



# transport

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## MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

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### MEDIA RELEASE

To: All media  
Date: Thursday, 25 July 2013  
Attention: News editors, reporters & PR wires

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### **MEC WILLIES MCHUNU WELCOMES 10-YEAR EFFECTIVE SENTENCE OF TAXI DRIVER WHO KILLED 15 PEOPLE IN 2011**

**PIETERMARITZBURG** – KZN MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Willies Mchunu, has welcomed the sentencing of a taxi driver who killed 15 people in 2011 on New Greytown Road, otherwise known as Copesville Highway.

Today the Pietermaritzburg High Court Acting Judge Piet Bezuidenhout sentenced the driver, Khululeka Gwala, to an effective 10 years in prison.

Gwala was driving a Toyota Quantum on the 30 September 2011 along the R33 when he illegally overtook cars in a traffic jam and collided head on with an oncoming truck.

It emerged in court that Gwala's taxi was carrying an overload as it had 20 passengers instead of 15.

Gwala had been arrested and later given R10 000 bail with very strict conditions.

The court could not prove the defence team's arguments that brake malfunction could have led to this gruesome accident.

Instead, Bezuidenhout ruled that the accident occurred because of Gwala's negligent and reckless driving, and found him guilty on that score.

Mchunu said he felt vindicated by this ruling, saying this judgment would be a lesson to all road users to always be cautious and considerate especially when transporting scores of members of the public.

“Indeed, this is a landmark judgment and I have no doubt this will be a hard lesson to all transgressors on the road. We have always advocated for tough measures and penalties to be imposed on those who are breaking the law and ultimately killing innocent people. With this judgment, the families of victims can now have closure on this horrendous matter,” said Mchunu.

Mchunu said his Department and all traffic law officials were encouraged by this judgment.

“This has added more impetus to our campaign to reduce road fatalities. Today’s judgment reaffirms our position that most of road accidents are caused by people who disobey road regulations. We are going to intensify our campaigns against lawlessness on the road,” he emphasised.

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