

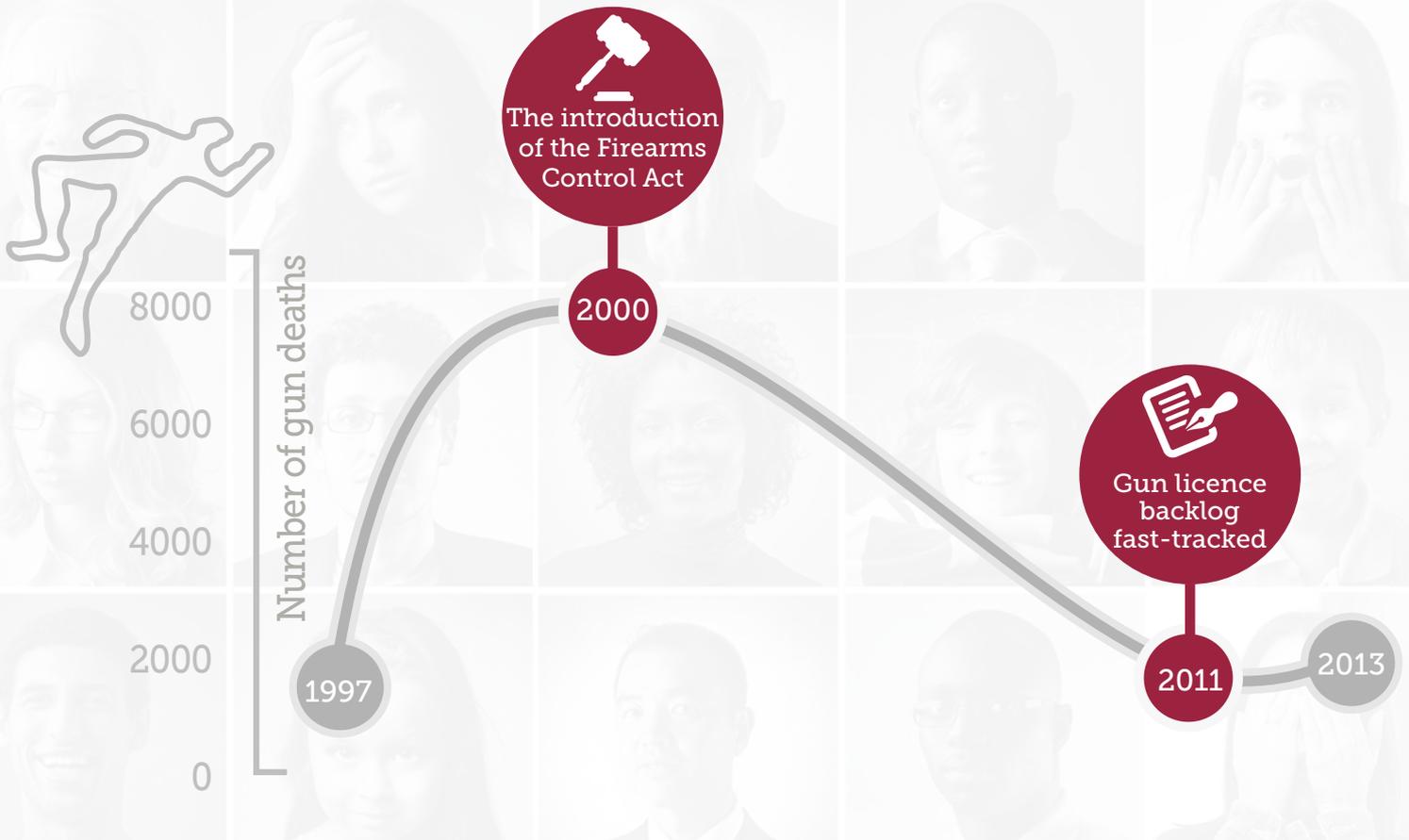


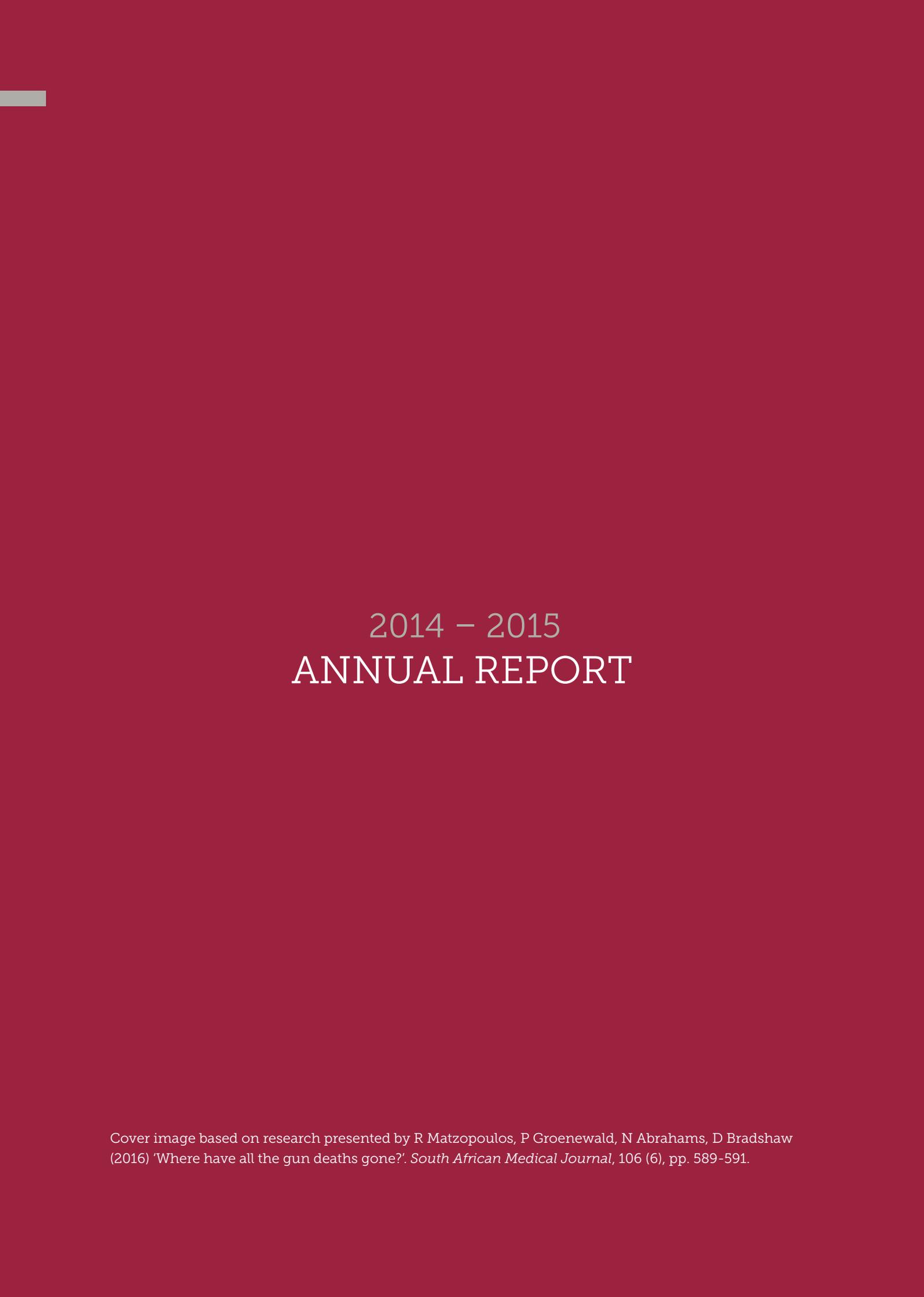
Annual Report

2014 – 2015

FEWER GUNS... ...FEWER DEATHS

The introduction of the Firearms Control Act (FCA) of 2000 contributed to a dramatic decline in gun deaths





2014 – 2015
ANNUAL REPORT

Cover image based on research presented by R Matzopoulos, P Groenewald, N Abrahams, D Bradshaw (2016) 'Where have all the gun deaths gone?'. *South African Medical Journal*, 106 (6), pp. 589-591.

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Acronyms

APCOF: African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum

ASA: Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa

CFR: Central Firearms Registry

CSP: Civilian Secretariat for Police

CRVS: Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation
(United States of America bureau responsible for national security)

FCA: Firearms Control Act (2000)

GfSA: Gun Free South Africa

GFZ: Gun Free Zone

IANSA: International Action Network on Small Arms

ISS: Institute for Security Studies

JCPS: Justice, Crime Prevention and Security

MP: Member of Parliament

MRC: Medical Research Council of South Africa

PCoP: Portfolio Committee on Police

SA: South Africa

SAFA: South African Football Association

SAPS: South African Police Service

StatsSA: Statistics South Africa

WEGE: Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity

WLC: Women's Legal Centre

Y&R: Young and Rubicam Advertising

Letter from the chair

South Africa is an extremely violent society. We cannot stand to absorb the full extent of this truth. To preserve our sanity, we blot large parts of it out. We have become numb by necessity. As a people we carry high levels of trauma, and anger is never far from the surface of our living. A gun in this context can only spell death. Before you read any further please take a moment to feel the pain of this reality. Pause for a moment and hold the terrifying tragedy that at least 18 people will die in South Africa today from gun violence while many more will be injured with lives changed forever.

It is within this context that Gun Free South Africa (GFSA) works towards a safer and more secure South Africa, by reducing gun violence. There are many factors that contribute to our extreme levels of violence. Guns are one key factor. Removing the gun does not guarantee ending the violence but it does drastically reduce the lethality of the violence. Easy access to guns makes killing easy, more likely and more frequent; while strong gun laws have been shown (including within recent South African history) to reduce gun violence.

In such an extremely violent society it is a no brainer to legislate more stringent restrictions on gun ownership. Yet sadly this remains a struggle to achieve. Once again there are multitudes of reasons for this. Perhaps the most basic reason is the continued belief that guns keep us safe. This false belief underpins much of the resistance to GFSA. For example, it convinces victims of gun violence to arm themselves, instead of calling for stronger gun control, thus making the mobilisation of survivors of gun violence by GFSA a real challenge. Ironically, because people are moved by fear more than the facts, they acquire guns to keep safe. Yet in the process they place themselves in greater danger as owning a gun increases the risk of accidents, fatal suicide, family-murder, femicide, as well as creating an incentive for crime that ends up arming criminals, making our society as a whole less safe.

Evidence shows that guns are excellent instruments of attack but are very poor at providing protection, with guns in the home proven to place people within the home at a much greater risk of becoming victims of gun violence. According to a 2015 FBI study, incidents of successful firearm-use defence are outnumbered 34-1 by successful attack, and for every successful use of a firearm in defence there are 78 suicides and 2 fatal accidents by firearms.

Even though the evidence shows the risk of gun ownership, it is not what people's common logic holds onto, and herein lies the deep challenge of our work: to question the common logic of our time.

It is not a totally innocent logic. It has strong backers with deep financial interests and a passion to defend it with everything they have. The so-called gun-lobby are in fact gun-violence-denialists.

In light of this I stand in awe of the work of GFSA. With a tiny staff, a virtual office, together with a dedicated board, GFSA tilts the balance in favour of the life-saving evidence.

If you just glance at this 2014-2015 Annual Report you will be struck by the enormity of the work that has been done. You will notice a string of strategic, creative and educative interventions and achievements.

GFSA is a lean organisation with unbelievable advocacy and lobbying skills. GFSA's networking capabilities are amazing to behold. Motivated by our small size and sharp strategy, GFSA is involved in multitudes of clever partnerships with other civil society organisations. This is crucial: GFSA is not merely asking other organisations to assist us in our work, but rather GFSA enables other organisations to see how gun control and gun violence connect with the core work of each organisation we partner with.

GFSA has had an overwhelming amount of media coverage over the past two years. Often this is as a result of being approached by the media for comment. There is, however, bitterness attached to this coverage, as it is often directly linked to incidents of gun violence. So, we need to always be cautious of holding up our extensive media coverage as a positive. Particularly in this past year, however, GFSA was able to publicise various campaigns on TV, radio and print, resulting in extensive coverage which was not dependent on any specific gun tragedy and which we need to do more of in the future.

GFSA is often asked whether a gun-free society is possible or whether it is just a pipe dream. As a society which has lived through the end of Apartheid one would expect people to have a higher sense of what is possible, but alas this is not so. I want to state that a gun-free society is not only possible, it is a necessity. And every day we delay, it becomes more of a necessity.

I am grateful for the privilege to be part of GFSA. I am grateful to Adèle Kirsten and Claire Taylor for their remarkable work; for the commitment of all GFSA's board members; as well as the backing GFSA has from outside the organisation. This includes financial support from the Open Society Foundation for South Africa and GFSA's anonymous benefactor, as well as donations by Y&R Advertising, Read Hope Phillips, Howard Varney, and a range of other organisations and individuals who gave their valuable time and expertise in support of achieving GFSA's vision of a safe and secure country free from gun violence.

Alan Storey
Chairperson



'Non-Violence' by Carl Reuterswärd outside United Nations Headquarters, New York

Introduction

This report covers the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015. In this time two part-time staff members were overall responsible for the lobbying, advocacy, public awareness and media relations implicit in Gun Free South Africa's work. Their work was undertaken with support and assistance from GFSA's Board and a range of other experts who donated their time and expertise to reducing gun violence in South Africa.

2014-15 Highlights



Consensus that gun control saves lives. A harvesting of GFSA's work over the past 20 years as our central message – that more guns equals more gun deaths and that gun control saves lives – took root across the violence and crime prevention sector. The most concrete expression of this is the White Paper on Safety and Security, which recognises that reducing gun violence has to be at the centre of efforts to reduce violence and build safe communities. This marks a significant shift across the entire social and criminal justice sector which has undoubtedly developed out of increased knowledge and practice in the violence prevention field, with GFSA being a significant contributor to building this knowledge base.



Innovative and strategic partnerships. Through developing a range of innovative and strategic partnerships GFSA brought new voices and constituencies into the gun violence reduction conversation. GFSA also partnered with organisations on a variety of campaigns. These included: supporting a call for a national firearms amnesty to mop up the illegal pool of guns in SA; a social media campaign calling for a ban on the use of R5 assault rifles by the police in crowd control; and removing firearms from homes in which domestic violence occurs. Other partnerships included holding a seminar to publicise gun-related research; conducting workshops on understanding gun violence with a youth constituency; and collaborating on the analysis of the annual crime statistics released in September of each year.



Precedent setting legal victory. A successful collaboration between GFSA and Y&R Advertising in an ad campaign, '*if your stolen gun was there, so were you*' resulted in a complaint to, and an appeals process, with the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) of South Africa. This was both challenging and inspiring; GFSA was able to depend on the support and expert knowledge of a skilled team of attorneys and advocates in defending the principle of freedom of expression. The ASA's Final Appeals Committee finding, that the ad campaign promoting responsible gun ownership constituted an expression of opinion on a matter of public importance, also set an important precedent for NGOs using advertising for advocacy purposes.

Strengthening the law

GFSA's core focus during this period was to advocate for the strengthening of firearms control legislation and the implementation thereof, through which GFSA consolidated relationships with key government bodies responsible for firearms control. Relationship-building was also facilitated by a change in leadership in a number of structures, including the Ministry for Police (a new Minister was appointed in May 2014); the Portfolio Committee on Police (the PCoP, which, in addition to seeing a number of new MPs appointed, also saw the appointment of a new Chairperson in June 2014); and the Civilian Secretariat for Police (CSP, a new Acting-Secretary was appointed in 2015). In addition to these changes a new head of the Central Firearms Registry (CFR) was appointed in early 2015.

Submissions

GFSA made various submissions on policy papers and draft Bills.

Draft Firearms Control Amendment Bill

GFSA made two rounds of submissions on the Draft Firearms Control Amendment Bill. Along with selected organisations representing gun owners, the CSP invited GFSA to comment on the Draft Bill (December 2014), prior to it being taken to the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) Cluster for review.

GFSA supported most of the proposed amendments, many of which were technical in nature. However, some of the amendments fundamentally undermined core principles of the Firearms Control Act (FCA). In particular, we opposed the following two amendments:

- Increasing competency certificate validity from 5 to 10 years from the date of issue – this undermines the purpose of the renewals process which ensures that gun owners need to continue providing proof that they remain 'fit and proper' to own a firearm;
- Making provision for a fifth licence, a percussion cap-and-ball firearm, to be issued – this undermines the principle of limiting the number of guns any one person can own.

Although many of the amendments in this Draft Bill related to ensuring the implementation of key outstanding amendments from a 2006 Amendment Bill, and therefore the focus of the 2014 Draft Bill was largely technical, the timing of it was unfortunate in that it was circulated very soon after the murder of South Africa's national football team captain, Senzo Meyiwa. Coupled with the trial of Paralympian Oscar Pistorius, the issue of gun violence and gun control was at the centre of social and political debates, resulting in unprecedented calls across the country for stricter gun laws.

In March 2015 the revised Draft Firearms Control Amendment Bill was published by the CSP for public comment. GFSA developed a thematic analysis of the Bill which we used to engage a range of civil society organisations, including NGOs and community-based organisations, providing them with support to raise their voice based on their experience of gun violence. We also conducted a number of workshops with communities affected by gun violence. Twenty written submissions were made on the Bill, including from the head of the Groote Schuur Hospital Trauma Unit, the Red Cross Children's Hospital, the South African Football Association (SAFA), the Quad-Para Association of South Africa (QASA), the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), and the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV), as well as submissions from communities affected by gun violence such as Kensington-Factreton, Paarl, and Nyanga.

Following this public engagement process, the CSP withdrew the Draft Firearms Control Amendment Bill to complete two research projects aimed at informing amendments. Only once a study commissioned by the CSP on the nature and extent of firearms and gun-related crime in SA, and a report by a Ministerial Task Team set up to do a 26 country comparative analysis on firearms control and legislative frameworks have been completed will amendments be finalised and the Bill tabled in parliament; this is expected in late 2016.

White Paper on the Police

The White Paper on the Police was published by the CSP for comment in early 2015. GFSA's written submission supported key aspects of the policy, including the separation of policing from safety and security (recognising that the latter is broader than policing); articulating a demilitarised, community-centred, human-rights focussed and accountable approach to policing; identifying the qualities and requirements for building a professional police service; and describing a framework for professional policing. We also raised a number of concerns, including the lack of detail on the demilitarisation process. GFSA's main critique of the White Paper was its failure to mention the unique role of firearms in contributing to and escalating the lethality of crime and violence, both by perpetrators and through the police's response to crime. In addition, we were critical of the policy's failure to mention how the presence, use and misuse of firearms can escalate the lethality of situations in which citizens exercise their right to protest, as witnessed at Marikana.

With further input by other government departments, the PCoP, and civil society organisations, the White Paper was finalised by the end of 2015 and is expected to be adopted by Cabinet in early 2016.

White Paper on Safety and Security

While GFSA did not make a written submission on the Safety and Security White Paper, we undertook a process of focused lobbying and advocacy aimed at ensuring that both the Safety and Security and Police White Papers articulated a clear policy position in support of violence prevention as expressed in the National Development Plan (NDP) for a safe and peaceful South Africa; and offered suggestions for ways in which the two White Papers and the Draft Firearms Control Amendment Bill could achieve greater synchronicity and alignment.

The primary focus of the White Paper on Safety and Security is to provide substance and policy direction for building safe communities; yet it made no reference to the complex causal and concurrent factors that lead to violence, with firearm violence and controls receiving only a cursory mention. Through Firearms Control Briefings (see box below) and civil society engagement, GFSA was able to provide both local and global data showing the importance of reducing gun violence as a core intervention for overall violence prevention efforts. As part of this

process, GFSA co-hosted a civil society Dialogue with APCOF, to explore the potential for aligning the two White Papers and the Firearms Control Amendment Bill. Dialogue participants from the gender-based violence sector and community-based organisations were very interested in working more closely on the bigger project of gun violence reduction; essentially exploring ways to break the cycle of violence.

Following further consultations, including another round of presentations to the PCoP by the newly appointed Secretary of the CSP (in September 2015), the White Paper was amended and submitted to the JCPS cluster for finalisation; it is also due to be adopted in 2016.

Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity Bill

Working with a national coalition of women's organisations, GFSA made both national and provincial submissions on the Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity (WEGE) Bill, noting the gendered nature of gun violence, in which men and women experience gun violence differently, and making two key recommendations:

- While the WEGE Bill referred to international agreements to combat gender-based violence, specific South African legislation was not listed. As such GFSA urged that the Bill make reference to existing South African laws especially the FCA, as it contains a number of provisions that protect men and women from gun violence, including prohibiting 'unfit persons' from owning a gun, and giving the police and the courts the power to immediately remove a gun in incidents of domestic violence and to declare a person unfit to own a gun;
- Although the WEGE Bill made provision for equal representation and empowerment in "designated public bodies and designated private bodies," GFSA urged that the Bill explicitly identify which institutions, as well as key positions within these structures must comply, and called for the Firearms Appeal Board and Designated Firearms Officers (DFOs) to be listed.

The WEGE Bill has not yet been signed into law.

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Evaluation

GFSA approached StatsSA to be included in an evaluation process of the data recorded and collated on death certificates; this after GFSA was made aware that StatsSA's mortuary reports were highly inaccurate as a result of data misclassification. In GFSA's submission to the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics evaluation process, we recommended that section 20 (4) of the Inquest Act, which threatens anyone anticipating the findings of an inquest with a fine and/ or imprisonment, be amended – as this limits the recording of data, resulting in misclassification e.g. homicides are classified as accidents. We also made suggestions that additional information on the cause and place of death be recorded.

The CRVS evaluation process is expected to be completed in 2016.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

GFSA is part of a global community that seeks to create a safer world for all. In 2015 we made an input into the review process of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, coordinated by the Global Alliance on Armed Violence (GAAV, a network of 160 members in 60 countries). Resolution 1325, which was adopted unanimously by the United Nations Security Council in 2000, recognises the changing nature of warfare, in which civilians are increasingly targeted, and women continue to be excluded from participation in peace processes. UNSCR 1325 addresses not only the inordinate impact of war on women, but also the pivotal role women should and do play in conflict management, conflict resolution, and sustainable peace.

Parliamentary lobbying and advocacy

In the two years under review, GFSA attended various parliamentary meetings to monitor gun control developments. Two processes were particularly significant to GFSA's work.

Central Firearms Registry turnaround strategy

In November 2010, following a review process by the CSP, a turnaround strategy for the CFR – the police body responsible for firearms control, including record keeping - was developed. In the years that followed, various breakdowns were noted in the CFR's functioning, including backlogs in processing firearm licence applications, apparent lack of data integrity, as well as an alarming number of fraud and corruption incidents.

In August 2014 the PCoP held the first of a series of sessions focusing on the CFR's functioning. GFSA was present at this and subsequent meetings, making a presentation assessing the functioning of the CFR in June 2015, when a special session was held to determine progress on the turnaround strategy and to explore solutions for improved implementation of the firearms licensing regime.

Throughout this engagement GFSA has emphasised the importance of accurate record keeping as a central feature of effective firearms control, providing policy briefings which show international good practice in this regard.

National Firearms Summit

In March 2015 the PCoP and CSP convened a two-day national Firearms Summit to look at ways to reduce the proliferation of firearms in South Africa. The purpose of the Summit was to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to develop a shared understanding and build a broad consensus on the kind of society we want within the context of a regulatory regime of gun control. The two key focus areas included the use of legal and illegal firearms in crime, including examining strategies to reduce the circulation of illegal guns; and exploring the impact of a gun culture on society.



The Summit brought together 150 participants, including policymakers, legislators, government officials, trade unionists, policing personnel, academics and researchers, as well as numerous civil society organisations, which included NGOs working in the social justice arena and in violence prevention, as well as various representatives of the gun owning community.

Although there were divergent views on several aspects related to the efficacy of firearms control in reducing crime, there were also a number of areas of emerging consensus on ways to reduce the proliferation of firearms in South Africa. These provided a useful platform to address firearm-related crime and violence, and GFSA highlighted these in a number of Firearms Control Briefings – see separate box for more information.

As a result of the national Firearms Summit, a CFR Stakeholder Forum (comprising mainly representatives from the firearms fraternity) was established with the purpose of addressing some of the concerns regarding poor service and alleged corruption in the system. GFSA attended these meetings from August 2015 and our role has been one of monitoring progress on the implementation of the CFR turnaround strategy, as well as ensuring that some of the core principles of the law (such as background checks and the renewals system) is not undermined in the interest of adhering to the principles of Batho Pele (Batho Pele, which means 'People First' is a set of service delivery principles that government officials must follow, including being open and transparent and delivering good service to the public). GFSA has succeeded in demonstrating that for the CFR to function effectively, it needs to include civil society organisations whose interest is in dealing with the impact of gun violence on our society.

FIREARMS CONTROL BRIEFINGS



In 2014, GFSA began the Firearms Control Briefings. These succinct, accessible and fully referenced policy briefings covering a range of firearm-related issues are a key tool in helping GFSA influence discussions on gun control by helping to shape the agenda and debate. Over this reporting period 20 Briefings were developed and distributed to key stakeholders working on policy development and implementation. Themes ranged from addressing local issues - such as the killing of police officers, gun use in domestic violence, and the economic costs of gun violence - through to global issues - such as the relevance of the Sustainable Development Goals to gun violence reduction in South Africa and international norms and standards in marking and tracing firearms to prevent loss and theft.

Committee of Inquiry

In mid-2013 the Minister of Police established a Committee of Inquiry into 'Allegations of Improper Practices by Certain Dealers in Firearms & Firearms Training Institutions', which GFSA engaged with – including making both oral and written submissions. In late 2014 GFSA became aware that the Committee's report had been finalised. However, despite numerous attempts to access the report, including instituting Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) applications on the South African Police Service (SAPS) and Parliament (with support from the South African History Archive and the Parliamentary Monitoring Group), we have not been able to obtain a copy. We are hopeful that the findings of this Committee will in some way shape some of the amendments in the 2016 Firearms Control Amendment Bill.

Strategic partnerships to promote safety

A range of innovative and strategic partnerships were entered into in 2014-15 allowing for significant media traction, as well as extending our reach in terms of new voices and new constituencies.

Campaigns

SAFA and the Senzo Meyiwa Gun Control Committee

Bafana-Bafana's Captain Senzo Meyiwa was shot and killed in October 2014. Following so soon after Oscar Pistorius' trial, the media and public interest in how and why gun violence occurs deepened the nation's conversation on the measures needed to reduce gun violence, including increased calls for a gun-free South Africa.

In response to Meyiwa's murder, the South African Football Association (SAFA) established the Senzo Meyiwa Gun Control Committee, which GFSa engaged with at a number of levels: GFSa's Adèle Kirsten spoke at a press conference to launch the Campaign in November 2014; we alerted the Committee to lobbying opportunities, including the March 2015 Firearms Summit (at which the Committee's Chairperson, Advocate Norman Arendse, spoke), as well as the 2015 Firearms Control Amendment Bill, on which the Committee made a submission.

A core call of the Senzo Meyiwa Gun Control Committee is for a national firearms amnesty to be held as a mechanism to mop up illegal guns in South Africa. The call for an amnesty was amplified in mid-2015, to coincide with two events: The International Action Network on Small Arms' (IANSA) global campaign, *Global Action on Gun Violence* (11 to 17 May), as well as International Gun Destruction Day (9 July). During this time SAFA undertook a range of media relations activities to highlight the importance of amnesties and the public destruction of surrendered and surplus weapons.

Although no amnesty was declared, GFSa is confident that this will form part of the approach to strengthening the firearms law in 2016.

INTERNATIONAL GUN DESTRUCTION DAY (9TH JULY)



In 2015 GFSa was invited by the Ministry of Police to witness the destruction of thousands of guns on International Gun Destruction Day at Arcelor Mittal Steel Factory, Vereeniging. GFSa supported the destruction for three reasons: it was an act of solidarity with all those whose lives have been devastated by gun violence as many of the firearms destroyed were used to murder, injure, threaten and intimidate innocent people; it demonstrated South Africa's compliance with international practice regarding the destruction of surplus firearms; and it illustrated the seriousness with which both government and the SAPS regard the problem of firearms, and their intention to gain control over both illegal and legal firearms.

Ban R5 assault weapons in police crowd control

As the SAPS celebrated its 20th anniversary in January 2015, GFSA in partnership with social justice activist organisation amandla.mobi launched a social media campaign to ban the use of R5 rifles in public order policing. The campaign drew on the National Police Commissioner's admission to the Farlam Commission of Inquiry (which was established to investigate the circumstances resulting in 34 miners being shot by police officers at Marikana), that two years after the massacre the SAPS still uses R5 assault rifles for crowd control, a practice described by Cees de Rover, an international policing expert, as "totally unacceptable".

Throughout 2015, GFSA continued working with amandla.mobi to push for the banning of the use of R5 rifles in crowd control.

THE HISTORY OF R5 RIFLES IN SA



A variant of the Israeli Galil assault rifle, the South African manufactured R5 rifle is designed for military use, being capable of both semi-automatic and automatic fire. It has a 35 round detachable magazine and in automatic mode is capable of firing between 600 and 750 rounds per minute. It has an effective range of 500 meters, although it can shoot well beyond this distance.

The R5 was introduced into South African policing in the late 1980's, at the height of Apartheid.

GFSA's campaign with amandla.mobi to have R5 rifles banned for use by police in crowd control is based on the unacceptable notion that a military weapon used to oppress under Apartheid is still in use by police officers controlling crowds in a democratic South Africa.

Remove guns from the home

In 2015 GFSA partnered with Sonke Gender Justice and the Women's Legal Centre (WLC) on a 'Remove Guns and Other Dangerous Weapons from the Home' campaign. Launched on Women's Day (9th August), it extended through to the 16 days of activism against violence against women. Thousands of pamphlets and stickers were distributed across the three organisations' various networks to

- Provide women with information on how both the Domestic Violence Act and the FCA can assist in reducing the risk of violence in the home, thereby showing how the law can save lives;
- Urge the SAPS to take responsibility for implementing the Domestic Violence Act and the FCA and removing dangerous weapons from homes in which domestic violence occurs

Sonke also hung a banner on the outside wall of their Johannesburg offices overlooking the Nelson Mandela Bridge in Braamfontein with the message:



Domestic Violence? You can ask the SAPS and the courts to remove dangerous weapons from your home.

An important aspect of this partnership was the wealth of information and insight into gender-based violence prevention provided by Sonke and the WLC, which enabled GFSA to deepen its message on the gendered nature of gun violence and also expand its reach. As a result, our joint campaign got extensive media coverage.



Sonke Gender Justice banner and sticker

Ad campaign promoting responsible gun ownership

In early 2014, GFSA, in a pro-bono partnership with Y&R Advertising, launched a provocative ad campaign – ‘if your stolen gun was there, so were you’ – consisting of a TV ad and three print adverts.

The two main aims of the campaign were to raise awareness of the link between the legal gun trade and the illegal market; and to reinforce the message of responsible gun ownership. This was creatively achieved by showing that a licensed gun owner remains connected to their gun, even after it is stolen or lost and used by criminals to threaten, injure or even kill others. The adverts included the by-line,



If your stolen gun was there so were you. Eighteen South Africans are shot and killed every day. Take responsibility. Hand in your gun. Visit gfsa.org.za for more information.

In a show of support for responsible gun ownership, the GFSA adverts were publicised across a range of outlets for free. For instance, eTV and eNCA donated R1.5 million of airtime to flight the TV ad, while newspapers across the country printed full colour copies.



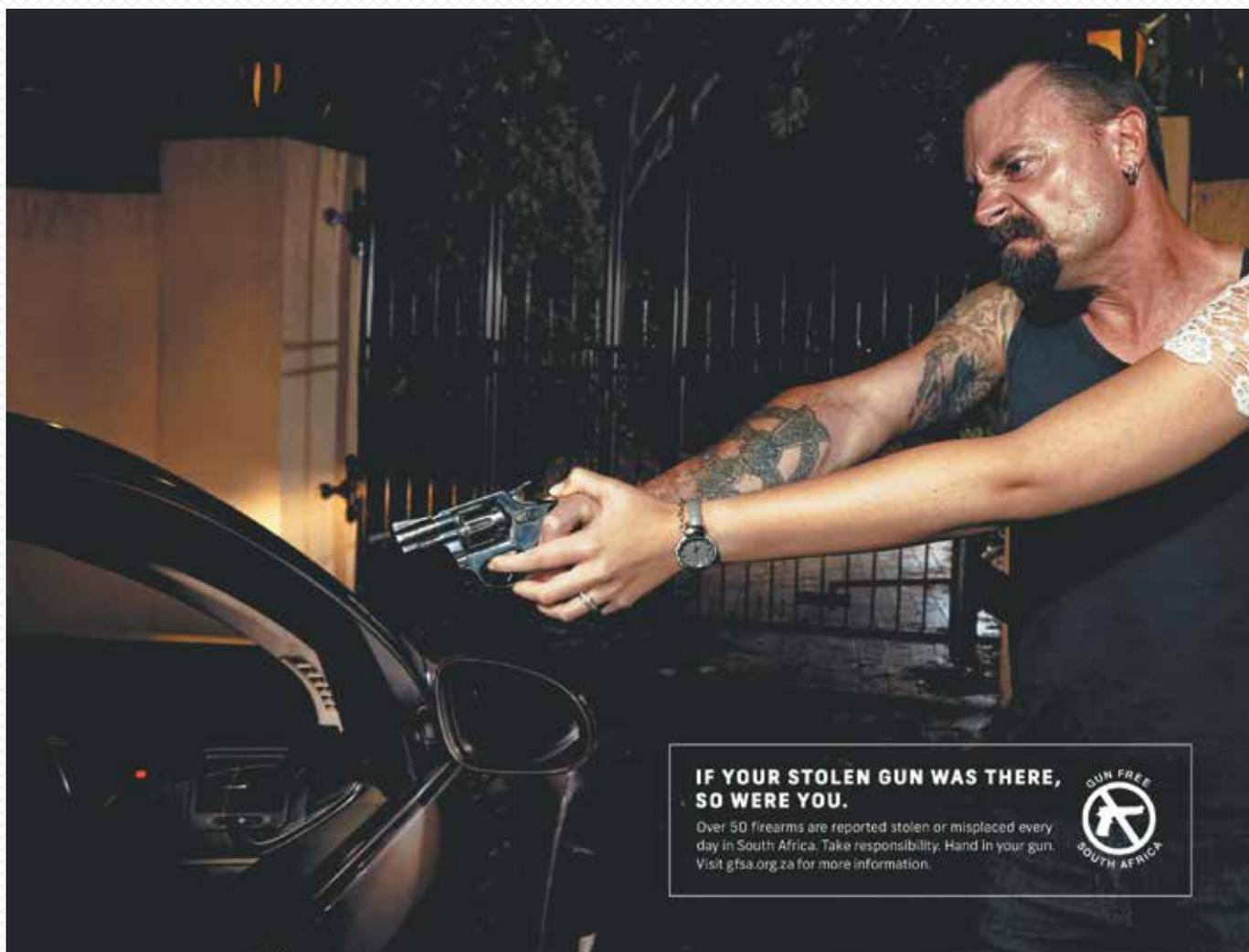
The ad, the gun lobby, and the ASA

A complaint was laid with the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa by a gun lobby group claiming that an advert published in the Sunday Times newspaper violated the ASA's Code of Advertising Practice. Following GFSA's response to this complaint, the ASA Directorate ruled against GFSA's ad campaign. The result was that media could no longer flight the ad.

With the help of our attorneys and advocate (Read Hope Phillips and Howard Varney respectively) GFSA appealed the ruling on the grounds that: GFSA (and by implication, other NGOs) falls outside of the Code's ambit and is thus not bound by it; the ad campaign is an expression of opinion falling under "advocacy advertising" of ASA's Code, which is not subject to the provisions of the Code; and GFSA has a Constitutionally-protected right to freedom of expression, which the Directorate's ruling unlawfully violated. GFSA's Appeal was dismissed by the ASA Standards Committee in November 2014.

Once again GFSA's legal team urged GFSA to appeal the hearing; and in March 2015, the ASA's Final Appeal Committee upheld our appeal, setting an important precedent for NGOs using advertising for advocacy purposes.

GFSA alerted the media and advocacy NGOs to our victory, which resulted in further media coverage and support for the campaign.



Networking

GFSA participated in a range of events during 2014-15, which served both as lobbying and public awareness raising opportunities. Highlights included:

- The South African Democracy Conference at the University of Oxford (April 2014) – at which research published in the American Journal of Public Health showing the impact of the FCA in saving lives was presented to academics, researchers, and national and provincial SA government officials.
- The ISS Fifth International Crime Prevention Conference (August 2014), where GFSA distributed copies of Gun Violence, Disability and Recovery (which was launched in SA in late 2013 in partnership with the Surviving Gun Violence Project).
- The South-South Safety Dialogues meeting in February 2015 in Cape Town organised by APCOF and the Igarapé Institute in Brazil and which included activists and researchers from countries such as Colombia and Kenya.

Seminar

GFSA, in partnership with APCOF and the ISS, held a seminar in Cape Town in November 2015 to present the most recent published research assessing the impact of firearms legislation on gun death rates in South Africa over a ten year period. Presentations by Dr Richard Matzopoulos of the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the University of Cape Town's School of Public Health, and Professor Naeemah Abrahams of the MRC quantified the number of lives saved as a result of the FCA. Matzopoulos calculated that over 4,500 lives were saved in five South African cities over five years, while Abrahams was able to show that the number of women that are shot and killed halved between 1999 and 2009. The seminar was well attended with representatives from NGOs, MPs, economists, faith-based organisations and the gun owning fraternity, giving rise to some robust debate.

Youth workshops

Gun Free Zones (GFZs – see separate box) were GFSA's entry point into Activate! Leadership, a network of young leaders that are given the skills and knowledge through a three year module-based training programme to drive change for the public good across South Africa. In January 2014 GFSA attended a two-day Activate! Leadership Showcase, at which we engaged with over 350 young people from across the country, all of whom are activators for change in their communities. The theme for the Showcase was: Imagining Possibilities! providing a great entry point into imagining a world without guns. GFSA was one of 16 organisations represented during a World Café experience, where we creatively engaged our 100 participants. Using an outline of a dead body, bullet casings and GFZ material, we got each group to talk about gun violence in SA. We then asked group participants to imagine a country without guns; participants' visions of a gun-free SA included an increased sense of trust, security, community, freedom, and economic growth.

Following the success of this engagement, GFSA partnered with Activate! Leadership to host a series of workshops on understanding gun violence and exploring activities for prevention. This was part of Activate! Leadership's celebration of the UN's International Peace Day on 21 September, which was also the one-year anniversary of the death of James Thomas, a founding member of Activate! – who was shot dead in the 2013 al-Shabab attacks at the Westgate mall in Nairobi. GFSA conducted five workshops with Activators and their networks in Benoni, Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Durban and Soshanguve.

The programme for these workshops was based on the unique experience of gun violence each participant had, which was used to map gun violence patterns and trends in their community; participants were then given an opportunity to plan their own campaigns to contribute to building safe communities.

In September 2015 GFSA used the Activate! workshop programme as a basis for a two-day workshop with Africa Unite, which also aimed to empower participants to engage with the law making process. Formed in 2001, Africa Unite aims to build human rights communities by empowering peer educators.

The series of youth-focused workshops have proven extremely beneficial for GFSA, allowing us to enter into the reality of young people and their experience of gun violence, including sharing their ideas for making SA a safer, more secure country; and helping us to establish relationships with youth leaders across SA.

GUN FREE ZONES



Gun Free Zones are an important tool used by GFSA; they create spaces in which people feel safe from violence and help to shift people's attitudes by challenging the idea that guns offer security, thereby helping to reduce the demand for guns. The GFZ tool was included in a new online portal for violence and injury practitioners called SaferSpaces, a digital centre to get information and be inspired on how to reduce violence and support community safety (see www.saferspaces.org.za). Regular updates by both GFSA and SaferSpaces ensure ongoing presence on the site.



Media and public relations

Media relations

In 2014-15, GFSA had at least 300 interactions with the media resulting either from GFSA issuing media statements and writing Op Ed pieces for national weeklies, or media requests for comment on gun violence and its prevention.

Media statements

GFSA proactively shaped the news agenda by issuing over 20 media releases in 2014-15 to alert the media to our activities, including campaigns and events, as well as calls for interventions to improve gun control in SA. In particular, two such calls were widely covered: GFSA's call for a thorough investigation into how firearms handed in by the public during the 2010 national firearms amnesty were found in an arms cache four years later; as well as for a forensic audit of all firearm licences issued since 2010 following various media exposés of fraud and corruption in the gun licensing process.

Opinion pieces

GFSA coordinated the publication of seven opinion pieces; five of which were written by international experts in the field of small arms control and violence prevention. Contributors included Philip Alpers, a policy analyst in the public health effects of gun violence and small arms proliferation; Rebecca Peters from IANSA; Vanessa Farr and Cate Buchanan from the Surviving Gun Violence Project; and Robert Muggah, Research Director at Igarapé Institute in Brazil. In addition, GFSA worked with the Flemish Peace Institute (a parliamentary advisory body based in Brussels) to secure media interviews for Tomas Baum, the Institute's Director, who gave a series of lectures in SA on the impact of gun laws in reducing gun deaths.

Media enquiries

GFSA continues to be seen as an important voice on gun violence and its reduction by the media. Particular moments of interest were around Oscar Pistorius' 2014 trial and sentencing for shooting and killing his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp on Valentine's Day in 2013; the murder of Bafana-Bafana captain Senzo Meyiwa in late October 2014; the 2015 Firearms Summit; and amendments to the FCA.

Public relations

Public enquiries

During 2014-15 GFSA responded to various public queries regarding firearms. While most people requested information on how to get rid of an unwanted firearm (with requests increasing during our 'if your stolen gun was there so were you' campaign), increasingly GFSA is asked to assist women who are threatened by a partner who owns a gun. GFSA has been successful in helping women navigate the declaration of unfitness process and facilitating interaction with relevant SAPS officials.

Materials

A range of materials were developed and printed, including GFSA's 2012-2013 Annual Report, a double-sided A4 pamphlet on GFZs, which was used extensively during the Activate! workshops, and a pamphlet and sticker on removing guns from domestic violence, which were developed in partnership with Sonke Gender Justice and the WLC.

Social media

GFSA uses social media, specifically our website and Twitter to raise public awareness. During the years under review, GFSA continued to update our website and grew our Twitter following, increasingly aiming our messaging to a youth constituency. GFSA's website is a one stop shop for taking action to reduce gun violence and includes a range of resources aimed at preventing gun violence. It also includes a map listing incidents of gun violence reported in the media. While this relies on media reports (rather than actual incidents involving the 18 people that are shot and killed daily in South Africa), the purpose is to give a face and name to some of the people affected by gun violence, to make them 'real' rather than a number, and to raise awareness that no one is immune to gun violence.



Operations and organisational development

Patrons

Pregs Govender, Human Rights Commissioner, joined respected cleric and Nobel Peace Laureate, Desmond Tutu, and founder of GFSA, Rev. Dr. Peter Storey as a patron of GFSA in 2014. An activist against Apartheid since 1974, Pregs was elected to the National Assembly in SA's first democratic election, where she acted as Chairperson of Parliament's Committee on Women. After being the only MP to register opposition to the arms deal in the Defence Budget Vote, Pregs resigned in 2002. In 2009 she was appointed Deputy Chairperson of the South African Human Rights Commission.

Board

GFSA welcomed three new Board members in 2014-15: Ronald Menoe, head of stakeholder management at Corruption Watch, brings knowledge on tracking and preventing corruption to GFSA's Board; Angelica Pino, a human rights lawyer and programme director at Sonke Gender Justice adds a gender lens and community mobilisation skills; and Lewina Rowland, a previous GFSA staff member who is currently working as a secondary school teacher, brings with her knowledge of working with youth and establishing GFZs.

In this time, GFSA also lost two Board members. Having served a five year term (2010 to 2015), both Professor Naeemah Abrahams and Doctor Sebastian van As resigned as Board members in 2015 due to work commitments.

At the end of 2015, GFSA's Board consisted of nine members.

NAME	POSITION ON BOARD	ORGANISATION, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE
<i>Alan Storey</i>	<i>Chair</i>	<i>Methodist Minister, Central Methodist Mission, Cape Town</i>
<i>Felicity Harrison</i>	<i>Vice-Chair</i>	<i>Director, Goedgedacht Forum</i>
<i>Pamela Crowsley</i>	<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Gun violence survivor</i>
<i>Nareshnie Maharaj</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Finance Manager, PACSA (Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action)</i>
<i>Malose Langa</i>	<i>Board Member</i>	<i>Psychologist and lecturer at the School of Community and Human Development, University of Witwatersrand and researcher at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation</i>
<i>Richard Matzopoulos</i>	<i>Board Member</i>	<i>Specialist Scientist, Burden of Disease Research Unit, Medical Research Council</i>
<i>Ronald Menoe</i>	<i>Board Member</i>	<i>Head Stakeholder Management, Corruption Watch</i>
<i>Angelica Pino</i>	<i>Board Member</i>	<i>Programme Director Community Action and Knowledge Management, Sonke Gender Justice</i>
<i>Lewina Rowland</i>	<i>Board Member</i>	<i>Teacher at South Peninsula High School, Cape Town</i>

Staffing

Adèle Kirsten and Claire Taylor were employed as staff members in 2014-15; Adèle was responsible for lobbying and advocacy and Claire for media and public relations and organisational development. Contract and casual staff were appointed as needed throughout the year.

Meetings

In addition to its Annual General Meeting, GFSA's Board met four times in both 2014 and 2015. Due to the fact that Board and staff members are scattered across four provinces, most meetings were conference calls, but each year the Board met face-to-face for GFSA's strategic planning.

Finances

CMDS, which was appointed as GFSA's bookkeeper in 2013, continued to manage GFSA's books until mid-2015, when Focus Financial Services took over this function.

Auditing company, Horwath Zeller Karro, which was appointed as GFSA's auditor at the 2013 AGM, undertook GFSA's 2014 and 2015 audits.

Abbreviated financial report for the period 1 January – 31 December 2014 and 1 January – 31 December 2015

INCOME STATEMENT	2014 (RANDS)	2015 (RANDS)
Total Income	2,364,351	1,676,567
Grants and donations received	2,338,662	1,646,857
Sundry income	11,794	8,030
Interest received	13,895	21,680
Total Expenditure	-2,292,020	-1,642,911
Salaries and consultants	-577,434	-798,161
Project fees	-1,640,244	-771,981
Office administration	-74,342	-72,769
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	72,331	33,656

Accounts for the financial year ending 31 December 2014 and 31 December 2015 audited by Horwath Zeller Karro Registered Auditors.

Audited accounts for the financial year ending 31 December 2014 and 31 December 2015 are available from Gun Free South Africa.

CONCLUSION

2014 and 2015 were exciting years in which GFSA made enormous strides in consolidating our impact and extending our influence. This has largely been as a result of innovative partnerships, which included deepening existing relationships with the potential for long-term ongoing joint campaigning and collaboration on projects, as well as breaking new ground and forging significant relationships with youth-based and youth focused organisations such as Activate! Leadership and Africa Unite.

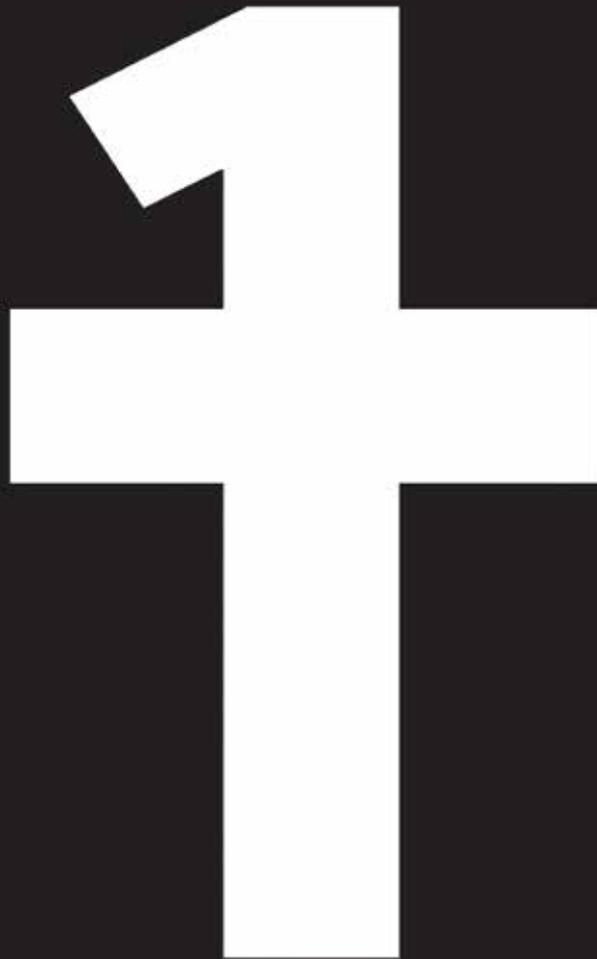
These past two years have also seen a number of strategic shifts for GFSA, one of the most notable being the location of our work on gun violence reduction within the broader scope of violence prevention and community safety efforts in South Africa. This in turn has allowed us to forge new partnerships, thereby reaching new constituencies.

GFSA's primary focus – strengthening the FCA to save lives – will continue into 2016, particularly when amendments to the FCA come before parliament. To do this, GFSA has to grow its capacity and hire additional people, so that it can effectively engage survivors of gun violence – those who live with the daily reality of gun violence, but whose voices are not often heard because they are not seen as stakeholders in the gun control debate as they do not own, use or trade in guns.

Youth are particularly vulnerable to violence, including gun violence. The amendments to the FCA are a unique opportunity to engage and empower young people to raise their voices in the law-making process. To date, GFSA has not had the capacity to fully engage with youth and understand their experiences and perceptions of guns, gun violence and its prevention. A critical area of growth for GFSA in 2016 involves building the organisation's capacity to have these conversations.

In our engagement with the FCA amendment process, GFSA will continue to articulate our vision of a gun-free South Africa. At the same time as lobbying to strengthen our national gun law, we recognise the importance of a phased approach to achieving our vision through adopting short-term goals that can make a significant impact in reducing the circulation of guns in South Africa.

Currently evidence shows that handguns are most often used in gun-related violence in South Africa, including murder, domestic violence, and other violent crimes, as well as suicide. As such, GFSA will continue to work to limit the number of handguns in circulation and remove them from homes as a first step to reducing gun violence and making South Africa a safer country.



Rest In Peace Senzo Robert Meyiwa
1987 - 2014



STOP GUNS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE!

South African women are at risk of becoming victims of gun violence. Many blame this on criminals, but a national study found that **more women (57%) were murdered by their husbands or boyfriends (called intimate femicide) than by strangers.**

Firearms played a major role in these murders, with guns used in 17% of the cases seen.

Guns are often brought out in arguments to threaten a woman into submission. But guns are light, easy to use, and kill easily. Once a gun is present, it can be used in a moment of rage or negligence, and the result can be death or serious disability. Guns can also injure or kill more than one person at a time.

Too often we hear stories of how guns - brought into a home to protect loved ones - are used against the very people they are meant to protect.

A woman must take immediate action if she lives in a home where there is a gun and the gun owner is abusive, depressed or suicidal. If the woman fears that the gun will be used against her or her loved ones. She can ask the court or the police to remove the gun immediately.

REMOVING A GUN

The Domestic Violence Act (DVA) and the Firearms Control Act (FCA) allow the courts or the police to remove guns from abusive gun owners.

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT (DVA)

The DVA allows LOCAL MAGISTRATE'S COURTS to grant interim and permanent protection orders. These are issued against the person using domestic violence, who is called "the respondent". In a protection order, the court orders the respondent to stop the abusive behaviour. Ignoring a protection order, or contravening it, is a criminal offence and the police must intervene if the abuse continues.

The court can also order the police to remove a gun or any other dangerous weapon from the respondent, whether the respondent owns the gun or simply has access to it. The court can make this order as part of an interim, or a final protection order.

The law says the magistrate can do this if:

9 (a) The respondent has threatened or expressed the intention to kill or injure himself or herself, or any other person in the domestic relationship, whether or not this would be with the gun or the dangerous weapon involved.

(b) Possession of the firearm is not in the interests of the victim or any other person in the domestic relationship because of the respondent's -

- i. state of mind or mental condition
- ii. inclination to violence
- iii. use of or dependence on intoxicating liquor or drugs

You have to apply for a protection order at the local magistrate's court. Ask to speak to the domestic violence court clerk for help in understanding and completing the application form. It is very important that the form is written in your words, including your own, full version of events and what order you are asking the court to make. As such, it's best to complete the form yourself. If this isn't possible, the court clerk can complete the form for you. But you should still ask the clerk to read what they have written to ensure that everything is correct. Always ask questions where you do not understand what the words on the form mean.



Any woman who lives in fear of a gun in her home can ask the magistrate's court or the police to remove the gun immediately, even if she doesn't have a protection order against the person threatening her.





Firearms gathered for destruction



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