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MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA
DATE: Friday, 8 August 2014
ATTENTION: Editors, News Editors and PR Wires

MEC MCHUNU LAUDS COURT'S KEY SENTENCING OF ILLEGAL TAXI OPERATOR TO SIX MONTHS IMPRISONMENT

KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Willies Mchunu, has welcomed the first-ever court ruling by the eMpendle magistrate court to sentence an illegal taxi operator to an effective six months imprisonment.

Mr. Mzothule Mncube was sentenced last week after being found guilty of operating without a licence and ignoring numerous, previous fines and court warnings. Mncube was first charged in January for operating without a valid licence and fined R5 000 by the eMpendle magistrate court.

He was again nabbed on 22 July 2014 for the same offence, provoking the same court's imposition of a six month-long imprisonment sentence, which he started serving last week.

Commenting after receiving news of the sentencing, Mchunu described the sentence as "groundbreaking" and said it would help to root out lawlessness in the taxi industry and sustain peace and stability.

"This sentence sends a clear message to other illegal taxi operators to appreciate the importance of respecting laws and regulations within which industry players must operate. This court ruling further strengthens our effort to root out all illegal operators

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from the taxi industry. Illegal operators and on-going recruitment of operators are the main source of conflict and violence in the taxi industry. This court's decision also responds to our calls for more punitive measures to ensure effective law enforcement against illegal conduct. Without doubt, it will immensely contribute to our processes of achieving lasting peace, stability and growth of the taxi industry," said Mchunu.

MEC Mchunu said the decision by the eMpendle magistrate is in line with the cooperation agreement that has been developed by the Department working with taxi associations engulfed by conflict.

Central to this agreement is a joint action by the Department and individual associations to apply for court interdicts to prevent illegal operators.

"We are convinced the latest court decision and the cooperative agreement will discourage the recruitment of new operators in economically unviable routes that results in overtrading and conflict," said Mchunu.

ENDS.

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