

Families of Marikana mineworkers file civil claims against Government

The families of the 37 mineworkers killed at Marikana on 13 and 16 August 2012 have filed civil claims against the Minister of Police in the High Court in Pretoria. The 37 families are represented by The Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa (SERI), and the Legal Resources Centre (LRC) and Wits Law Clinic.

In August 2012, these workers, with thousands of others, were on strike demanding a living wage. They were killed after the police opened fire. The majority of the deceased workers were the sole breadwinners of their families and supported large extended families on their meagre income. A total of 326 dependants relied on the deceased workers' wages. Their families, living in the North West, Eastern Cape and Gauteng provinces, as well as Lesotho and Swaziland, continue to live in unbearable conditions of grinding poverty, and, despite some ex gratia assistance from charities and churches, remain destitute following their deaths.

The families are claiming compensation for:

- the loss of the financial support of the deceased to their families;
- grief and emotional shock caused by the death of their husbands, fathers, brothers and caregivers;
- the medical expenses of psychological and psychiatric treatment; and
- their loss of family life and parental care.

The families also claim a formal apology from the Minister of Police for the loss of their loved ones. An apology will bring much needed closure to the families who feel they have been abandoned by the South African government.

Kathleen Hardy, SERI attorney for the families, says "This civil suit should be unnecessary. The Marikana Commission of Inquiry spent more than two years establishing what was already clear in video and media footage: the SAPS are responsible for causing these deaths. We hope that the Minister will see the need for urgent compensation for the killing of these men". Michael Power, LRC attorney for the Ledingoane family adds "We hope that the Minister of Police will act urgently on the civil claims, apologise to the families of the deceased workers for the loss that they have suffered, and provide the families with the sorely needed financial support."

- Read more about the Marikana civil claims [here](#).
- Presentations made by the families of the deceased miners before the Marikana Commission of Inquiry [here](#).

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