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Call Centre: 0861 647746

*call one*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Early successes for SACMEC Call Centre**

The South African Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (SACMEC) call centre is located in Sunninghill, Johannesburg and the number is 0861 MISSING (0861-647746).

The call centre receives calls and aids in the reporting of missing persons and directs people to their nearest police station. At the South African Police Services' (SAPS) Client Service Centre identifying characteristics of the missing or unknown person are recorded on a SAP55 form to begin the search process.

This information must however, be made available as soon as possible to the general community, in order for them to help in the search for the missing person. This will be achieved by receiving information at the call centre from the public and relaying this information to the investigation official, at SAPS, and or case managers appointed by SACMEC. In traumatic and emotional cases the call centre can also assist in directing the public to experts in trauma counseling and other related services.

According to Captain Fanie van Deventer who heads up the Bureau for Missing Persons (BMP) and recently appointed President of SACMEC:

“This call centre is currently running with one person due to an extreme shortage of funds. By using call forwarding from the call centre number we ensure that in effect, there is 24-hour availability, and follow up can then commence immediately. Obviously this is far from an ideal situation and the launch of SACMEC will aim to obtain additional funding to appoint more people in the future”.

*more*



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*call two last*

The future plans from SACMEC include a number of projects aimed at raising additional funding to appoint more people so that a 24 hour availability of personnel at the call centre is achieved.

The branding of the call centre number will generate awareness and visibility with the public to facilitate the reporting process.

“Prior to the launch, in a trial period recently undertaken using a standard land line number, following promotional activity on SABC 1, there was an overwhelming response from the public with between fifty or sixty calls daily being received, some as late as 23:00 at night. Of the twelve children featured, three were successfully found in a short space of time due to the visibility and tremendous participation from the community” said Captain Fanie van Deventer.

SACMEC has appealed to the public or business community for any support whether financial or in kind.

*ends*

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