



CAPE CHAMBER

OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

CRIMINALS HAVE SUCCESSFULLY KILLED A VITAL COMMUTER SERVICE

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The criminals have won. They have successfully sabotaged and killed a vital train commuter service that provided a transport lifeline for the communities most in need of affordable public transport.

The Chamber was commenting on the decision by Metrorail to suspend the service on the Chris Hani – Kapteinsklip and Bishop Lavis lines because copper theft and vandalism have made it impossible to continue operating.

The time has come to get tough and ban the export of scrap copper and to treat metal theft as a serious crime. If we don't take drastic steps like this, we will lose the whole commuter rail service.

The blame for the poor security could be shared around but ultimately we are dealing with a major crime and that is the responsibility of the police. We must ask where are the police? What are they doing while the infrastructure of the country is being wrecked and stolen?

Attempts to tighten legislation on the trade in stolen copper had clearly not worked and now drastic action was called for.

The big problem is that the crime had been seen in terms of the value of the stolen material and not taken seriously. Instead it should be viewed in terms of the damage done. A thousand rands of stolen copper actually represents millions of rands in terms of the destruction, interruption to services and replacements costs. It is crime on an industrial scale and should be treated as such.

Janine Myburgh

President of the Cape Chamber



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