

# Vandals cost Prasa R30m

THE torching of trains and other forms of vandalism is so severe that Metrorail's central line, which had 33 trains transporting commuters in Cape Town, is now down to only eight.

The city's rail transport "situation" is the worst in the country, Transport Minister Blade Nzimande said on Friday during a walkabout at Prasa's Paarden Eiland depot, where he viewed the damages to the state-owned enterprise's infrastructure during various arson attacks.

Nzimande, flanked by provincial transport and public works MEC Donald Grant and mayoral committee member for transport and urban development Brett Herron, said all three tiers of government were working together to deal with the vandalism.

Said Nzimande: "Prasa spends a lot of money on security, but to me it looks like we're not getting value for money. It really needs to be addressed, but it's broader than that.

"We need to look short- to medium-term on what needs to be done to secure the trains. Securing it is not just securing this metal, but the people, who use these trains."

In a recent incident, five carriages and overhead power cables were damaged when a train was torched at Retreat Station on Thursday.

Metrorail regional manager Richard Walker confirmed repairing the gutted coaches would cost close to R21 million.

At the Cape Town railway station last Saturday, two coaches were burnt and the platforms' cabling was damaged.

Repairs are expected to total at least R30 million.

- News24

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