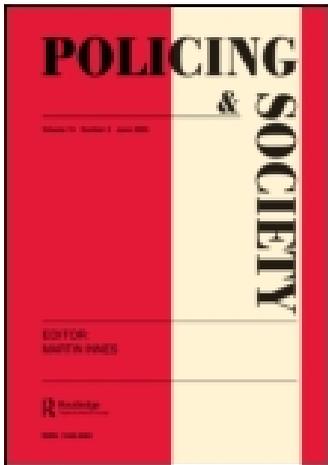


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Publisher: Routledge

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Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/gpas20>

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Published online: 09 Dec 2013.

To cite this article: Tessa Diphorn & Julie Berg (2014) Typologies of partnership policing: case studies from urban South Africa, *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy*, 24:4, 425-442, DOI: [10.1080/10439463.2013.864500](https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2013.864500)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2013.864500>

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Typologies of partnership policing: case studies from urban South Africa

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(Received 22 November 2012; accepted 13 October 2013)

In the contemporary pluralised landscape of policing, partnerships between public and private policing bodies are often the norm, rather than the exception. This is particularly the case for South Africa, where partnering between the state police and private security industry has a long history. Through focusing on different types of partnerships between the state police and the private security industry in urban South Africa, this article shows that the generally applied ‘junior-partner’ model does not reflect the complexity and diversity of public–private policing partnerships. Through an analysis of unstructured and structured interactions between private security officers and police officers in different operational settings in three South African cities (Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban), this article shows how various forms of partnering – ranging from competitive and collaborative – simultaneously take place due to a range of different factors, such as the nature of information-sharing, personal perceptions and networks. This article thereby emphasises the diversity of partnering in contemporary urban South Africa that often maintains *and* challenges the ‘junior-partner’ model.

Keywords: policing; public–private partnering; urban; private security; South Africa

Introduction

The exponential growth of private security worldwide has unleashed debates across disciplines concerning state sovereignty, legitimacy and authority in the policing domain. What does it mean for the state when private security officers greatly outnumber police officers? In the increasing pluralised landscape of policing, what types of relationships and partnerships are created between these two policing bodies?

In analysing the partnering between public and private policing bodies, the majority of the literature employs a model that emphasises either a competitive or collaborative relationship. Either private security companies assist the police by functioning as their eyes and ears and supporting the public agenda, or a competitive and perhaps hostile relationship emerges, where the private security sector encroaches on the state police’s domain. Rather than following such a model with two opposing routes, this paper argues that various types of partnering simultaneously take place in urban South Africa that contain both collaborative and competitive dimensions. By focusing on different types of partnering, both ad hoc and structured, in three different urban centres in South Africa, this paper explores the factors that shape the various manifestations of partnering and thus

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the relationships developed on the ground between the private security industry and the state police.

The first section of this article presents a brief overview of the existing literature on public–private partnering that generally employs the ‘junior-partner’ model. The second section discusses the methodology and how the authors collected their data. The third section provides an historical sketch of public–private partnering in South Africa to show the changes, particularly regarding the strategy of the South African state, in public–private partnering. The fourth section focuses on ad hoc and unstructured interactions between the armed response sector, a particular sector of the private security industry, and the state police, and shows how personal perceptions and networks determine the nature of partnering. The fifth section focuses on structured and sustainable interactions within City Improvement Districts (CID) to show how information sharing, coordination, and the nature of the client shape the types of partnering. This section will show that partnering is based on the routinisation of contact as well as mutual benefit. This article ends with some concluding remarks through a brief comparison of the two case studies.

Partnering in policing: the ‘junior-partner’ model

The existing literature argues that partnering between the private security industry and the state police can take various forms, with competition and cooperation as the two predominant modes of interaction. In 1989, Stenning identified six different stages that have also been identified in other studies, which commonly occur between public and private policing bodies. The first stage is outright denial and a refusal on behalf of the public police to acknowledge the existence of private policing, followed by the second stage of grudging recognition and denigration. The third stage is characterised by competition and open hostility where police officers feel threatened by the growth of the industry that is encroaching on their core activities. The fourth stage focuses on an increase in control, primarily through legislative regulation models.

The fifth stage is *active partnership*, both officially and unofficially, that contains a strict hierarchical structure and is coined as the ‘junior-partner’ model (Jones and Newburn 1998). Such a partnership assumes that the public police are the ‘senior’ partners and the private policing bodies are the ‘junior’ partners ‘whose role is to give the public police whatever assistance they can to help them do the job of “real policing”’ (Stenning 1989, p. 180). Numerous empirically based studies have identified this ‘junior-partner’ model, in South Africa and elsewhere (McManus 1995, Rigakos 2002, Wakefield 2003, Berg 2004a, 2004b, Nalla and Hwang 2006, Button 2007). Both parties generally welcome this ‘junior-partner’ model, particularly the private security industry. Private security officers are generally enthusiastic about joint efforts and increased cooperation with the police (Wakefield 2003, Berg 2004a, 2004b, Nalla and Hwang 2006, Manzo 2009). Hummer and Nalla (2003) argue that security professionals are more positive towards working with police officers, that they hold the police in high regard, that they value ongoing partnerships and that they propose more cooperation.

Although Stenning (1989) thoroughly describes why a ‘junior-partner’ model is beneficial for both parties, he advocates for an *equal partnership* without hierarchy, which is the sixth stage and is supported by Shearing (1992). This perspective entails a pluralist model of policing consisting of cooperative efforts with various governing entities co-existing with equal status. However, authors such as Hummer and Nalla (2003, p. 89) criticise Shearing’s proposition of a pluralist model as it ‘inherently assumes clear

lines of distinction between the roles and functions of public and private sectors', which are actually blurry. Hummer and Nalla (2003, p. 95) make a plea for a cryptic model that involves numerous partnerships where 'the ultimate responsibility of upholding statute remains state-centered'. Similarly, Singh and Kempa (2007) have found, in a study of private security in South Africa, that the occupational cultures of the two sectors have aligned, with both sectors exhibiting strategies of policing, which are more punitive and militaristic, reaffirming the blurring of roles.

In reference to Ericson and Haggerty's (1997) conception of police officers as 'knowledge brokers', this framework sees police officers at the centre of the hub between various policing agents. Loader and Walker (2004, p. 225) argue that it is the state that 'structures the security network both in its presence and in its absence, both in its explicit directions and in its implicit permissions'. Crawford (2006, p. 137) argues that the state must constitute 'more than "one node among many"' and that public providers must function as coordinators and facilitators. Despite the pluralised landscape of policing, state-centred approaches, which propose a more dominant role of the state in the nodal framework of security governance, continue to reign in understanding public-private partnering.

The 'junior-partner' model thus functions as the core framework in understanding public-private partnering. When analysing the range of different factors that determine the nature of public-private partnerships, such as the sharing of information/crime intelligence and resources, organising joint operations, shared police mentality, and social networks/capital, these are framed and analysed in their potential position within the 'junior-partner' model (Jones and Newburn 1998, Berg 2004a, 2004b, Nalla and Hwang 2006). This article aims to move beyond this model and argue that various factors, such as the sharing of information and personal perceptions and networks, lead to multifaceted forms of partnering that are not encapsulated within the 'junior-partner' model. Furthermore, this article, unlike that of Stenning (1989), primarily focuses on the perceptions of private security personnel and how they experience the various forms of partnering.

Methods

To investigate the nature of partnership policing, the authors collected data from three South African cities. The first author, Tessa Diphorn, conducted 20 months of ethnographic fieldwork in Durban, South Africa, between 2008 and 2010 and focused on a specific sector of the industry – the armed response sector. In addition to practical issues, such as access, this sector was primarily chosen due to the nature of security provision: this sector concerns armed men who patrol the streets and frequently enter the public domain, as will be discussed later. Additionally, the armed response sector is one of the largest growing sectors of the industry, with expected growth rates due to continuous technological progress, a steady demand for armed response and an increase in both formal and informal partnerships with police officers and community initiatives.

Although Diphorn frequented several companies and interviewed the owners of more than 20, 4 companies were selected for in-depth analysis and they reflect the diversity of the industry. The first is a large and internationally owned company that operates globally. The second is a large Durban-based company that operates solely in Durban. The third and fourth are small, community-based companies: one operates in an affluent, predominantly white area, while the other operates in a former Indian township

on the outskirts of the city. Although these four companies served a range of clients, Diphoorn focused on residential security, i.e. households.

Diphoorn employed a range of qualitative research methods. The main method was participant observation, which entailed accompanying the armed reaction officers during their day and night shifts. She spent approximately 750 hours with armed response officers in their vehicles and regularly 'hung out' at the company offices and interviewed various individuals about armed response. Diphoorn conducted a total of 167 semi-structured industry personnel as well as informal interviews (that generated the majority of the data). She also conducted focus group discussions, gathered life histories of individuals working in the industry and analysed a substantial amount of data, such as employee contracts.

The second author, Julie Berg, conducted research on private security and/or CIDs in 2002, 2006, 2007 and 2010 in the greater Cape Town and Johannesburg areas. A selection of six CIDs within Cape Town was selected as case studies to explore plural policing arrangements. A qualitative approach was adopted and research methods chosen to elicit information on the phenomenon in an exploratory way. Thus, Berg conducted 47 open, in-depth interviews supplemented by participant and non-participant observation. The in-depth interviews involved participants from local, small- and medium-sized private security companies as well as large, international private security companies (all focused primarily on guarding as their main function). In-depth interviews were also conducted with representatives from the government, business, trade unions, the community and CID managing bodies.

Participant observation and non-participant/direct observation were methods used to supplement the in-depth interviewing. Participant observation involved a 'ride-along' with a private security company, and attendance at a variety of public security forums (for instance, a Community Police Forum) and private security industry Security Association meetings and events. Non-participant/direct observation involved observing the activities of CID security governance in public spaces (streets of the CIDs themselves), such as actual foot and street patrols as well as the effects of CID governance (beautification projects, cleansing efforts and so forth). Attendance at the aforementioned events and the street-level observations were conducted on an ad hoc basis throughout the duration of the research (rather than a sustained and systematic process of observation). A large range of documents was analysed for the dual purposes of eliciting factual data and unpacking authors' and others' meanings or understandings of CIDs and the nodes within them. This included, for instance, legislation and policy, budget and other speeches, annual reports, constitutions, court cases, workshop reports, minutes of meetings, brochures and pamphlets, newspaper articles and websites (of CID and private security companies, for instance). This article, thus, includes detailed empirical data obtained through qualitative research methods from the three largest urban centres in South Africa over an extensive period of time.

South Africa: 'partnership policing'

South Africa has been chosen as an appropriate site to engage with the issue of public-private policing as the private security industry is valued at approximately 2% of the total GDP of the country, which, it is claimed, is the largest worldwide (Abrahamsen and Williams 2011). The annual report of 2010/2011 compiled by the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA), the pseudo-state body with the mandate to

monitor and regulate the industry, accounts for 8828 registered private security businesses, a growth of 17.77% since the previous year (although the number of businesses has been fluctuating over the years mainly due to mergers and market consolidation). The number of active registered private security officers for the same time period was 411,109, an increase of 5.13% since the previous year and a steady, but huge increase of 256.46% since 1997. Notwithstanding the limitations of comparing private security with public police forces, the authors calculate the current ratio of private security personnel to South Africa Police Service (SAPS) uniformed personnel to be approximately 3:1.

Partnering between the private security industry and the state police in South Africa stems from the apartheid era. The private security industry began to grow exponentially from the mid-1970s, with estimates that it was valued at around US13 million dollars in 1978, which rose to US58 million dollars in 1986 (Grant 1989). This growth is understandable, considering the violence and political turmoil characteristic of the states of emergency in apartheid South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. The apartheid state invested heavily in maintaining the system of segregation and the state police (the then South African Police Force) focused more on maintaining political control than on conventional policing. This created a need for supplementary manpower that would not deplete state resources and this was predominantly supplied from the crime prevention sector, such as guarding (Shaw 2002, Singh 2008). Through various changes in legislation, certain tasks that had previously been under the command of the state police were 'handed over' to the private sector, which also led to further professionalisation of the industry to promote its supportive role (Grant 1989, Brogden and Shearing 1993, Irish 1999, Shaw 2002, Singh 2008).

One of the main changes in legislation was the establishment of the National Key Points Act (NKPA) 102 of 1980, which entailed that companies were recruited to secure national key points – sites of strategic importance for national security (such as military bases and power stations). The NKPA placed private security companies under the mandate of the National Defence Force (Mehta 1990), granted security personnel the powers of arrest and search and seizure, and led to further paramilitarisation and specialisation of the companies involved (Grant 1989). This had a ripple effect across the industry as clients began to expect the same levels of professionalism and mandated powers.

The NKPA was the kick off to future working relationships between the industry and the apartheid state, such as the establishment of the Security Officers Act of 1987 and corresponding Security Officers Board that monitored and regulated the employees of the industry. The Security Officers Act was 'a framework for the extension of the network of a state-corporate "partnership" policing further into civil society' (Brogden and Shearing 1993, p. 72). As partnering increased, the 'old boys' network' manifested, referring to a group of white men operating within the industry and the apartheid armed forces (Singh 2008). It functioned as a club where 'membership was exclusive and largely restricted at the administrative levels to those with police, intelligence and military backgrounds' (Singh 2008, p. 43). The private security industry increasingly functioned as a complementary body to the apartheid state (Shaw 2002, p. 111).

South Africa's political transition implied a complete transformation of South African society, including the governance and provision of security. Through a mandate centred on 'community policing', the transformation intended to eliminate the reputation and role of the police from the instrument of state oppression against a non-white majority,

towards a community-friendly force serving all South Africans (Shaw 2002, Marks 2005, Minnaar 2005, Singh 2008). As an inherent part of this transformation and liberalisation of crime management, the SAPS incorporated a 'more managerialist approach' (Berg 2004b, p. 227), such as changing its name from a police 'force' to a police 'service'. The private security industry also attempted to reinvent itself in the 1990s from a 'club to a business' (Singh 2008, p. 43) in light of new security challenges and as an attempt to distance itself from past associations with the apartheid state.

The envisioned transformation of the post-apartheid state was outlined in the National Crime Prevention Strategy of 1996 and in the 1998 White Paper on Safety and Security. The NCPS envisioned a 'multi-agency approach' (Singh 2008, p. 14) whereby state bodies would work alongside other partners, such as community members, business entities and the private security industry, to combat crime. However, the vision of partnership policing was 'only to be established on the SAPS' terms, i.e. strongly controlled and directed by police managers at police station level' (Minnaar 2005, p. 89). Partnering implied that 'the SAPS "runs the show"' (Berg 2004a, p. 113) and that the private security industry function as the 'eyes and ears' to assist and play an 'adjunct role' (Manzo 2009, p. 8). The South African state thus envisioned their multi-agency approach along the lines of the 'junior-partner' model.

The private security industry has generally welcomed the idea of establishing official partnership with the state. However, the industry has mainly faced frustration with lack of state response to their calls for assistance. In 1996, a submission was made by the private security industry to the SAPS Task Team on Partnership Policing, requesting the extension of powers to security officers (Minnaar 2004). Repeated calls by previous and current Ministers of Safety and Security (now Ministers of Police) calling on private security to partner with the state in crime-fighting endeavours have further given attention to the potential of the security industry (Roelf 2008). In light of the lack of success in allowing private security more powers, the shift has been on formalising partnerships so as to grant private security the support they need from the state police to effect arrests and for the state to mobilise the capacities of the private sector to fulfill its own objectives.¹

However, apart from ad hoc instances of close collaboration between private security and the state police (Minnaar 2004), there is, as yet, no state policy on official formalisation of private-public partnership policing in South Africa. The result has been the emergence of area- or municipal-based projects to enhance cooperation between private and public policing bodies. Numerous police stations have also set up official gatherings, often known as Ground Operational Co-Ordinating Committee or Extended Station Crime Combating Forum meetings, where certain interested partners, such as members of the private security industry and community policing forums, are invited to attend. Yet, these initiatives are not uniform, operate differently per area and often include members of higher authority from both sides, such as station commanders and owners/managers of private security companies. The result is that these initiatives and their potential fruits do not always trickle down to the level of operations.

The following sections explore several unstructured and structured relations occurring in urban spaces in South Africa. The first section addresses the relationships between armed response officers, a specific type of private security officers, and police officers that emerge from ad hoc and on-the-ground interactions. The second section reviews interactions between various state and non-state role players that are characterised by proactive, sustained and structured interaction through CIDs.

Meeting on the street: unstructured and ad hoc encounters

The armed response sector

The armed response (also known as armed reaction) sector emerged in the 1980s and accounted for 2836 security providers in 2011 (PSIRA Annual Report). The term 'armed reaction' refers to armed private security officers who respond to sources of distress, such as alarms and panic buttons. Diphooorn did not encounter one female armed reaction officer: this is clearly a male-dominated security domain. Armed reaction officers operate from a vehicle and are steered by a control room that receives and diverts sources of distress. The armed reaction sector thus involves three core components: the alarm installation and maintenance (sales agents and technicians); the reception and coding of the signal (the control room); and the provision of security (the armed response officers).

The armed response sector originally intended to provide assistance to clients in privately owned spaces, both commercial and residential. Although this is still their prime mandate, armed response officers are increasingly performing policing duties in public spaces. This expansion is due to three main factors. The first derives from the mounting competitive nature of industry that is described as 'saturated' and 'cut-throat', forcing companies to continuously seek out new clients. One of the results of this has been the provision of additional services to clients, such as escorting clients to their residences, and assisting non-clients in public spaces in the hope to acquire them as new clients. The second factor originates with clients who are increasingly demanding armed response officers to do more. The growth of collective clients (such as neighbourhood watches) employing armed response companies to patrol their streets (i.e. open public spaces) has further pushed armed response officers into the public domain. The third factor comes from police officers who increasingly seek out and request armed response officers to assist them in apprehending criminals and gathering crime intelligence. The following section will discuss this third factor and analyse several factors that influence the daily encounters between police officers and armed response officers. The claim made here is that the relationships between these two policing bodies are primarily steered by personal relationships and are thereby simultaneously competitive and collaborative; they sometimes adhere to the envisioned 'junior-partner' model, and at other times they do not.

Wanna-be policemen

Armed response officers and police officers share many of the same predicaments and sentiments in their line of work: a lack of power to combat crime, a lack of appreciation and inability to please the public, the fear of facing legal proceedings, and numerous occupational hazards and risks. Due to this shared policing mentality, police officers often state things such as 'we can use all the help we can get', where the assistance of other armed bodies is valued. But more importantly, as one police officer stated: 'We're fighting the same war, the war on crime!'² This shared mentality leads to a relationship of appreciation and checking up on one another, such as police officers driving by private security officers and questioning them about relevant crime information.

Yet, a shared mentality can also lead to friction. As the demarcation line between the policing bodies intersects on numerous occasions and thus becomes increasingly blurry, encroachment can lead to hostility and competition. As mentioned, private security officers are often more willing to create partnerships, yet they often feel that this is not mutual and that the sharing process is not reciprocal. Common statements such as 'we are

always on the scene before them' and 'we arrest the bad guys for them' indicate how armed response officers place value upon the work they do for police officers and how they feel that police officers do not realise that their role is indispensable. This confirms what Singh and Kempa (2007) have found with respect to the fact that private security officers in South Africa are eliciting roles traditionally associated with the state police, such as a law enforcement role.

This eagerness to assist the police predominantly derives from the 'wanna-be' culture that is frequently ascribed to the private security occupational culture (Rigakos 2002, Wakefield 2003, Manzo 2009). As many armed response officers initially wanted to be policemen, or are managed by former policeman and former members of the South African Defence Force, they often thrive on incidents where they can do more than patrol. Common statements such as 'we are policemen, we just don't do all of the boring paperwork' and 'we are policemen, we do a big part of it' highlight this mentality. However, it is also this 'wanna-be' mentality that creates friction. Police officers often feel offended to be compared to armed response officers, highlighting that they 'are the law' and 'have the law'. Despite a potential shared mentality and united purpose, a need to differentiate oneself from the other remains.

Furthermore, police officers often feel threatened and experience the armed response sector as obstructive when armed response officers step over the supportive role and do not fit the envisioned junior role. One of the main sources of this concerns withholding and/or refusing to share crime intelligence. Private security companies have a certain degree of control over the flow of information to the police (Shearing *et al.* 1980, p. 197–198). Station commanders often claimed that private security companies refused to share their crime records yet demanded that the SAPS share theirs. The following statement of an owner of an armed response company highlights this as well:

There is a lot of crime that goes on, without the SAPS even knowing the slightest thing about it. Crime statistics provided by the police aren't complete, because clients don't always report things. But we have this information, in our records. In some areas, we know more about what's going on. (Interview: Durban, 26 August 2010)

Profit versus protection

Besides withholding information, police officers frequently accuse private security personnel of providing false information to consolidate the poor reputation of the police. Many police officers mentioned how companies deliberately make the police look bad in order to maintain a perceived need for private security, as is shown by the following quote from a police officer:

These guys, when they come to a client's house and there was a break in, something was stolen, or what not, they often tell them [the client] not to phone us, they say we'll never come or that there's no point. They make us look bad – now how can we work with some like that? And trust them to have our back? (Interview: Durban, 12 May 2010)

One such incident occurred in Durban in February 2009 when two armed response officers responded to a client's premises after a hijacking had occurred just outside their house. While waiting for the police, the two armed response officers complained about the long wait for the police, in front of and with the clients. A discussion between the clients and armed response officers emerged that openly criticised the police, so when the

police arrived approximately 45 minutes later, the situation was rather tense. The police were shocked to hear that there had been a hijacking, as they had been informed that it was a case of vehicle theft. A hijacking implies that the owner or driver of the vehicle is inside when stolen, and, thus, a potential victim, whilst vehicle theft implies that no one was present. Hijackings are thus prioritised over vehicle theft. The policemen became openly frustrated and a rather tense quarrel between the police and armed response officers erupted. The armed response officers were blamed for being stupid, not doing their job properly, and misinforming the police. The police officers then encouraged the client to report the case. When the police left, annoyed, the armed response officers told the client that the police officers had lied, that their control room was not to blame, and that the police used it as an excuse to justify their late arrival. Additionally, the armed response officers discouraged the client to report the case, saying it was ‘a total waste of time’.

This case depicts a division of labour in dealing with incidents of crime: the armed response officers respond to the place where the crime occurred and then ‘hand over’ the incident to the police. It depicts a process of acknowledged hierarchy and division of labour. However, as the information was not sufficiently shared – either due to accidental or deliberate miscommunication – suspicions and accusations created a rather hostile encounter. When interviewing these same police officers a few weeks later, they claimed that the company in question purposely provided false information to maintain the perception that their private security services are indispensable and that the state police is inefficient. When probing further, it became clear that these accusations were solely directed towards this particular armed response company due to similar incidents that had occurred in the past. More specifically, there had been antagonistic interactions between one of the police officers and one of the armed response officers in question. Therefore, the hostile encounter of this incident was largely steered by personal vendettas, which was fuelled by the miscommunication of information.

Private security companies (and officers) are also often accused of focusing on the client’s needs, rather than that of the public, as a low-ranking police officer indicated:

For them it’s all about the client. Now if they hear about an armed robbery, or anything like that, and even if they know the client is okay, because he phoned in, what these guys do – they go straight to the client, but don’t think: hey, these guys could be driving around somewhere, let me see if I can find them. That’s how a cop thinks. And this frustrates us, many guys get away, we never catch them. (Interview: Durban, 21 April 2010)

Due to this (presumed) consumer focus, members of the industry are often not seen as real ‘crime fighters’, particularly those in management level. A frequently heard statement, ‘They make money out of crime, we fight to get rid of crime’, highlights the way police officers differentiate themselves and perceive to have divergent goals. Furthermore, police officers often feel that private security companies seek cooperation as a marketing strategy to heighten their accountability towards the public. Goold *et al.* (2010, p. 15) argue that a connection to the state is ‘used as a marketing tool- borrowing, as it were, the symbolic power of the police as a means to enrol customers and boost sales’. On the other hand, private security companies often feel ‘used’ by the police for financial benefits. Many industry members expressed that they were often used for ‘the money’ and the ‘fast cars’ and threatened if they did not comply, as the following statement from an owner of an armed response company elucidates:

We avoid the police, too many long stories. When they help you, they expect something. I try to operate my business in the way we do it and leave the police out of it, because they either try to take your money or just make everything much more complicated. Police help never comes for free, there's always a catch, and sometimes it bites. (Interview: 26 August 2010)

They're a bunch of criminals

Such accusations are fuelled by the potential use of force and allegations of corruption, a dimension that is often ignored in the literature. 'They're a bunch of criminals' is a statement used by both parties towards the other and amongst each other.

The SAPS generally has a negative reputation among the South African public, and, as citizens, many armed response officers share public perceptions of the police as corrupt, understaffed and inefficient. On the one hand, their perceptions of the police are more positive than those of the general public, because they do similar work and face comparable challenges. On the other hand, their views are more negative when they witness corruption and other police failings firsthand and experience this as an impediment to their own work. Armed response officers often described the police as exceptionally corrupt and gave numerous examples of cases where they had arrested suspects who were subsequently released by the police and whose statements had 'miraculously' disappeared. However, many police officers share these feelings, and during patrols, interviews and interactions with the police, there were numerous discussions about police officers not trusting their own colleagues. An Inspector explained that the lack of commitment and calibre among policemen is one of the reasons of his support to the private security industry, especially armed response:

Go to the police station, on a Tuesday night at three...you'll see are a bunch of sleeping policemen. And this is why we need these guys [armed response officers] to work the ground for us. They can do the work, they can patrol, arrest criminals, even better than some policemen. And many of them, such as these two [two armed response officers present], I trust them more than the guys sitting inside with a uniform. (Interview: Durban, 12 May 2010)

In turn, police officers share a common public reputation of private security officers as criminals and describe private security officers as 'criminals with a uniform', which is supported by the following statement of a police officer:

The whole inside-job thing, that happens with security guards, car guards, that level. For an armed response officer to be directly involved in an inside job, it's difficult...it happens, but it's rare and he's gotta plan it out properly, from control room to the top. So if I say an armed reaction guy is a criminal, I don't mean in his work, but I mean, outside work, back home, in the *location*.³ There they are drunks, smoke marihuana, visit prostitutes, have kids all over the place... That kinda thing. That's why they below us. (Interview: Durban, 29 January 2009)

Similarly, armed response officers share some of these perceptions of their colleagues. During a focus group discussion with several armed response officers in March 2009, we discussed the possible provision of more legal powers to security officers. They all agreed that this was dangerous and understood the government's hesitation in granting these powers, as the following quote from one armed response officer points towards:

The problem is that not all of us are good at our job... Some of these guys are just stupid, and some will abuse [the additional power], will use the power for their own sake, for their own games, to help out their friends... Many guys can't be trusted.

Allegations of corruption and participation in illegal activity thus occur in both directions. Images and perceptions are fragmented, multifaceted and very often based on personal experiences. One police officer may mistrust armed response officers in general, but will also work closely with two of them in a specific area and vice versa. And as these fragmented and multi-layered views are also directly inwards, among themselves, it seems that the label of 'public' and 'private' does not play a defining role. Rather, the willingness of a policing agent to work with another is primarily based on personal experiences.

Ad hoc encounters, which constitute the majority of interactions between police officers and armed response officers, are thus steered by personal encounters that can take different forms within the same day. The manner in which a public and private policing official will police the streets of South Africa together in a form of partnering thus eventually has very little to do with national policy-making. Furthermore, as numerous armed response companies operate throughout the urban realm, it is difficult to create an official structure of partnering between this sector and the state police. The result is that local police stations and certain company owners will establish a certain type of relationship, either collaborative or competitive, or friendly or hostile, but this does not always trickle down to the performing officers and is highly susceptible for change. The 'junior-partner' model is thus maintained in some situations, and challenged in others, due to different individuals and circumstances.

Meeting in the boardrooms: structured and sustained partnerships

Public space security

As mentioned, the armed response sector has, in many respects, taken on more public space duties, but there is a small part of the security industry that operates solely and completely on public spaces, as the quotes below from CID managers illustrate:

We are not there to secure the buildings that pay for us. I don't go on to any building. Our mandate is for public spaces so we secure public spaces. (Interview: security manager of an CID in Cape Town, 19 March 2007)

Since the late 1990s, various South African cities have introduced the CID initiative, which has arguably had a profound effect on the nature of urban security governance – specifically the nature of partnership policing in these spaces. Currently known as Special Rating Areas, they are geographically defined urban spaces (of usually a few city blocks in size) in which the ratepayers (property owners) within that space agree to pay an additional levy on their property to supplement local government services, such as cleansing and security. In other words, property owners in a bounded space pay extra rates so as to purchase additional cleansing and security for that space, over and above what the state provides. Therefore, one of the main features of many CIDs in South Africa is the decision to use the majority of the top-up levy received from ratepayers to outsource security to private security companies. This has meant that the private security companies contracted by the CIDs may be seen routinely patrolling CID jurisdictions and essentially securing public streets.

By-law bobbies

The private security companies within the CIDs are not armed response companies: ‘we don’t specialise in armed reaction because we don’t believe it’s the [CID’s] responsibility...’.⁴ Instead they can be thought of as, what Berg (2010, p. 290) coins, ‘by-law bobbies’ or public safety ambassadors (Huey *et al.* 2005, Sleiman and Lippert 2010). The types of crime and disorder will be different in each CID space, meaning that private security may be confronted with different challenges depending on the CID.

Private security officers in the CIDs are generally involved in the following activities: motorcycle, bicycle or vehicle patrols (involving armed or unarmed guards); the planning or supervision of security operations within the CID area (such as the physical removal of vagrants from CID property); logistical support to state agencies (in road blocks, for instance) as well as a consultancy role with respect to education drives, support to state agencies, and advice (usually to other companies) on how to deal with vagrancy and so forth. They wear clearly identifiable yellow bibs and are mostly involved with the day-to-day ‘upkeep’ of the CID area through monitoring, prevention and problem-solving activities. For instance, since ‘security’ is quite broadly conceived of within the CIDs, private security companies may monitor *any* signs of disorder, from missing drain covers, malfunctioning street lights, illegal dumping, parking infringements to serious criminal activity. Traditional risk-management mentalities of private security thus come into play when guards also identify potential security risks and threats to public disorder (Shearing and Stenning 1982). Thus, private security officers in the CIDs are predominantly focused on proactive prevention in terms of information gathering, visibility and urban management, which is a broader way of thinking about security than a ‘detection and punishment mentality’ (Wood and Shearing 2007). The CIDs thus have a much broader mentality or way of thinking about safety than that of the SAPS, but simultaneously may align with a narrower SAPS mentality in particular circumstances (see Berg 2010 and Singh and Kempa 2007).

In some of the CIDs, private security companies are specifically tasked by the CIDs to ‘sit in on all the boards in the area’ for the purpose of fulfilling the mentalities mentioned above – information-gathering, local relevance and, generally, being ‘involved with the people’.⁵ Yet, they may *simultaneously* buy into the mentalities and activities of state agencies through, as mentioned, providing support for state-run joint operations (raids on buildings for instance) and also identifying criminal activity after the fact. They may also emulate the state agencies, for instance consider the following comment by a member of the state police:

They [private security companies] work on their initiative so they’re different but...most of them base themselves on the police...a lot of institutions will try to copy us as far as possible. For example, we have an occurrence book and a charge office, you’ll find that security companies will have an occurrence book and they call it the charge office as well. And the uniforms, they tend to copy the police uniforms as well. (Interview: SAPS inspector, 10 June 2002)

Information sharing and coordination

A large part of the work of private security companies in the CID is getting to know the area and gathering information, as demonstrated by the following comment:

Our strength is how parochial we are, we are very parochial...we are so parochial there isn't anything we don't know about – we really know the streets and because of that we know where the hotspots are we know where certain things happen at certain times of the week. (Interview: chairperson, CID Company, 23 October 2006)

The initial movement of private security exclusively into public spaces through the CID initiative necessarily meant that state and non-state agencies would invariably 'bump' into each other on a regular basis. The inevitability of this happening on a regular, sustained basis (as opposed to ad hoc encounters) led to the gradual exchange of information and eventual joint meetings and operations, which in some CIDs took years to accomplish. For instance, consider the following statement by a CID involved in the research:

It took me four years [to develop a relationship with SAPS], when I came in they thought we wanted to take over their jobs, they were really 'anti', but we proved to them that we just wanted to help. (Interview: CID security manager, 19 March 2007)

In some of the CIDs, weekly security meetings take place between SAPS and other security-related role players, such as Metro Police and private security, where planning takes place with regard to how crime will be addressed for that week. There may also be monthly, operational meetings where security role-players may compare crime statistics, plan operations and share information on operations already held. There may also be a broader, monthly Community Police Forum meeting involving an open session to the public (thus involving the community) but also including all the security role players in discussing community concerns and security needs. In one of the CIDs researched, the need for operational collaboration was identified as essential so as to avoid duplicating deployment and coverage of public spaces in the CID – in other words, to avoid inefficient use of resources.

What is clear from the interactions between SAPS, the CID and private security in particular is that it is not a one-sided affair. Due to the nature of the CID as client, mandated by the city to fulfil certain top-up functions, it is not necessarily the case that private security will fulfil a 'junior-partner' role to the state. In some respects the CID and private security will influence the course of events:

I was actually saying that we [the CID] then get joint operations done, we will go to SAPS and say we have identified these problems can you please come and assist us or can you please run an operation where you can eradicate that problem from occurring. (Interview: CID security manager, 19 March 2007)

In other respects the relationship is completely reciprocal:

We [SAPS and private security] share information, work out strategies and we share our strategies with them and they share their strategies with us. (Interview: private security Operations Manager and Operations Supervisor, 18 October 2006)

Yet, in other respects, private security within the CIDs will provide a simple supplement to the state as a 'junior-partner' at a very local level, as demonstrated by the following quote:

Well what we [private security] do most of the time is compile information for them [SAPS] and we hand it to them and then they obviously do there whatever they need to do. Sometimes when they also have issues like when there is a spate of robberies happening on

this corner here, they obviously can't stand with police officers there 24-hours a day, they will inform us to say 'look we are having a concern in this area can you actually look at deploying?' And then we will actually put more visibility in that area to prevent that crime from occurring. (Interview: CID security manager, 19 March 2007)

Some of the CIDs may also liaise with SAPS at higher levels of command, from station level to the level of provincial commissioner of police depending on the need, i.e., for reasons of complaint/oversight or due to a specific problem that needs to be dealt with on ground level requiring higher levels of clearance. The CID's role may thus go well beyond local level security networks operating on joint ventures, but constitutes a more regulatory role over SAPS, since the CIDs can then influence the types of ventures taking place between SAPS and private security on the ground. The status of the CID as client thus affects the nature of relationships between SAPS and private security. The relationships between SAPS and private security therefore seem to move on a continuum of styles – from a 'junior-partner' role, to the equal partnership relationship advocated by Stenning (1989), to CID private security steering the activities of SAPS.

Not-for-profit clientele

As mentioned, the CID as client of private security has affected the dynamic of partnering with the SAPS. It cannot be denied that the private security industry is profit-orientated. However, the CID is a not-for-profit organisation composed of civilian representatives who want to ensure that public spaces are protected in a way that gains support from not only property owners, but also the city or municipality as well as those who move in and out of those spaces (the public). In other words, private security contracted by the CID may exhibit a trait of social responsibility, since private security will adopt their client's responsibilities in order to do the job required of them (otherwise they will lose the contract).

For instance, it is generally the case that private security will only look after their own clients, and it is expected that in the CIDs they will only cater to the geographical spaces of the CID. This is still the case in some CID areas, but a prevailing mentality which has emerged over the years is that the displacement of crime from the CID to neighbouring areas is undesirable: 'it's unfair to displace our problems on to the next area...we look after our neighbours' (CID security manager, 19 March 2007). This means that private security may go beyond the call of duty and may extend their activities beyond CID boundaries – such as, for instance, pursuing a suspect outside of an CID (instead of simply stopping at the CID border) or liaising with institutions (such as other private security companies) outside of the CID, as commented on by a member of the state police:

I'm very, very happy with the private security around here. No areas would you say that they're actually more keen than they are [in the CID]... I've never even heard of an incident where a [private security] guy says 'I don't want to become involved'. (Interview: SAPS Inspector, 10 June 2002)

'...without them we would have a problem'.

The CIDs have, it can be argued, created conditions conducive to sustained and focused partnerships between the state and non-state. This is primarily because the majority of those involved in the CIDs described the relationship between SAPS and

private security as being good or excellent, as the above heading and following quote shows:

...I [SAPS] regard the [CID] as great partners...we have an excellent relationship.
(Interview: SAPS Captain, 11 April 2007)

The CIDs have created new incentives for private security and SAPS to collaborate through perpetuating the movement of private security exclusively onto public spaces resulting in private security having to sometimes buy into a criminal justice logic to address public space security issues in the CIDs. However, private securities working in the CIDs also have their own mandates to fulfil through a much broader focus on spatial regulation and urban ordering. There are thus converging and diverging policing practices and mentalities occurring in the CIDs. When mentalities and practice *converge* around a criminal justice logic, then private security plays the 'junior-partner' role through providing resource support to SAPS and other state institutions – particularly because private security requires the arresting power of SAPS. Where mentalities and practices *diverge*, they tend to be complementary in that private security, within the CIDs, fulfils a broader urban management focus within which crime control is one aspect, and thereby does not fulfil a 'junior-partner' role.

CIDs have created the routinisation of contact between institutions – the regular, daily, weekly and monthly meetings – thus allowing for sustained partnerships. And although there are still individual efforts and personalities in sustaining them, the partnerships may not be as reliant on them as in areas outside of the CIDs, because institutions become accountable to each other through sustained and routinised interaction. Considering the high turnover of personnel within the state and non-state sectors, this may account for why the partnerships in the CID have been running for so long.

Concluding remarks

This article has discussed two different types of relationships between private security and the public police in urban South Africa. The first focused on encounters between police officers and armed response officers that are ad hoc and unstructured. Due to the lack of a coherent and encompassing framework imposed to steer these encounters, personal perceptions and experiences shape the nature and possibilities of partnering. The result is that each encounter is unforeseen and unpredictable and dictated upon its occurrence. Although there are official and structural initiatives between the two bodies, these are area-bound and do not always trickle down to the actual policing encounter. The second focuses on a structured and sustained form of partnership that steers the encounters between the different policing bodies, where information is regularly shared and routinisation leads to predictable interactions. Due to the role of the CID as the client, numerous forms of partnering simultaneously take place and are more sustainable.

A main difference between these two forms of partnering concerns the policing mentality that steers these practices. Armed response officers are primarily concerned with crime control, whereas the CIDs operate within a much broader understanding of security. Armed response officers are generally eager and willing to work with the police; they possess a 'wanna-be policemen' attitude. This can either supplement or challenge the 'junior-partner' model, and is largely dependent on the actual individuals involved in

each circumstance. In the CIDs, due to a broader understanding of security, their activities may either align with a law enforcement mentality and a junior partner role is fulfilled, or they may focus on urban management issues which transcend a law enforcement approach. In the latter case they, therefore, do not fulfil a ‘junior partner’ role, but function as an equal partner due to their mandate within the CIDs and the demands of their clientele. Their role is, thus, flexible and changes according to demands and contexts.

Yet there are several similarities between both forms. The first, and most obvious, is that encounters between the two policing bodies are plentiful. The second is that both forms of interactions depict a situation where private security officers are increasingly operating in public spaces, and encroaching on the traditional domain of the public police. With the CIDs, this expansion is inherent to its design and thereby more controlled and sustainable. With the armed response sector, this expansion was unforeseen and the lack of official policy – both national and local – has maintained the unpredictable and uncontrolled nature of the interactions. Thirdly, certain factors are crucial to both types of partnering: sharing information to gather crime intelligence, a shared policing mentality with a unified goal, and a clear division of labour. However, the ways in which these factors unfold and shape the partnering are different. With armed response officers, personal views are decisive, while routinisation and structure dictate the interactions within the CIDs.

Public–private partnering in urban South Africa thus may take various forms, primarily due to the wide array of private policing bodies. The ‘multi-agency approach’ envisioned by the South African state is thus one that is executed in various forms. And as the pluralised landscape of policing will continue to expand, different forms of partnering will continue to evolve. This is particularly apparent with the growth of official relationships between citizen organisations, such as neighbourhood watches, and private security companies. Although the ‘junior-partner’ model is a useful and readily employed framework, we need to move beyond such a perspective and include the growth of initiatives that supersede this. We particularly need to take cognisance of the emergence of novel systems of non-state governance – both at a local and global level – and so too the changing role and powers of clientele, which will further impact on the nature of so-called partnership policing.

At the time of writing, the Private Security Industry Regulation Amendment Bill of 2012 was in the process of being approved in parliament (after already being rejected twice and subsequently re-drafted). If approved, the Bill will, for the first time, formalise relations between the state police and the private security industry as the Bill requires PSIRA to:

promote crime prevention partnerships between the private security industry and organs of state responsible for crime prevention. (Private Security Industry Regulation Amendment Bill, 2012, Section 2(a))

This has the potential of profoundly altering the security governance landscape, yet this clause is vague in terms of what ‘partnerships’ may mean or entail and what types of crime prevention approaches will be sought. In light of this potential new role for PSIRA, it has taken the initiative of establishing its own research unit. Yet, as our research has shown, partnerships and the roles of nodes within them may be fluid and dependent on a range of factors. How the nature of partnerships are conceived of may significantly

impact on how these partnerships are promoted – whether conceived of as a ‘junior-partner’ role for private security or conceived of as much more than this. And there are indications that the aim of the Bill is to enable government to draw on the resources of the private security industry in a one-sided relationship that will be ‘heavily in favour of the government’ (quote by Jenny Reid, president of the Security Association of South Africa (SASA), in Nevin 2013).

Although it remains to be seen how PSIRA interprets its role as a promoter of partnerships and what sorts of partnerships will be encouraged by the government, more studies are needed to analyse which factors at which particular points of time determine when and whether the ‘junior-partner’ model is adhered to and appreciated, and when it is not. This will inform policy, not only in South Africa, in terms of promoting partnerships that are sustainable and effective in light of empirical research findings, rather than on universal, normative presumptions about what private security should be.

Notes

1. As representatives of private property owners, the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977 grants a range of powers to private security personnel as ‘private persons’. However, they can only make citizens arrests for certain scheduled offences and they cannot attend to by-law and traffic infringements (Singh 2008).
2. Interview: Durban, 15 March 2009.
3. Location is a synonym for township and refers to areas that were designated for non-Whites during the apartheid era.
4. Interview: private security company representative, 19 October 2006.
5. Interview: private security representative, 19 October 2006.

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