

Cops back in offices

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WITHIN a day the issue that caused the entire Empangeni Crime Intelligence unit to be locked out of their offices was resolved.

Members of the unit arrived at work on Monday morning to find the offices in Property House on Rex Henderson Street locked with a sign on the gate that read, 'These premises have been locked due to non-payment of rental' – by order of the building's management.

The Zululand Observer has established that the cause of the problem was an expired lease agreement and the national Department of Public Works confirmed there was no payment from their offices.

'The non-payment was caused by a lease that expired in December and while the lease was being extended, officials did not effect payment to avoid irregular expenditure,' said public works spokesman, Thami Mchunu.

'The payment has however since been made and the landlord alerted.'

Mchunu said the premises were reopened on Tuesday.

Crime Intelligence units provide vital information that can drive the day-to-day policing of an area.

The units specialise in in-depth investigation and a loss of just one day can set a policing sector back considerably, a police insider told the ZO.


'Owing to the nature of their work, these members also cannot work in any office

other than the one allocated to them,' the policeman said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Empangeni SAPS spokesman Captain Mbongeni Mdlalose also on Monday

confirmed that the King Cetshwayo District cluster commander, Major General Zonde, had stepped in to facilitate a fast solution to the issue.

'He is aware of the problems arising from this particular unit's offices, and will be working hard to resolve the issues and to find sustainable solutions to prevent such a thing from happening again,' Mdlalose said.



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