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For Immediate Release

**LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES ON HIGH-ALERT AS TAXI INDUSTRY STRIKE ENTERS DAY FOUR**

The KwaZulu-Natal Government and eThekweni Municipality have created a platform that will expedite the process of releasing the remaining 85 impounded minibus taxis.

However, a proposal by government to ensure that the 85 vehicles are released by Friday, 25 September 2015, after following the court process, was rejected by members of the taxi industry.

In a high-level meeting with MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Willies Mchunu, City Manager Sibusiso Sithole, City and Provincial Transport Department officials on Wednesday, 23 September 2015, the taxi industry demanded that vehicles be released by the Municipality free of charge.

However, an impounded vehicle is only released to the owner after following proper legal processes and paying a fine which is determined by the court. This process is in line with the National Land Transport Act.

Since Monday, 21 September 2015, 81 minibus taxis have been released following the payment of a R1500 fine if the owner of the vehicle presents a valid route permit. A fine of R3000 was imposed if owners failed to produce a route permit.

Members of the taxi industry went on strike after the Metro Police impounded 305 vehicles, during a joint enforcement operation with the South African Police Service, which was conducted from 18 to 20 September 2015 in eThekweni.

Of the 305 impounded vehicles, 163 were minibus taxis.

To minimise the impact on commuters, eThekweni Municipality has requested that the Passenger Rail Association of South Africa increase the number of trains and Durban Transport Buses are also operating to ferry commuters.

Law enforcement has been beefed up. Members of the South African Police Service and Metro Police are monitoring the situation and will not hesitate to act swiftly if any incidents of violence flare-up.

Commuters are urged to be on high alert and to report acts of violence, vandalism and intimidation to the Metro Police number 031 361 0000 and SAPS on the number 10111. ENDS

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