

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 12 JULY 2017**

**RE: POLICE OFFICER AND SON SENTENCED FOR LIVESTOCK THEFT**

On Monday, 10 July 2017, the Mthatha Regional Court sentenced Tamsanqa Maqungu (44) and his son Khaya Maqungu (19) to three years imprisonment after they were convicted of stealing 12 sheep from an elderly farmer.

According to evidence presented in court, Maqungu, a Warrant Officer based in the Crime Prevention Unit in Knysna in the Western Cape, and his son stole the sheep from a communal grazing field near Centuli village in the Bityi area near Mthatha on 10 July 2013. With the assistance of his son and his herdsman, they took the sheep to his kraal and replaced the identification marks of the legal owner of the sheep with his. He slaughtered one sheep and returned to his place of work after two days.

One of the sheep returned to the home of the rightful owner, 70-year-old Buyelele Sokhetye, who noticed that the identification marks had been replaced. He traced the owner of the new identification mark to Maqungu's home where he found his other ten sheep and reported the matter to the police. Maqungu's herder, who became the state witness, revealed that the policeman was behind the theft and had slaughtered one sheep because he was craving the liver of the sheep.

During trial, Maqungu and his son maintained their innocence claiming that the herdsman was the thief. However, Regional Court Prosecutor, Siphso Sintwa managed to convince the court that the father and son were guilty as charged. Citing the prevalence of livestock theft in the Bityi area and the fact that the policeman had committed the offence out of greed, the state prayed for a custodial sentence, which was granted.

The NPA welcomes the sentence with the hope that it sends a strong message that livestock theft is a serious crime which has a direct effect to the rural communities' economic wellbeing and has to be punished for harshly.

Kind Regards,

Justice in our society, so that people can live in freedom and security

**Luxolo Tyali**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP Mthatha**

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