

Fight against cable theft continues to yield results

[Johannesburg; 25 February 2021] Four (4) Transnet employees from the company's Freight Rail division have been arrested and are due to appear in the Pretoria Magistrate Court this morning on charges of copper theft.

In a joint operation with Transnet's security division, the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (the Hawks) arrested the employees at the Koedoespoort Infrastructure Maintenance depot in Pretoria yesterday, Wednesday 24 February 2021.

This follows the arrest of two suspects a week ago, who were en route to a scrap metal facility with a truckload of copper cables from Transnet. This arrest led to the arrest of two more suspects, and the discovery of a wooden drum containing new and unused copper cables from Transnet.

Further investigation uncovered that the suspects worked with some Transnet employees, who were then arrested yesterday.

Transnet, working with law enforcement agencies, has intensified the fight against cable theft in recent months, and the collaboration continues to yield results.

Between April 2019 and January 2020, Freight Rail lost 354 227 meters of overhead cables, resulting in an average of 21 trains being cancelled per day. In 2020 alone, TFR reported 5 138 incidents ranging from cable theft, vandalism of rail equipment, and deliberate cutting of cables.

The arrests demonstrate that Transnet will not tolerate the economic sabotage caused by cable theft or the tampering and damaging of essential infrastructure as defined in the Criminal Matters Amendment Act, Act 18 of 2015, and send a strong message to those who are involved in such criminal activities that they will be arrested and prosecuted.

Based on current ongoing investigations across the country, more arrests are expected to follow.

Members of the public are encouraged to report any information to the tip-off line – 0800 203 843

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