



# transport

Department:  
Transport  
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

## MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

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### MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA  
DATE: 04 April 2016  
ATTENTION: Editors, News Editors & PR Wires

#### **MEC MCHUNU DISTURBED AT THE HAVOC IN PORT SHEPSTONE TAXI RANK OVER NEW RANK SECURITY**

THE KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Willies Mchunu, has expressed utter disappointment at the resistance demonstrated by taxi operators in Port Shepstone, protesting against security measures that have been introduced at the main taxi rank to maintain law and order and protect commuters.

This follows the disruptions at the taxi rank and Port Shepstone CBD, where taxi operators barricaded roads, nearly bringing the town to a stand-still. This resulted to the arrest of more than 32 people for barricading the road and for causing havoc.

They were apparently protesting against the security personnel, who have been assigned by the Department of Transport to ensure maximum security at a taxi rank, mainly to protect innocent commuters.

The security has signed a cooperation agreement with the Police, Hibiscus Coast Municipality and the Department of Transport, which is part of ensuring compliance with the law.

The introduction of the security personnel at the taxi rank was triggered by incidents of violence last year, which led to blockages and damaging of vehicles.

In a meeting convened with all four taxi operators, which were involved in the conflict and Hibiscus Coast municipality, MEC Mchunu, announced that drastic security measures will be undertaken to prevent the escalation of violence.

Among others, the security measures will intensify the work and visibility of the police, be part of the rank management system, which will include controlling the access at taxi rank, installing CCTV cameras and security personnel.

Before the security personnel were introduced at the taxi rank by the MEC, officials from the Department's Public Regulatory Entity (PRE) had a meeting with all the associations and the local leadership of Santaco to brief them on progress and development.

Commenting on the latest disruptions, MEC Mchunu said he was surprised that there were people who opposed government's efforts to strengthen security measures aimed at safeguarding people's lives. "The improvement of security is mainly to ensure that commuters and operators themselves are safe. This is not new as it was agreed by all stakeholders last year after conflict erupted. The security company has signed cooperation agreement with the police to further strengthen the eyes and ears of law enforcement on the ground. It is therefore surprising that people are opposed to such an important initiative. As

government, we are serious about eliminating incidents of violence and conflict in the taxi industry, and this is a pragmatic case of rooting out threats to people's safety," said Mchunu.

The approach of government taking over security and control at taxi rank was benchmarked in Newcastle following years of conflict involving five local taxi associations. Thus far, this initiative is working well in Newcastle, without any resistance and has assisted in stabilising the situation in the area.

Ends.

**Media contacts:**

Kwanele Ncalane: 072- 803 1462/ 079- 699 5755/ [Kwanele.Ncalane@kzntransport.gov.za](mailto:Kwanele.Ncalane@kzntransport.gov.za)

Nathi Sukazi 081 018 0518/ [Nathi.Sukazi@kzntransport.gov.za](mailto:Nathi.Sukazi@kzntransport.gov.za)

Website: [www.kzntransport.gov.za](http://www.kzntransport.gov.za)

Twitter: @KZNTransport

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/kzntransport](https://www.facebook.com/kzntransport)