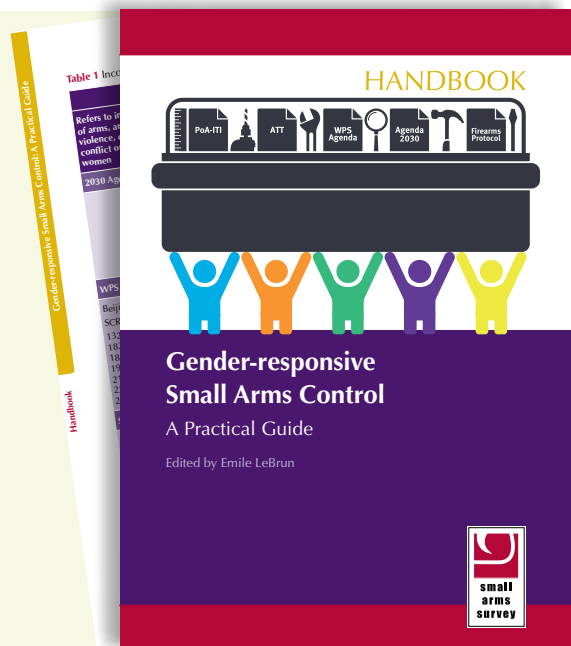




In support of IANSA's 2019 Global Week of Action against Small Arms, Gun Free SA organised a number of events and dialogues in Alexandra – with the key focus on getting community leaders and young people to pledge to #ReportIllegalGuns and help #EndGunViolenceSA

Guide to gender-responsive small arms control

Gun Free SA was one of the contributors to *A practical guide to gender-responsive small arms control*, aimed at streamlining implementation efforts between small arms control and the women, peace, and security agenda. Coordinated by the Small Arms Survey, the Guide was launched in New York in October 2019.



USING THE LAW TO BUILD SAFER COMMUNITIES

While Gun Free SA continued to advocate for the FCA to be amended to strengthen it, close loopholes and improve the administration thereof, an expected amendment was not tabled in 2018-19. As such Gun Free SA focused on lobbying government to ensure the enforcement of existing gun control legislation and global and regional protocols.

ConCourt rules gun ownership a privilege

CONSTITUTION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Gun Free SA acted as *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) in a 2018 case in which the Minister of Police appealed a High Court judgment that had ruled in favour of a South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association application challenging the constitutionality of regular gun licence renewals.

Using evidence provided by Gun Free SA, the ConCourt unanimously ruled on 7 June 2018 that gun ownership is not a fundamental right under South Africa's Bill of Rights, rather it is a privilege regulated by the FCA. Under the Act:

- No person may possess a gun without a valid licence,
- A firearm licence is valid for a limited period of time, and
- Unless a gun owner has renewed his gun licence before expiry, he has committed a criminal offence and is subject to penalties, including a fine or imprisonment

“The application is dismissed.”

Ruling made on 7 June 2018 by the Constitutional Court to an application for firearm licence renewals to be declared unconstitutional, Gun Free SA acted as amicus curiae in the case

Following an urgent application by Gun Owners SA in response to the ConCourt's ruling, the North Gauteng Court helped craft the relief sought and interdicted the police from acting on the ConCourt's judgement in relation to firearm licence renewals. Gun Free SA has been admitted as amicus in this case, which will be heard by the Supreme Court of Appeal in 2020.



Stockpile management stops illegal guns and gun use

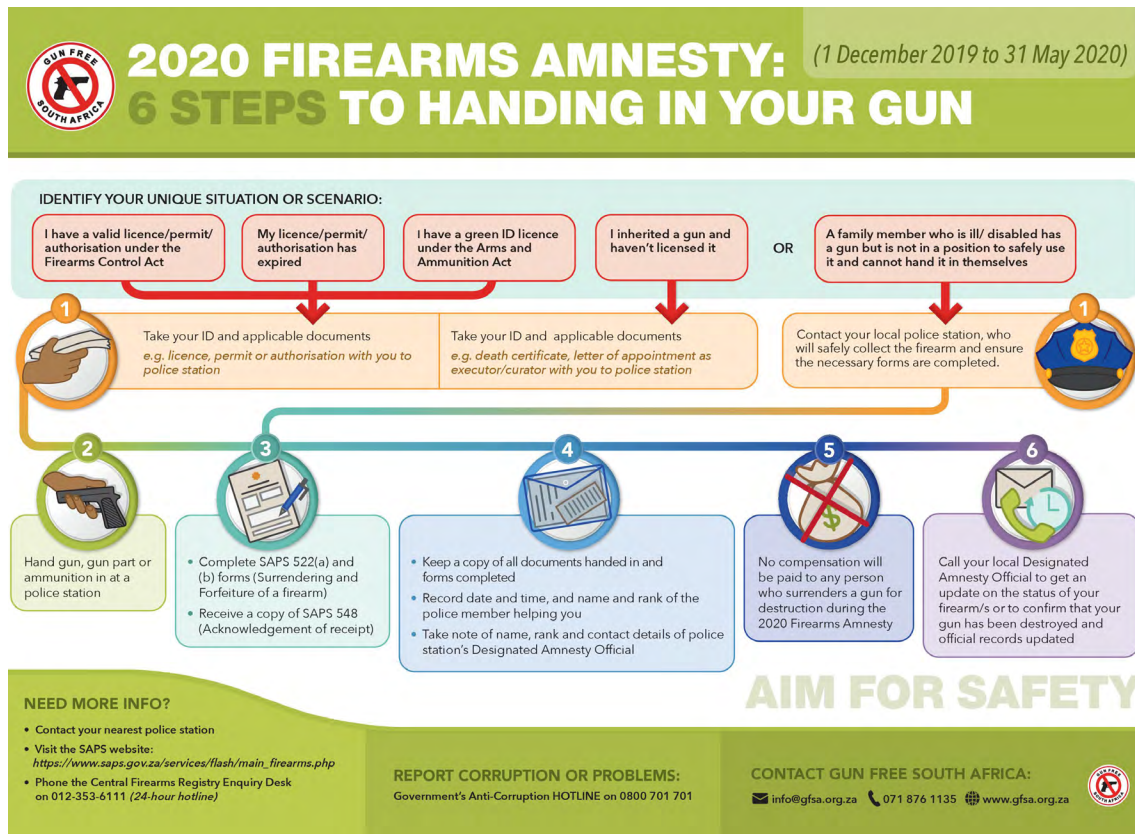
In 2018-19, Gun Free SA focused attention on stockpile management in recognition that most, if not all unlicensed guns in South Africa were once legally held until they were leaked into the illegal pool through loss and theft, trafficking, or fraud, corruption and poor enforcement of the law.

In our engagement with the state we highlighted five distinct actions to reduce the leakage of guns:

- Safe storage
- Scheduled audits
- Regular collections e.g. through amnesties
- Frequent destructions
- Accurate record-keeping

Amnesties recover guns

After years of lobbying by Gun Free SA in which we highlighted the effectiveness of amnesties to remove excess, unwanted and illegal guns and the conditions for a successful amnesty, the Minister of Police declared a six-month national firearms amnesty starting on 1 December 2019.



Gun Free SA developed a pamphlet and infographic describing the 6 steps to hand a gun in during the 2020 national firearms amnesty



Conditions of a successful amnesty

In our engagement with government and MPs, Gun Free SA highlighted four conditions to enhance the success of the 2019-20 national firearms amnesty:

- No questions asked, so anyone can hand in a gun anonymously
- Civilian oversight to ensure transparency and identify problems as soon as possible so that these can quickly be dealt with
- Timing, to coincide the amnesty with changes in gun control policy or practice
- Communications and public awareness raising programmes are especially important as people often wait until the last minute before acting on calls to hand-in firearms and ammunition

“Over 120,000 firearms and 1.8 million rounds of ammunition were recovered in SA’s past three amnesties. Over one third of the guns and ammunition recovered in the 2005 and 2010 amnesties were illegally-held (45,133 and 738,028 respectively).”

Gun control and violence: South Africa’s story, p. 57

Destructions permanently remove guns



The only way to remove the risk that firearms, ammunition and firearm parts will leak into the illegal pool is to destroy them



Having not destroyed firearms since 27 April 2016, the police held two gun destructions in 2019 in which 55,000 firearm were destroyed. While we welcomed these destructions, Gun Free SA made a written submission to the police calling for three steps to ensure that weapons earmarked for destruction are indeed destroyed:

- Marking of firearms prior to destruction to show that the weapon was held within a destruction storage programme
- Establishing an independent verification team tasked with ensuring that firearms, ammunition and firearm parts listed for destruction are still in police stores and are destroyed
- Sharing data sets listing the details of all firearms, ammunition and firearm parts scheduled to be destroyed with regional and international policing agencies to monitor transnational diversion

“Reducing the period of time between identifying surplus weapons and their destruction is a major step towards reducing the risk of diversion. Where weapons languish for months or years in storage, there is an increasing risk that criminal elements will identify their whereabouts and find ways to steal them.”

Opinion piece It is vital for SA to dispose of guns safely by Jonathan Rickell, City Press, 18 April 2019

Private security guns must be controlled



SA's private security industry is three times the size of the South African Police Service; it undertakes policing functions, which includes arming guards, yet operates largely outside of any control



In 2019 Gun Free SA developed a comprehensive submission in response to Draft Amendment Regulations in terms of the Private Security Industry Regulation Act (No. 56 of 2001) published by the Minister of Police to make amendments to the Private Security Industry Regulations, 2002.

Gun Free SA's submission located the proposed amendments within a context of poor risk management of firearms in the private security industry resulting from non-compliance with the Private Security Industry Regulation Act, inaccurate and inaccessible industry firearm records, loss and theft, fraud and corruption, and no oversight of industry firearms as well as poorly trained security officers.

Detailed comments were made on proposed changes to the regulations to further tighten the control of industry firearms as well as improve oversight of the industry, noting that while the private security industry is three times the size of the South African Police Service, it undertakes policing functions, which includes arming guards, largely outside of any control.

“Gun loss and theft from security businesses has been an ongoing concern; often this is as a result of security officers or companies being targeted for firearms.”

Gun Free SA submission on Draft Amendment Regulations in terms of the Private Security Industry Regulation Act

Commonwealth Dialogue: Countering diversion of small arms and light weapons



The Commonwealth

Adèle Kirsten, Gun Free SA's Director, attended a three-day Commonwealth Dialogue at Wilton Park in the UK in 2019. The Dialogue was attended by representatives from 10 Commonwealth countries, mainly Africa and the Caribbean, the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime as well as researchers from the Small Arms Survey. The three days were spent sharing knowledge and experiences to identify and strengthen efforts and resources to stop the leakage of small arms, light weapons and ammunition in recognition that they are responsible for more human rights violations than any other type of weapon.



HOW WE WORK

Gun Free SA's work is underpinned by three modes of working:

Mode 1: Evidence-based

Gun ownership is an emotional issue, tapping into fears and identity. While Gun Free SA recognises this, a core principle is that all our work is evidence-based.

Anecdotes give emotion to a data point, data show trends and changes over time

#ArmedWithFacts: Guns leading cause of murder

An ongoing campaign in 2018-19 was raising the awareness of policy makers, enforcers, researchers and the public that, just as in the 1990s, gun violence has reached epidemic proportions in South Africa, with gunshots replacing knives as the leading cause of murder nationally.

In addition to developing regular gun police briefings underpinning this fact, a key output in 2019 was the publication of a report, *Gun control and violence: South Africa's story*. Tracking gun control and gun violence in SA over a 25 year period, the report is a map to reducing gun violence in SA by identifying tried and tested gun control interventions that saved lives in the past and which can again save lives.



SA study over 25 years shows gun control saves lives, poor enforcement kills, offers solution to rising gun crime

To mark global disarmament week (24-30 October 2019), Gun Free SA published a comprehensive report on gun control in South Africa over 25 years.

The report, *Gun control and violence: South Africa's story* (also available as a [summarised booklet](#)), identifies five key interventions that reduced the availability of guns in the years 2000 to 2010:

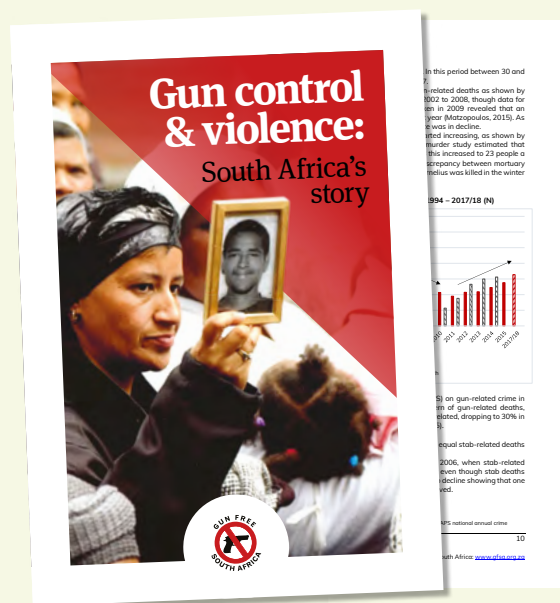
1. **Stricter regulations**, particularly the FCA, which raised the bar for gun ownership
2. **Capacity building** to support the implementation of the FCA, including appointing and training new staff and acquiring new IT and logistical equipment
3. **Addressing illegal and criminal guns and gun use** by way of audits to identify obsolete guns, national firearm amnesties, intelligence driven operations (such as Operation Sethunya) to recover illegally held guns and regular destructions
4. **Awareness raising** to inform members of the public of provisions in the FCA as well as campaigns to recover and destroy unwanted and illegally held guns, such as guns in deceased estates
5. **Regional and sector cooperation**, including agreements to standardise the trade, storage, possession and use of guns as well as operations to recover and destroy guns and other small arms (such as Operation Rachel which destroyed over 19,000 firearms in Mozambique)

In the 10 years that firearms were strictly controlled and less available in South Africa (2000-2010), guns stopped being the leading cause of murder and gun-related deaths almost halved, from 34 people shot and killed a day to 18.

However, from 2011 gun violence began increasing due to various breakdowns in South Africa's firearms control management system. This included fraud and corruption, deliberate leakage of guns from secure stores into the illegal market, inappropriate target-setting, under-resourcing and poor planning.

As a result guns have become increasingly available. As gun availability increased so has gun violence.

The latest national crime statistics (2019) show that guns are again the leading cause of murder: 34% of murders in 2018-19 were from gunshots and 22.5% were knife-related.



Mode 2: In partnerships

Gun violence affects everyone – young and old; it impacts on issues relating to education, health, peace, safety and socio-economic development; and concerns state and non-state actors. This means that while Gun Free SA is a single issue campaign, our focus facilitates partnerships with a range of stakeholders as any intervention to address crime, violence, inequality or injustice (e.g. through early childhood development, skills development, job creation, urban renewal or holding free and fair elections) depends on silencing the guns.



Ms Flaki Ramothata, principal at MC Weiler primary school in Alexandra (right) greets Ms Nolundi Gilishe, parliamentary liaison officer for the Deputy Minister of Police (left) at the launch of Gun Free SA's Guide to building safe communities at MC Weiler primary in 2018

Mode 3: Strategic communication

In 2018-19 Gun Free SA strengthened our communication channels:

Media advocacy

Strategic media relations help raise public awareness and encourage discussion. In 2018-19 we issued a range of media statements and wrote a number of op-eds, including:

- Responding to events such as the ConCourt ruling that gun ownership is a privilege, firearm destructions, the release of annual crime statistics and the announcement of a six-month firearms amnesty starting on 1 December 2019
- Calling for action, for example discouraging gun ownership for self-defence by highlighting the risks of a gun in the home, raising awareness of how the FCA can be used to remove a gun from someone who is unfit to own a firearm and to dissuade parents and caregivers from buying toy guns as gifts for children



“A recent Constitutional Court ruling notes that a system of regular gun licence renewal brings South Africa’s gun control regime within an international legal and political gun control framework.”

Opinion piece Concourt’s Firearms Control Act ruling gives a clear direction on gun licensing by *Ronald Menoe and Claire Taylor, Daily Maverick, 21 June 2018*

Social media

Website revamp

Gun Free SA’s website was overhauled to make it more accessible and to highlight the gun violence epidemic sweeping across SA. In addition to a *Take Action* section, our gun violence incident map profiles some of the gun violence that impacts the lives of people living in South Africa daily.

Twitter

Instead of just posting information, Gun Free SA’s twitter is increasingly used to engage followers, e.g. by running polls and hosting live chats. We also started running thematic campaigns to mark significant days in the calendar such as the 16 days of activism for no violence against women and children and youth day, and involving partners by cross posting and tagging relevant posts.

Materials

In addition to our *Toolkit: Your guide to building safe communities* and *Gun control and violence: South Africa’s story* research report, summarised booklet and timeline, we developed a range of materials, from videos to infographics, from gun control policy briefings to posters, pamphlets, T-shirts and caps.



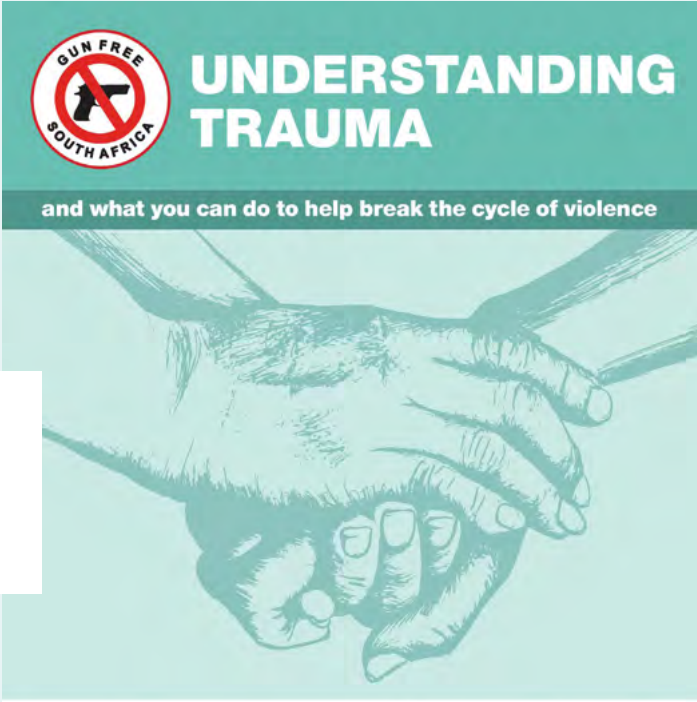
Understanding trauma

Communities across SA living with the daily reality of violence experience deep and damaging direct and secondary trauma, which feeds into a cycle of violence.

Violent shootings happen daily and are deeply traumatic:

A selection of shootings over the 2019 holiday period:

- Manhunt launched after five shot dead at Joburg tavern, IOL, 18 December
- Lavender Hill community left reeling after boy (5) shot dead, Eyewitness News, 22 December
- Johannesburg cop kills wife before committing suicide, TimesLive, 23 December
- Man shoots partner and then himself on Christmas Eve in Killarney, Rosebank Killarney Gazette, 24 December
- Man shot in car outside Durban mall, TimesLive, 27 December
- Gunshot bodies of 7 suspected zama-zamas dumped near Benoni highway, TimesLive, 27 December



WHAT IS TRAUMA?
Trauma is a deeply disturbing experience. It is often the result of an overwhelming amount of stress that goes beyond a person's ability to deal with the emotions involved.

WHAT IS A TRAUMATIC EVENT?
This is an event that an individual experienced directly or witnessed. It can involve death or injury as well as any threat to the physical, emotional or psychological safety of the self. Examples include witnessing the loss of a loved one, physical pain or injury, e.g. after an attack, or being held-up at gunpoint and robbed.

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Most often people feel fear, panic and helplessness after a traumatic event.

Gun Free SA's pamphlet, *Understanding Trauma*, describes what trauma is, common reactions to shock, practical steps to heal or help someone else recover and a list of organisations that can help



Firearms control policy briefings

Policy briefs are distributed to policy makers, enforcers and civil society at a national, provincial and local level to raise awareness that gun violence in SA has reached epidemic proportions and to identify tried, tested and practical reduction interventions.

In 2018-19, Gun Free SA developed 12 policy briefings, responding to specific types of gun violence that have happened, such as police killing and being killed, new developments in gun control in South Africa and globally, and reporting on new research to further inform gun violence reduction interventions.

Firearms control policy briefings developed in 2018-19:

- Police killings: Protecting members and their families
- Cape Town proves strong gun laws save lives, lax enforcement kills, illegally supplied guns more dangerous in short term
- Constitutional Court unanimously rules regular gun licence renewal is constitutional: What next?
- QUICK FACTS: Guns and violence in South Africa
- Are guns effective for self-defence? Examining the evidence
- Licence renewals: A cornerstone of gun control
- How many guns are there in SA? The importance of stockpile management
- Western Cape mortuary surveillance shows gun deaths doubled in 6 years
- Halving crime in SA needs effective gun control
- Women under the gun: Actions to protect women from gun violence
- Gun control and violence: South Africa's story over 25 years
- Firearms amnesties: Four key factors for success



GOVERNANCE

Organisational development

Board

2018-19 saw a number of changes to Gun Free SA's board, reflecting the organisation's new focus on partnering with youth activists to build safer communities:

- Four board members resigned: Nareshnie Maharaj, Ronald Menoe, Lewina Rowland and Alan Storey
- Two board members joined: Sithombo Maqungo, professor and head of the orthopaedic trauma service at Groote Schuur Hospital and University of Cape Town and Yolande Baker, a child protection specialist and director of Childsafe

Chairperson

In 2018, Alan Storey, who had been chairperson since 2009 and who was recognised for his thoughtful and visionary leadership, passed the baton to his successor Ronald Menoe. After Ronald stepped down as a board member in early-2019, Gun Free SA's vice-chair, Felicity Harrison, filled the role as acting chair until Yolande Baker was appointed chairperson at Gun Free SA's AGM on 10 July 2019.

As of 31 December 2019, Gun Free SA's board consisted of seven members:

Yolande Baker	Chairperson	Executive director, Childsafe
Felicity Harrison	Vice-Chair	Head of sustained dialogues programme, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
Angelica Pino	Treasurer	Programme director of community action and knowledge management, Sonke Gender Justice
Pamela Crowsley	Secretary	Director of Crowcon
Malose Langa	Board Member	Registered psychologist and lecturer at the school of community and human development, University of Witwatersrand
Sithombo Maqungo	Board Member	Professor and head of the orthopaedic trauma service, Groote Schuur Hospital and University of Cape Town
Richard Matzopoulos	Board Member	Chief specialist scientist and co-director of the South African Medical Research Council's burden of disease research unit and honorary professor, public health medicine division, University of Cape Town





Gun Free SA staff went to Parliament in 2019 for the Department of Police's budget vote

Staffing

Over the two year period Gun Free SA has employed four staff members, with a financial consultant to manage our finances. The staff are Adèle Kirsten: Director, Sara Chitambo: Communications manager, Claire Taylor: Researcher, and Mary-Ann Nobele who joined Gun Free SA from CRF as a youth facilitator in 2018, then as an intern in 2019 and who was offered employment as youth projects officer to start in early 2020.

Meetings

Gun Free SA held two annual strategic planning meetings in January 2018 and 2019, which were an opportunity for staff and board members to come together to review and make important decisions on the direction and priorities for the organisation.

Gun Free SA held two AGMs: The 2018 AGM was held in Johannesburg on 30 May and the 2019 meeting took place in Cape Town on 10 July.

In addition, the Gun Free SA board had five ordinary meetings during this time.



Gun Free SA's new office in Alexandra has access to an inhouse coffee shop where staff and volunteers can meet and work



Financial report

Gun Free South Africa Statements of comprehensive income

	2019	2018
	R's	R's
Grants and donations received	1 867 858	1 555 793
Other income	253 148	390 660
Total income	2 121 006	1 946 453
Operating expenses	(2 147 023)	(1 980 235)
Operating deficit	(26 017)	(33 782)
Investment income	41 387	27 974
Equipment fund	(9 437)	3 000
Finance costs	(913)	-
Deficit for the year	5 020	(2 808)
Reserves:		
At beginning of year	986	3 794
At end of year	6 006	986



Donors

Increasing our support remains a priority and successful approaches made in 2018-19 helped secure our longer-term donor base.

Financial support is also sourced from pro bono work and services provided to Gun Free SA. This includes the work done by the advertising agency Young & Rubicam as well as pro bono legal advice provided by John Simpson, Faskens Martineau as well as Rose Norton Fulbright and our senior legal counsel, Matthew Chaskalson, with Jessica Griffiths and Lwandile Sisilana as junior counsel. Other income sources include private donations and interest yielded.

We acknowledge the support of the following donors who provided funding for implementation of activities and operational costs in 2018-19. The support of our funders enables us to save lives and reduce gun violence.



DG Murray Trust



European Union



Heinrich Böll Stiftung



Millennium Trust



Open Society Foundation for South Africa



RAITH Foundation



UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation



CONCLUSION

While Gun Free SA's core focus has always been to reduce gun violence in South Africa, the importance of our work was realised in 2018-19. In this time guns overtook knives to become the leading weapon used in murder in South Africa.

This is scandalous. Guns, unlike knives, are controlled by laws, regulations and protocols. But poor implementation as a result of weak enforcement and lack of compliance has facilitated the increasing availability of guns. And, as research globally and nationally has proven time and again, gun availability tracks gun violence.

In 2019 President Ramaphosa envisioned halving violent crime in SA in the next 10 years.

If we do not act to reduce the ready availability of guns in our country, our communities, our homes, his vision will remain just that.

Acting means reducing existing stockpiles of legal and illegal guns and stopping new guns from entering the market.

As a country, we have done this already: Between 2000 and 2010 a range of interventions – a new gun law that raised the bar for gun ownership, amnesties, intelligence led recovery operations and regular gun destructions all helped reduce the availability of guns.

The result was a halving of gun-related deaths, from 34 people shot and killed a day to 18.

South Africa's experience between 2000 and 2010 is a detailed account of how to reduce gun violence. Hundreds of people – fathers, mothers, sons and daughters – are alive because guns were less available in this time.

SA's experience between 2000 and 2010 is a map to halve violent crime in the next 10 years.

What we need now is action.



A supporter holding an orange ribbon made by Kellen Daniels, a junior city councillor from the Durban Youth Council (DYC) who asked to partner with Gun Free SA in 2018 to raise awareness of rising gun violence



