

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Why don't guards stop or halt cars?

Only police officers may legally stop cars on a public road.

There is strict legislation and municipal conditions which apply to a closure.

Q: Why do we have guards then?

Guards are informed of suspicious vehicles and there are several cases where a guard reporting these vehicles has led to an arrest.

Guards are there as a failsafe should traffic back up or the booms become damaged in any way.

Q: Why are we so careful when other closures appear to be willing to stop cars and limit access?

Our road closure is complex for several reasons, it has two public schools, Wagenaar Road (special conditions) and it has an open boundary with another closure. This makes us open to increased scrutiny from Ekurhuleni. We also believe any cost of defending ourselves in legal proceedings would be unaffordable. Making "school traffic" sign in would create a massive traffic jam resulting in the road closure being dissolved.

Q: Could we stop stolen cars or criminals from exiting after a crime?

No. This would be extremely dangerous since the criminals may have weapons and enter into a gunfight if trapped. Standard procedure is to get them out of suburb as quickly as possible, tend to the victims and let SAPS and security chase. If we closed the gates and there were ten cars waiting to get out then the crooks would get out their car, shoot the driver in the first car and ram that car through the gate. They don't care about you, your car or the gate. We also want to avoid possible hostage situations.

Q: How can the closure work if we allow anyone in and out?

The area covered by the two Edenglen closures has 10 streets that are closed all or most of the time. This significantly limits the routes that criminals can use to pass through the suburb or avoid patrol cars.

Any criminal that does break the law in the closure will have photos and video footage of them leaving and entering which significantly increases the chances of them being caught later and of successful prosecution. The license plate recognition cameras are also a successful addition to our closure.

Q: Can we have stickers?

Yes, but we cannot limit the access of non-sticker holders in any way. Most school pupils do not live in the area, plus visitors and service deliveries to homes have rendered the sticker system meaningless.

Q: How does the 24 hour car patrol work?

The 24 hour car patrol is for the exclusive use of contributors. The car may respond to non-contributing armed responses customers but will only wait until one of the floating Mamba cars can relieve them. We also need to be aware that we are dealing with a very variable issue. There have been times when Mamba has had well over half a dozen cars in our suburb depending on the situation. In the case of the LPR arrest, 4 extra cars were deployed to our suburb. Both entrances/exit were covered and the remaining cars patrolled inside. The primary role of the closure is to prevent crime, the patrolling car is a visual deterrent, priority is with contributors.

Q: Does the car remain in the area and regularly patrol all streets?

Yes. Mamba provides the committee with GPS data of the vehicle each month which we check for regular coverage.

The car only leaves the area to refuel or maintenance and at these times Mamba arranges another car to be in the closure. If you have any concerns regarding where the car is or how it is operating let us know the location, date and time. Be specific as the reports are very detailed and going through an hour's worth of data can take a long time. The cars are fitted with advanced technology - GPS, maps, dash cam, driver cam, time recording, speed recording, voice recording. We can verify every action of the car and driver.

Q: Why do I need armed response if I am a contributor?

The services that the road closure contributions purchase are aimed at decreasing serious crime in the suburb and patrolling the public streets. The services that your armed response fees purchase are reaction to emergencies and alarms on your private property.

Road closure is preventative whereas armed response reactive and includes additional benefits such as medical emergencies. Most insurance companies require armed response. In South Africa you can never have enough security.

Q: Are there Mamba cars for non-contributors?

Yes, just the same as in other areas without a dedicated patrol car, Mamba has cars that patrol for their personal customers. These cars are shared between multiple areas and response times can be slower.

Q: How many licence plate recognition (LPR) cameras are there?

At the moment 4 (including North closure) of the 7 permanent entry/exit lanes are covered by LPR cameras. We will be putting in additional cameras to ensure all main entrances are covered.

Q: What can we do about guards not paying attention and/or sleeping?

The committee is in continual contact with Mamba about the performance of guards and repeat offenders ultimately are subjected to disciplinary actions and may get dismissed. No guards are perfect though so we rely on all residents to engage with guards to keep them more alert, to wake them on the rare occasion you see them asleep and to call the control room anytime you think a supervisor should come and check on them. Report any service or guard issues to the committee and we will take it up with Mamba, we depend on the residents to help us monitor the service. The guards also have to press a button at the same time as the driver to let a car in or out, this assists in keeping the guard alert and his eye on vehicles.

Q: What can we do to keep guards alert?

The 24 hour gate on Wagenaar has a baton system where the night guard must check in at several points every 20 minutes. The committee is daily provided with data of every successful and missed check point. If you do not see the guard in his hut, look up and down the road as he is probably on patrol.

Q: What does the committee do about speeding, broken street lights and potholes?

We act like any other member of the community and notify our councillor and the municipality. If all residents do the same, the quicker the issues are likely to be addressed. The mandate of the committee is security.