



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT

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MEC MCHUNU SATISFIED WITH PROGRESS IN ENDING VIOLENCE AND STABILISING TAXI INDUSTRY IN KWAZULU-NATAL

THE KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Willies Mchunu, has expressed satisfaction at the stability achieved by the taxi industry, with many previously conflict-ridden associations now enjoying stable and peaceful operations.

MEC Mchunu has attributed the achievement of peace and stability in the taxi industry in the province to the strong partnership between government and the South African National Taxi Council (Santaco), which has ensured a joint approach to resolving conflict.

Addressing Santaco's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Newcastle this weekend, MEC Mchunu reported that incidents of violence were subsiding and only few areas remained with pockets of violence.

"The province's taxi industry is now broadly stable and peaceful. The incidents of violence and killings have gone down. We thank Santaco and leadership of associations for their firm stance against violence and killings. As government, we are satisfied with progress made and we must all work together to ensure that the remaining areas of concern also achieve total peace and stability. Achieving peace is never easy and requires men and women of integrity and honesty. Through collective leadership and partnership between government and Santaco we have achieved major milestones," said Mchunu.

Over the past few years, areas which were engulfed by conflict and violence have made progress and are stabilising among them are: KwaNongoma, Mandeni, Nyoni KwaDukuza, Maphumulo, Folweni, Bergvile, Port Shepstone, Howick, and Newcastle.

Through the intervention by MEC Mchunu of open dialogue and peaceful negotiations, these areas have resolved issues amicably and any outstanding matters are dealt with proactively working with Santaco and the executives of these associations.

There are few areas currently experiencing challenges, which include KwaNdengezi and Molweni, in which the Department of Transport is currently intervening.

"We are determined to eliminate violence in the taxi industry, even on the few remaining areas, and we swiftly move to ensure that violence is arrested and operators and commuters are safe. We must build an industry that is reliable and inspires confidence to the commuters. Police are doing their best to ensure that perpetrators of violence are dealt with firmly," said MEC Mchunu.

MEC Mchunu also used the Santaco AGM to announce progress in fast tracking the issuing of operating licenses, saying three new offices have been opened in eMpangeni, Port Shespone, and Ladysmith, and now the Department was working on opening another new office in Jozini.

These offices, including the Pietermaritzburg head office, have improved the issuing of operating licences to deserving operators and are part of stabilising the industry. Previously operators used to travel from across the province to Pietermaritzburg to apply for operating licences but now services are accessible closer to their locations.

ENDS.

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