



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA
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ATTENTION: Editors, News Editors & PR Wires

MEC MCHUNU WELCOMES DECREASE OF 49% IN ROAD FATALITIES ON KZN OVER THE EASTER LONG WEEKEND AND URGED ROAD USERS TO CONTINUE RESPECTING ROAD TRAFFIC LAWS

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Willies Mchunu, has welcomed the dramatic decrease of 49 percent in road fatalities in the province over the Easter long weekend.

The province of KwaZulu-Natal moved from 55 fatalities in 2015 to 28 fatalities in 2016, featuring amongst the top three best performing provinces including North West (71 percent reduction) and the Free State (52 percent reduction). These preliminary figures, from a comparable period of the 24 to 28 March 2016 (the Easter long weekend), were released by the Minister of Transport, Ms. Dipuo Peters, in Pretoria earlier today.

Crashes have also been reduced by 31 percent, from 38 crashes last year to 26 road crashes this year. Notably, the province this time around did not record major fatal accidents, where three or more people were killed.

Commenting after the release of the statistics, MEC Mchunu said the province was committed to sustaining a downward trend in road crashes and fatalities.

"During the festive, we were the only province that managed to reduce fatalities by 2 percent, and now we have moved far beyond that by achieving a 49 percent reduction. Whilst welcoming this reduction we still maintain that one life lost is one too many. We must continue to work hard to reduce the road carnage and its socio-economic impact in the province and country. We wish to commend all enforcement and road safety agencies, stakeholders and our social partners, who have invested efforts and time in creating consciousness on the importance of safety and adhering to road traffic regulations," said MEC Mchunu.

Mchunu has, however, condemned the continuing errant behaviour on the road, mainly as the highest speedster was caught driving at 227 km/h at a zone of 120km/h. This was the highest speed recorded in the country, and the perpetrator's court case will be closely watched.

More than four drivers were arrested driving at more than 200 km/h on the N2 in Park Ryne, south of Durban.

MEC Mchunu also expressed anger at more than 246 motorists arrested for drinking and driving, saying these are the people who have no regard for other people's lives and are posing a threat to the safety of the society and other road users.

"If you are drinking alcohol and decide to drive, you are equal to someone carrying a weapon of mass destruction waiting to explode and harm innocent people. We urge all sectors of our society to come out and speak strongly against drinking and driving, speeding, using cell

phones when driving, unfastened seat belts and driving un-roadworthy vehicles. If we can all work together, we will achieve the target of halving road accidents by half in year 2020. We call on all the people of KwaZulu-Natal to walk with us I'm championing this course," said Mchunu.

Mchunu concluded by calling on all stakeholders to participate in the heightened campaign to promote safety of pedestrians and cyclists in the province.

The multi-disciplinary law enforcement teams include the department's Road Traffic Inspectorate, SAPS, Metro and municipal officers, Emergency Medical Services, South African National Defence Force, Cross-Border Agency and road safety personnel, stopped and checked more than 95 000 vehicles during the Easter period in the province. From these checks, there were more than 20 000 written fines issued. More than 1 802 people were arrested for driving without driver's licences and 205 public transport vehicles were impounded for various defects.

Ends.

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