

Chairperson's Report: Financial Year 1 December 2024 – 30 November 2025

Over the past year, a key focus for Onverwag has been the strengthening and upgrading of our camera network. Following the gifting of most of our cameras to the Onrus Vermont Special Rating Area (OVSRA), Onverwag continued to maintain a smaller network that is monitored 24 hours a day. During the year several cameras were replaced with units offering improved capabilities. In line with developments in technology, our new Network Video Recorder (NVR) includes Licence Plate Recognition (LPR) functionality, and an LPR camera has been installed along the R43. This enables us to operate an independent system without relying on the NAVIC platform and allows suspicious vehicles to be flagged more effectively.

The older generation cameras that were returned from the OVSRA were assessed and several may be repurposed in the future. A decision on how best to utilise these cameras will be taken during the coming year.

The safety of Brekvis Bay and the Coastal Path remains an ongoing priority for Onverwag. The monitoring of our camera network has assisted in maintaining oversight of these areas, while the increased visibility of the OVSRA Eco-Patrollers during the festive season has further strengthened safety along the coastal areas.

Safety within the home environment is also an important focus. Many online scams and fraudulent activities occur while individuals are in the perceived safety of their homes. Throughout the year, Onverwag continued to host Cell Savvy workshops aimed at helping residents recognise and respond to these threats by developing the necessary awareness and practical digital safety skills.

Onverwag has also continued to create awareness around the issue of human trafficking. In addition, as part of our Whistle Campaign, whistles were made available to members of the public at no cost, with the initiative promoted through social media to encourage community participation in personal safety.

Onverwag remains an active participant in the Safety and Security Management Team established by the Onrus Vermont Special Rating Area. Communication within this structure takes place through a dedicated WhatsApp group and radio contact with the control room, which operates 24 hours a day.

The radio previously provided to Onverwag by the OVSRA was withdrawn at the end of the five-year tender period. In response, Onverwag entered into a monthly contract with a locally based company for three iTalk radios with dual SIM card capability. This arrangement has strengthened communication between our camera monitoring team, the head of patrols, the Chairperson and the OVSRA control room. However, this contract has added significantly to our annual operating costs.

Under the protocol agreed with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DEFPE) through Marine and Coastal Surveillance (MCS), Onverwag reports all suspected poaching activities observed or reported by members through a secure 24/7 reporting channel. Where possible, the relevant authorities assign resources to act on the information provided.

Throughout the year Onverwag representatives attended the weekly JOCOM Security Meetings hosted by SAPS in Hermanus. Hermanus SAPS is divided into several operational sectors, with Onrus and Vermont forming part of Sector 1. Quarterly meetings are also held with neighbouring

communities such as Hawston and Fisherhaven, providing an opportunity to share information and coordinate responses to security concerns.

Following a home invasion that caused considerable anxiety within the community, SAPS and Onverwag jointly hosted an Imbizo with residents. The purpose of the meeting was to provide clarity on the roles of the various safety and security organisations operating in the area and to address community concerns.

Onverwag continues to support initiatives in neighbouring communities that aim to prevent youth from becoming involved in criminal activity. Donations were made to the Yeboneer Programme run by the Hawston Library at the Thusong Centre during school holidays, the Soli Deo Gloria group in Hawston which offers weekly dance and arts activities, and Seeds for Kids in Zwelihle which provides similar programmes for young people. Support was also provided to the Victim Empowerment Room at SAPS for victims of gender-based violence and children who have experienced abuse. In addition, torches were donated to the Zwelihle Neighbourhood Watch and Community in Blue.

Maintaining visibility within the community remains important. During the year several of our signboards displaying Onverwag contact details required attention. Some were replaced while others were repaired and maintained. We extend our thanks to CCG Electrical and their team for assisting with this work.

Reliable access to electricity remains an important safety concern. Power outages continued throughout the year and, at times, restoration was slow. Onverwag occasionally assisted in escalating issues and ensured that members were kept informed about progress.

Onverwag also has representation on the Ward Committee for Ward 13. Street lighting falls under the municipality's Integrated Development Plan process. Historically, the ward has been able to fund the installation of three streetlights per financial year, generally allocated to recognised hotspots or poorly lit areas. Following the home invasion, some residents approached the municipality directly to request the installation of two streetlights in Petrel Street without wider community consultation. After discussions between the Ward Committee, the municipality and community representatives, it was agreed that future requests for street lighting must be reviewed through the Ward Committee before implementation. To date, Petrel Street has not been identified as a crime hotspot, and the environmental impact of additional lighting within the surrounding green belt area also needs to be considered.

The majority of Onverwag's funds are generated through annual membership fees. During the year the Sage One accounting system improved invoicing and administrative efficiency. We thank members for their continued cooperation in paying their fees timeously and for alerting us to any invoicing errors. When our administrative assistant responsible for invoicing left midway through the year, the Treasurer stepped in to manage invoicing, receipting and budget oversight. Special thanks are due to both the Treasurer and the Membership Secretary for their teamwork during this period.

Our website continues to be updated regularly to ensure that information remains relevant. During the year we also ensured that our website and social media platforms comply with the requirements of the POPI Act.

I would like to thank each committee member who has volunteered their time and energy throughout the year. Their commitment has ensured that Onverwag continues to adapt and respond to the challenges faced by our community.

Onverwag exists because of the continued support of our members, who remain the eyes and ears of the neighbourhood. Your vigilance and participation are greatly appreciated.

Special thanks are extended to the NG Gemeente for allowing us to make use of their facilities, and to our auditors, Pragma Konsult, who for the fourth consecutive year have generously offered their services pro bono. We also acknowledge the ongoing partnership with SAPS Hermanus, the OVSRA and other accredited Neighbourhood Watches in the Overstrand area.

The committee elected in May 2025 comprises Anne Droomer (Chairperson), Eddie Holloway (Vice Chair and Security), Amanda Duberly (Treasurer), Vanessa Sutherland (Secretary), Coenie Groenewald (Patrols), Michelle McHeath (Membership) and Michiel De Kock (Community).

Stay safe.

Anne Droomer
Chairperson, Onverwag Neighbourhood Watch

Appendices

What you should do to prevent falling victim to scams and fraud * issued by SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

- *Never respond to emails or cell phone calls and messages appearing to be from a bank which requests your personal details*
- *Do not respond to emails or cell phone messages requesting that the user clicks on a link which usually directs you to spoofed website*
- *Never provide your online ID, password or PIN to anyone and never write them down or share them*
- *Do not save your internet banking password on your desk top*
- *Do not leave your computer unattended after entering your internet banking password*
- *Always log off at the end of a session*
- *Avoid doing internet banking at public internet cafes or other computer accessed by people you do not know*
- *Change your PIN and password frequently*
- *Put sensible transaction limits on your accounts*
- *Only provide credit card details to reputable companies*
- *Do not pay for something you have not seen*
- *If it too good to be true, it usually is.*

NEVER SEND MONEY OR GIVE CREDIT CARD DETAILS OR ONLINE ACCOUNTS DETAILS TO ANYONE YOU DO NOT KNOW OR TRUST

Signs of Trafficking

LOOK FOR CLUES THAT IDENTIFY A POSSIBLE
VICTIM OF MODERN-DAY SLAVERY.

CONTROLLED BY ANOTHER PERSON

They are accompanied by a controlling person, and do not speak on his or her own behalf, but instead defer to another person.

CONTROLLED MOVEMENT

They are transported to or from work, or live and work at the same place. They show signs that their movements are being controlled.

LACK OF EARNINGS

They are unable to keep his or her earnings: it is “withheld for safekeeping.” In many cases, the person owes a debt they are working to pay off.

FOREIGN, UNFAMILIAR WITH THE LANGUAGE

They have recently arrived in the country and do not speak the language of the country—or they only know sex-related or labor-related words.

OVERLY FEARFUL, DEPRESSED, SUBMISSIVE BEHAVIOR

They are frightened to talk to outsiders and authorities since they are closely monitored and controlled by their trafficker(s). They may be fearful, anxious, depressed, overly submissive, and may avoid eye contact.

BAD HEALTH & MALNUTRITION

They may have signs of abuse or signs of being denied food, water, sleep, and/or medical care.

LACK OF IDENTIFICATION

They are not in possession of their passports, identification, or legal documents.

SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

They may have bruises, scars, and other signs of physical abuse and torture. Victims of human trafficking are often beaten in areas that will not damage their appearance, such as their lower back.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

They may show signs of drug use or drug addiction. They can be forced or coerced into drug use by his or her traffickers, or turn to substance abuse to help cope with his or her enslavement.

LACK OF TRUST

They may be distrustful and suspicious. A victim of human trafficking may act as if they distrust any person who offers them assistance or attempts to converse with them.

LACK OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS

They may have few or no personal possessions.

SIGNS OF DEPENDENCE

They may demonstrate affection, attachment, or dependence toward their abuser.

DECEIVED BY A FALSE JOB OFFER

Their actual job is different from the advertised job they had accepted.

FEELINGS OF BEING TRAPPED

They feel that they are unable to leave their current situation

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