



MEDIA STATEMENT

To: All Media
Attention: News Editors/ Reporters and PR wire
Date: 08 July 2009

Way forward for Durban Alternate Bus Operator

The Cabinet Task Team, the Mayor, and City and Provincial officials have been working around the clock in an effort to get the Durban Transport services restored as soon as possible since the closure of Remant Alton effective from 29 June 2009. The inconvenience and hardships caused to all passengers in the interim is sincerely regretted.

There has been an enormous public outcry on this matter where a number of commuters particularly workers and scholars were left stranded due to the operational challenges that were encountered by Remant Alton.

In order to restore the service with a minimum of delay, emergency provisions of the existing contract were used for the appointment by the Province of an alternative operator for the Durban Transport service. The new operator will be required to source at least 80% of his staff requirements from the Remant Alton staff.

An alternative operator who is an experienced operator with a very good track record in KwaZulu Natal in particular for the running of bus services, Tansnat Africa (Pty) Ltd has been appointed. The start up of services by an alternative operator is a huge exercise, and maximum effort by all concerned is being done to ensure that 100 buses, and in particular the scholar services, are operational on 20 July 2009 when the schools re-open.

A reality is that with the reduced subsidy funding available it has been necessary to reduce the number of buses and the number of trips in the new service to match the existing funding. A further reality is that it is necessary to terminate the Durban Transport bus services in some areas, but they will be provided with alternative public transport by minibus taxis or small bus operators. Full details of the areas affected will be made known at a later stage.

Although we are forced to reduce the service to match the available subsidy funds, the quality of the service will be good as far as standard of buses, adherence to timetables, etc is concerned.

It must be emphasized that this is just a holding operation to restore a good Durban Transport service to October 2010 and to take us beyond the 2010 World Cup. After October 2010 a new Phase 2 operations will be introduced which will involve the restructure of the existing operation into one aligned to the Integrated Public Transport Network (as per National policy). This will take a longer period of time for the implementation details to be finalized, and will involve consultation with all stakeholders.

Our mandate as government is to provide a transportation system that addresses the needs of our commuters and furthermore promote public participation in all matters of governance. There is a sub committee that will work on finding the long lasting and permanent solution in this regard to ensure that the people of Ethekewini Municipality are not faced with such challenges in the near future.

**Issued by MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison,
and the Mayor of the eThekwini Municipality. (Media contact :
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