

Shutdown of all lifts at police station for probe

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ALL the lifts at the Mount Road police station have been shut down after a lift plummeted four storeys there on Wednesday afternoon.

The police station has five lifts, three of which are near the building's main entrance, with two at the side near the barracks.

Yesterday morning, inspectors from the departments of labour and public works were at the station conducting an investigation into what happened.

It remains unknown why the lift's emergency brakes failed and why it fell to the ground floor.

The inspectors said a preliminary investigation showed that no cable had snapped in the lift shaft and that routine monthly maintenance checks had been done.

"An independent report needs to be done. Only then, will we know the cause," an investigator said.

"Clearly something went wrong but what it is we do not know yet."

The eight-storey station houses

various departments, including the Mount Road Cluster head office and station staff, administration and crime intelligence offices.

Seven people – four clerks and three police officials, most of them from the police Criminal Record Centre division – were in the lift when it fell to the ground.

Staff inside the building said they had heard a sound of grinding metal followed by a loud bang.

On impact, the doors of the lift jammed, forcing emergency workers to use crowbars and eventually the jaws of life to force them open.

Bay EMS operations manager Ashwell Botha, who was on the scene, said firefighters and a specialist EMS Rescue Services unit had been called to assist.

"Medical staff climbed into the lift to treat the injured and they were then hoisted out," Botha said.

Provincial police spokeswoman Brigadier Marinda Mills said yesterday three people had been discharged from hospital, with four still in hospital with leg fractures.