

SART Mid-Year Report: 2017



1. INTERIM CHAIRPERSON OF SART

Professor Sinegugu Duma, chair of the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), left the University of Cape Town (UCT) at the end of March 2017 to take up a position at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. SART would formally like to thank Professor Duma for her untiring commitment to SART since she founded the team in April 2016. Professor Lillian Artz has agreed to be the interim chair of SART until a new chair is selected by the SART team. This is the mid-year report by the interim chair.

2. NUMBER AND NATURE OF SEXUAL OFFENCES CASES

Summary data for the period 1 January–15 June 2017 from the Discrimination and Harassment Office (DISCHO)

Case descriptors	Number/nature of cases		
Number of cases	15		
Gender of complainants	Female: 14	Male: 1	Trans/GNC*/Non-binary: 0
Gender of accused persons	Female: 0	Male: 15	Trans/GNC*/Non-binary: 0
Alleged perpetrator known or unknown to complainant	Known: 9	Unknown: 6	
Where incident took place	On campus: 6	Off campus: 9	
Number of staff members accused	2		
Number of students/others accused	13		
Number of cases reported to the South African Police Service (SAPS)	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 case: reported as a robbery • 1 case: still being investigated and will be reported to SAPS • 1 case: the complainant wanted to report the matter but not pursue a criminal case 	
Number of cases in which the complainant chose not to report to the police	8		
101 Complaints lodged with SAPS (101 = complaints lodged against police)	2		
Pre-trial consultations	1		
Requests for change of residence and	Requests: 3	Granted: 3	

whether granted	
Reporting timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Within hours’ of the incident: 8 • Three days later: 1 • One week later: 3 • One month later: 2 • Three months later: 1
Referrals to DISCHO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Student Wellness: 4 • From warden: 1 • From Campus Protection Services (CPS): 1 • From standby advisors (after hours): 2 • Direct: 7
Number of cases taken to Victoria Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With DISCHO/CPS: 3 • Complainant went on own: 1 • With SAPS (went to Somerset Hospital): 1 • Went to “other hospital” (unknown): 1 • Went to GP: 2 • Did not need medical exam / assistance: 6 • Did not go for medical exam / assistance: 1
NB: All complainants who reported within 72 hours received medical assistance.	

*GNC refers to persons who are gender non-conforming.

UPDATE BY DISCHO (Post 15 June)

DISCHO received reports and provided assistance in 16 complaints of sexual assault and rape, and seven complaints of sexual harassment in the period between 1 January and 14 July 2017. For this reporting period, DISCHO received fewer complaints of sexual harassment when compared with previous years. DISCHO’s sexual harassment complaints tend to exceed all other types of complaints. It is unclear if these statistics indicate a reduction in sexual harassment incidents or whether complainants are not reporting. In seven of the sexual offences cases, the alleged perpetrators were not known to the survivors. Ten of the sexual offences incidents occurred on campus – the majority of which took place in student residences.

DISCHO has highlighted a number of challenges they have faced in providing assistance and support to survivors. They specifically cite a case where a survivor was raped at an event outside Cape Town. When the survivor reported the incident to the police in the area where she was assaulted, she was informed by the SAPS member on duty that she could not open a criminal case as “she did not see the perpetrator”. She was also not helped with obtaining medical assistance. It was only on her return to Cape Town that she was assisted at Victoria Hospital in Wynberg.

SART will continue to address these issues of survivor support through monitoring, advocacy and the provision of assistance to DISCHO and survivors when requested.

3. SART ACTIVITIES

SART activities since 1 May 2017 have included:

- **Consolidating the role of SART at UCT**

Consultations with UCT stakeholders about the current and proposed role of SART in monitoring and assisting with cases of sexual offences and discrimination at the university were held. A memorandum of understanding will need to be drafted with the UCT executive that sets out:

- (i) the role of SART
- (ii) SART structure and infrastructure
- (iii) who SART is accountable to and reports to
- (iv) the extent to which SART recommendations are binding
- (v) an ethics protocol as it pertains to having access to cases reported to DISCHO, the confidentiality of cases and the reporting of cases in the public domain.

- **Guidance**

A first-responder guide for cases of sexual offences is being developed. It will be accompanied by training materials that are being developed by SART's Training and Public Awareness team. SART will make the first-responder guide available for comment on the SART website.

- **Policy analysis**

The SART team is analysing the various policies, practices and procedures that are in place to deal with sexual and harassment at UCT. International models at centres of higher education are also being analysed. Special attention is also being paid to UCT staff members who are jointly appointed with the Western Cape Government, the Department of Health, the National Health Laboratory Services and the Medical Research Council or who work in community-based facilities off campus.

- **Bringing UCT stakeholders together and working towards an effective response system**

A dedicated workshop for the management of sexual offences and discrimination at UCT has been proposed and is under discussion. The aim of the workshop is to better coordinate and streamline these mechanisms as well as to create measures to hold these structures to account for the implementation of these policies and protocols. SART anticipates that the workshop will give stakeholders responsible for the receiving, investigation and management of reports of sexual and sexual harassment an opportunity to:

- give input about their current (and suggested) roles in the management of sexual and sexual harassment cases at UCT
- discuss the limitations/boundaries and challenges of these roles
- find a way for all of these structures to deal with these matters in a way that is victim-centred, that recognises the rights and needs of accused persons, that is coordinated and properly articulated to the UCT community, and is followed through in a way that sees 'justice served', however that is defined
- discuss the role of SART / similar structure.

- **The Silent Protest**

SART has secured funding from the AIDS Healthcare Foundation to support a Silent Protest at UCT. The first Silent Protest was initiated at Rhodes University in Grahamstown in 2007 and now takes place annually on campuses across the country. It is a peaceful gathering of students and staff on campuses during the month of August to show solidarity with rape survivors and to

promote the right to be free from all forms of gender-based violence. It also highlights the challenges that rape survivors face after reporting incidents of sexual violence. Each Silent Protest includes a morning briefing, symbolic silencing, a march, a “die-in” and an open mic session to end the protest, allowing participants to break the silence about gender-based violence.

The Silent Protest at UCT will take place on 29 August 2017. Notifications will be released shortly.

- **Victim Support Services**
SART has been consulting with non-UCT psychosocial support structures to secure longer-term, post-trauma counselling for survivors. The idea of securing post-incident counselling is to ensure that survivors can speak to mental-health professionals about the impact of violence on their lives, including how it has affected their learning, relationships, futures and general health and well-being.
- **Council for Higher Education and Training**
The Council for Higher Education and Training is currently undertaking a sexual offences policy review of universities across the country. Members of SART are represented on this committee and will feed information to, as well as draw progress reports from, this committee about the management of sexual offences and discrimination on campuses across the country.