

## Assessing the South African Police Service in crowd management

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### Abstract

Crowd management functions have challenges to Public Order Policing (POP) members hence in their functions have to balance the constitutional rights of different parties. A qualitative research design was adopted to investigate crowd management by POP members. The data was collected through semi-structured, focus group with a total of three focus groups (6 members in each) comprising of POP members in Rosslyn, Pretoria. Findings indicated that the role of POP units is to maintain law and order, disperse crowds, monitor crowds, and protect human rights. The findings further indicated that POP units play a role in crowd dispersal when the event is over or when the crowd turns violent. Although POP members play an important role in crowd control there are still challenges when performing these functions. Finally, POP member's experiences were obtained to make recommendations for future crowd management functions.

**Keywords:** South African Police Service, crowd management, crowd control, public disorder, mass demonstration, protests.

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