



# transport

Department:  
Transport  
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

## MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

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### MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: Friday, 15 December 2016

ATTENTION: Editors, News Editors & PR Wires

### **MEC MCHUNU CALLS FOR CALM AND VOWS TO BRING STABILITY IN KWANDENGEZI'S ON-GOING TAXI DISPUTE**

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Willies Mchunu, has called for calm and vowed to use all necessary measures to bring peace and stability in KwaNdengezi and Zwelibomvu taxi associations subsequent to the on-going taxi dispute that has resulted in the death of several taxi operators.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 2016, Mr. Dumisani Hlongwa, who was a rank manager was shot and killed in the taxi rank. A week later, Mr. Bongumusa Sithole, was gunned down at midnight on Wednesday, the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2016 at Klaarwater. Mr. Sithole is believed to have been driving his taxi ferrying passengers when he was shot, together with a passenger. Police are investigating the incidents and have urged anyone who may have information to come forward.

Mchunu has expressed his disappointment as these incidents which have brought fear amongst taxi operators within the two associations and left community members fearing for their safety. Numerous concerns have been raised by members of the public seeking interventions from the Department of Transport.

MEC Mchunu has reassured the public that the Department is working hard, together with SANTACO and the involved associations, in trying to bring peace and stability.

**“A lot has been done with regard to bringing peace and stability in KwaNdengezi and Zwelibovu Taxi Associations. We are engaging with all stakeholders and we are optimistic that we will find a solution that will bring end to this violence. We are also appealing to those who are perpetuating this violence to refrain from such behavior. We want to make a call to all associations involved to remain calm while the police are doing all they can to find perpetrators and end the tension and violence,”** said Mchunu.

**“Our vision as the department is to ensure that our public transport is safe, reliable, affordable and is accessible to all. The safety of commuters and all members of the public is our top priority and the government will do anything to ensure their safety,”** he added.

KwaNdengezi has in the recent past been experiencing a spate of killings of taxi operators over conflict involving the two associations. This previously prompted MEC Mchunu and SANTACO deciding to keep a close eye on the two associations, with the deployment of Shanela (the department's public transport enforcement unit) and more police visibility to intensify security measures as part of ensuring safety for the commuters and the general public. This bold move yielded positive results as the situation normalised and incidents of violence subsided.

ENDS.

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