the SARPCCO secretariat is also responsible for training and capacity building throughout the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region on law enforcement issues.

At its conception, the SARPCCO secretariat established a Legal Sub-committee to investigate the legal aspects concerning the differences in legislation among the different legal systems in the region, as well as a training sub-committee, which is responsible for the training of police officials at a regional level.

This SARPCCO Legal Sub-committee has been investigating the harmonisation of legislation in the region. One of the first tasks mandated to the Legal Sub-committee was the development of the SADC Firearms Protocol. The National Police Commissioners endorsed the Protocol during a meeting in February 2000, in Botswana and it was signed by regional heads of state in August 2001.

**SADC Firearms Protocol**
The Protocol incorporates provisions related to the training of police and customs officials in the following areas, among others:

- Firearm control;
- Marking and tracing of firearms;
- Destruction of stockpiled firearms;
- Weapons collection initiatives, and;
- Eradication of the culture of violence in the region.

**The challenge**
Capacity building is one of the current buzzwords internationally. One of the challenges however, is to define capacity building within the framework of the goals set by SARPCCO.

The SARPCCO secretariat has defined some of the areas where the need for training and capacity building is the greatest regarding small arms and light weapons (SALW). These include:

- Good practice principles for storing SALW;
- Stockpile management;
- Recordkeeping, and;
- Border control relating to SALW.

SARPCCO member countries generally face the same trials when attempting to accomplish regional co-operation. Each police force has a limited number of personnel as well as a limited budget for normal police operations. In many countries there is no spare funding to use for regional efforts.

Analysing the challenge presented by training in the region leads to...
the conclusion that regional standardisation is of utmost importance. Police agencies have developed their own training methodologies and each addresses their unique problems in their own countries. However training that is conducted regionally and draws on the experiences of all the countries in the region is especially valuable. Equal partnership opportunities are extremely important for the development of trusting relationships and respect throughout the region.

Assessing the resources available for training purposes, it is easy to conclude that most training workshops should take place in South Africa as training aids as well as experienced personnel, i.e. the South African Police Service (SAPS) are easily available. It is important however that each country gets the opportunity to host some of the training sessions as the other SARCCCO member countries have their own unique expertise to incorporate in regional training. Regional co-operation is becoming a priority as SARCCCO member states realise that a united front is the only way to defeat crime. Cross border operations are taking place throughout Southern Africa and it is imperative that members from different policing agencies train together to engender trust and familiarity with each other’s operational procedures.

**Current successes**

During several workshops and training sessions facilitated by the SARCCCO Secretariat and the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), it became clear that the cooperation among individuals from different police forces was growing as they came to know each other. They agreed that the working relationship was enhanced by the principle of bringing together the same group for different courses.

Members that participated in the training courses felt that they were not only acquiring crucial SALW knowledge but that they were part of the process of building regional co-operation and actively shaping the future of the region.

**Future challenges**

As the world becomes more technologically advanced, Africa will have to face the fact that cross border policing is an absolute necessity. International borders do not restrict criminals. Law enforcement agencies will have to work together more closely to combat crime, as each crime, not only weapon related crimes, committed in the region is of concern to the other members of SADC.