



MEDIA STATEMENT

Cape Town April 30 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROPOSED SAPS AND QCTO-LINKED FIREARM LICENCE TRAINING CHANGES RAISE SERIOUS PUBLIC SAFETY CONCERNS

Safe Citizen, as part of a national alliance opposing SAPS – and - QCTO (*Quality Council for Trades and Occupations*) - linked changes affecting the firearms training environment in South Africa, has written to government and industry stakeholders calling for urgent scrutiny, intervention, and review of the proposed changes, reportedly scheduled for around June 2026.

Safe Citizen warns that the consequences of these changes may affect public safety far beyond the training sector itself.

“alarming issues relating to inexpert content”

At issue is whether the proposed substitution of a basic skills programme for the thoroughly proven unit-standard training currently required of prospective firearm owners is credible, affordable, sustainable, and properly quality-assured. Since 2012, unit-standard-based firearm training has been expertly managed by the Professional Firearm Trainers Council (PFTC), and there is no compelling reason to replace this proven system. A review of the proposed skills programme by Safe Citizen has revealed alarming issues relating to inexpert content and ambiguous drafting.

“Especially affected will be the commercial security industry”

The current proposals raise serious unanswered questions around provider accreditation, certification processes, statements of results, assessment integrity, instructor pathways and sustainable system-wide quality assurance.

Especially affected will be the commercial security industry – some four times the size of SAPS, and arguably the sector that does more on a daily basis to help keep South Africans safe than SAPS itself is presently capable of doing.

“SASSETA was not adequately managing the environment”

Of significant concern is the fact that a previously uninvolved division of SAPS is now bolstering the proposed changes. That institution has demonstrated to South Africans that it is incapable of reliably managing even much of its own routine administration. Moreover, it was SAPS that, around the mid-2000s, actively supported the establishment of an industry-based quality assurance mechanism for firearm training in response to concerns that SASSETA was not adequately managing the environment.

“The risk and consequences are unthinkable – it cannot be permitted to occur”

The risk and consequences associated with placing such a critical element of the firearm competency chain into the custodianship of SAPS are, in Safe Citizen’s view, unthinkable. It cannot be permitted to occur.

This is not a niche industry issue. It is a public safety issue.

South Africa cannot afford to weaken a professionally managed training environment without clear evidence that any replacement system is better, workable, and capable of sustaining proper standards. The immediate priorities must be:

- a pause on implementation pending proper review
- transparent assessment of the likely impact
- meaningful consultation with affected stakeholders
- independent technical scrutiny of standards, certification, and quality assurance arrangements

Public safety depends on proper standards, competent instruction, credible assessment, and governance that works in practice.

Safe Citizen is spearheading this campaign in alliance with industry stakeholders. A fuller media statement, executive summary, and supporting documentation will be released on Tuesday, 5 May 2026.

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