

G4S served with notice to terminate Mangaung correctional facility contract

Department of Correctional Services (DCS) Minister Ronald Lamola has told Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services that the department has served international security company G4S with a notice to terminate its contract.



Image source: Allan Swart – [123RF.com](https://www.123RF.com)

The company was in contract with the department to run the Mangaung Correctional Facility where rapist and murderer Thabo Bester escaped last year.

“The notice to terminate follows a legal opinion that DCS had sought. It has been deemed that BCC is not suitable to continue with the contract. In line with the concession contract agreement, a termination notice for a period of 90 days has been served to BCC, and thereafter, the contract will cease to operate.

“DCS has already resumed with an internal exercise for the takeover process,” Lamola said.

The Minister told the committee that in the 2021/22 financial year, there were some 22 escapes from correctional facilities across the country.

"We are the first to acknowledge that one escape at our facilities is one too many. We will redouble our security operations to prevent escapes and deal harshly with officials who fail to adhere to Standard Operating Procedures as the National Commissioner acted yesterday in the Mthata management area where there was an escape of two inmates and one has been recaptured.

"Eight officials who were on duty on the date of the escape and did not adhere to standard operating procedures have been suspended," he said.

Meanwhile, police spokesperson Brigadier Athlenda Mathe says at least two more G4S employees have been arrested in connection with Bester's escape from prison.

"The pair will appear before the Bloemfontein Magistrate's Court on Wednesday ... on a charge of assisting an inmate to escape from lawful custody and defeating the ends of justice.

"The team investigating this case have so far arrested eight suspects and cannot rule out the possibility of effecting more arrests," Mathe said.

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