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● 14 new recruits officially introduced, but 48 others still desperate for permanent jobs

# Metro in need of additional cops and traffic officers

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In a bid to beef up security and law enforcement in the city, Nelson Mandela Bay officially welcomed and handed over badges to 14 new metro police recruits.

They are part of a group of 97 recruits who went for training in 2020.

But of the group, 48 have been left out in the cold after the metro failed to live up to its promise to permanently employ them.

Metro police commissioner Andrew Moses said the purpose of the unveiling of new re-

cruits was to introduce them to the community and emphasise the role they would play.

Moses said additional assistance to the already thin workforce would be beneficial to the city.

"The members who are currently outside the system could be of great value to the metro and council," he said.

"They are fully trained officers; however, their employment issues are outside my realm.

"But it's well within the council's prerogative to make decisions on such matters."

Moses said people often thought employment offers for young people were an issue of

the metro police, but that they would welcome more officers.

"I understand their [the aggrieved 48] predicament, and the plight of unemployed youth in the bay and province.

"We need them inside the system, but that decision is above my pay grade.

"The city must be engaged to get processes in place so we can get them inside the recruitment process instead of outside," he said.

Safety and security political head Stag Mitchell, who had been in meetings with the group of 48 trained recruits to negotiate salary issues, was a no-show at the event.

He was meant to attend,

according to the media invite. When contacted, he said:

"My admin [staff] told you I had an emergency to attend to and that is my answer to you guys."

Representing the aggrieved group of recruits, Christopher Abrahams said they felt the badging ceremony was a slap in their faces and an event conducted after they had wrapped up negotiating with the city.

"We met with the city manager [Noxolo Nqwazi] and mayor [Gary van Niekerk] on Tuesday, who blatantly told us we were not going to get permanent employment due to money issues."

Abrahams said they were



READY TO SERVE: Nelson Mandela Bay metro police commissioner Andrew Moses conducts an inspection of the 14 new police recruits after they received their badges as law enforcement officers yesterday. Picture: FREDUN ADRIAN

again offered extended public works programme (EPWP) contracts and salary increments with no indication of how much it would be.

"We have another meeting with them on Friday and by then we will have to make a decision on what we will do with this offer, but right now everyone is demoralised and heartbroken."

Addressing the new recruits, Moses said they would bring the change the city needed by turning the tide on rampant crime.

"Our mandate is to support the SAPS, traffic services and this municipality by enforcing its bylaws.

"One of the key aspects of the courses you did is adhering to the oath you pledged and I

now instruct you to serve mankind."

New metro police officer Constable Buhle Tembeni said she was privileged and honoured to serve the community.

"I am passionate about serving the community.

"I want to make a difference in any way I can. I am so grateful for the opportunity I have been given

to do just that." Another recruit, Constable Jermaine Persent, acknowledged that many were yearning to receive the same opportunity to become an officer.

"I have been given an opportunity that many others are seeking and because of this I have a duty to my community to be the best I can be," Persent said.