

Response by KZN MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Willies Mchunu on the statement issued by the DA – M13 Field's Hill tragedy

I have noted with absolute dismay the statement issued by the DA to the media and the public following the unfortunate accident that claimed lives of 22 people in Field's Hill (M13 intersection).

Even during this difficult time when the province is in mourning the DA, true to its form, could not resist temptation to use this unfortunate moment for political breast-beating and political point scoring.

In our humble view, this is a moment that calls upon all responsible citizens of KwaZulu-Natal irrespective of political affiliation to stand together and jointly search for solutions to the current challenge (Road fatalities).

The accident that happened last week is a tragedy which we should all be mourning as a province and as a country.

It is for this reason that we appreciate the actions of the then acting President, Mr Jeff Radebe, together with Transport Minister Dipuo Peters, of coming down to express Government's shock and concerns at the spate of accidents in KwaZulu-Natal and, indeed, in the whole country.

We have shared with the public that from the preliminary investigation, it is clear that the braking system of the truck was not working effectively and the driver hit a red traffic robot.

May I state that, we agreed with the Minister of Transport on the formation of a Task Team to investigate and recommend to government how best we can deal with the challenge of M13.

The team, among others will look at the legalities of restricting trucks from using M13, including the economic and the social impact of such a move.

We wish to reiterate that punitive measures are a critical aspect of enforcing road regulations.

However the other critical aspect is to change the mind-set of road users for them to be conscious of the calamities associated with their disregard of the standing road regulations.

As a proper process to further clarify actions that have been taken by the Department to address issues raised by the DA, I undertake to table a comprehensive report to the Cabinet and that I table that report to the Legislature for Debate.

Ends/

Willies Mchunu – MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison in KwaZulu-Natal.