



# transport

Department:  
Transport  
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

## MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

### MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA  
DATE: 10 September 2016  
ATTENTION: Editors, News Editors & PR Wires

#### **MEC KAUNDA DECRIES LOSS OF 14 PEOPLE'S LIVES IN KZN ACCIDENTS OVERNIGHT**

There were 14 people who lost their lives in road accidents between Friday afternoon and Saturday morning in various parts of KwaZulu-Natal, triggering Transport, Community Safety and Liaison MEC Mxolisi Kaunda, to make a renewed call for all citizens to rise up and fight to end the carnage.

Kaunda, accompanied by the Harry Gwala District Municipality Mayor, Buhlebezwe Local Municipality Mayor and Head of the Department of Transport, this morning visited the families of the seven people who died in the Highflats accident.

The accident took place at about 18:45 yesterday on main road P68, between St. Faiths and Highflats, near Ixopo, when a hearse vehicle collided head-on with a bakkie, which was ferrying all of the victims – four females and three males. Another three people were injured and taken to the nearby hospital, two of whom are critical and have been transferred to Edendale hospital in Pietermaritzburg.

The police have opened a case of culpable homicide against the driver of the hearse, who is alleged to have been driving while under the influence of alcohol. The driver was also injured and is under arrest. The other accidents occurred in Marchison (N2), N2 near Empangeni as well as Ladysmith, which together also claimed a total of seven people. They include pedestrians; a mother and child who were killed while crossing the road in Murchison, and the driver ran away. Police are on a search for the driver.

Addressing families and relatives of the victims of the Highflats accident, Kaunda expressed words of comfort, and committed that the government will work closely with them until their loved ones are laid to rest.

**"On behalf of the government, I wish to send our deepest condolences and assure you that our department and the Road Accident Fund will be on hand to assist the families with funeral preparations. We are utterly devastated by the Highflats accident – and others that happened elsewhere in the province – but all which could have been avoided. These fatal crashes demonstrate that as individuals and communities, we should rise up and play our respective roles in the fight to end the road carnage. It is a major socio-economic burden on the South African society, and the time has come for all of us to realise it is our collective responsibility. It touches all of us as families, the government, communities, churches, schools, business sector, labour movement and Amakhosi directly, and therefore we should heed the call to end the carnage by strictly respecting road traffic rules and signs,"** said Kaunda.

Meanwhile, yesterday's law enforcement road blocks targeting buses ferrying young women going to Umkhosi WoMhlanga (Reed Dance) in Nongoma led to the issuance of 224 charges for various defects including driving without valid licences (48), unlicensed vehicles (40), overloading (3), unroadworthy tyres (20) and faulty brakes (5).

ENDS.

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