

Graders have been working flat out to remove the snow | And traffic moving slowly in the process freeing trapped motorists, truck drivers and learners

Media and Public Statement by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements, Siboniso Duma

22 September 2024

N3, KwaZulu-Natal: Our dedicated team from Road Traffic Inspectorate and Infrastructure Unit have been working flat out with the entire disaster management teams involving SAPS, SANDF, SANRAL, N3TC, RTMC, Agriculture and Rural Development, COGTA - nationally and provincially including municipalities.

We have deployed more graders to assist with the rescue operations.

As around 09h20, there is just no access for cars from Montrose towards Johannesburg. Ice boulders are everywhere.

In the video is slowly moving traffic from Harrismith towards Montrose. We advise motorists not to attempt to use the N3 to Durban.

Around the Shell Garage towards Montrose, that's where people have been stuck for two nights.

Trucks and cars are covered in snow.

There are hundreds of trucks and some jackknifed, which makes it difficult for graders to remove the snow as rescue teams have to remove one truck at a time including cars.

The team is, however, working hard and we see the light at the end of the tunnel.

We are using the cutting edge technology to monitor the road networks also using SANRAL camera control centers.

Unfortunately, in some areas the cellphone network is not available.

We remain concerned that although thousands of motorists have been freed, others are still trapped.

Last night we noted a distressed post for urgent help from Radio Presenter Penny Ntuli and others.

There are two buses with learners each. They remain our priority.

We have assisted 67 learners from Qwabi Primary School who were traveling from Durban to Qwaqwa. They had been stuck.

We wish to assure those who are stuck and many others and their loved ones, that the team has doubled their efforts to clear the snow.

Our main focus is to enable the disaster management teams to urgently bring much needed relief.

Following the deployment of more graders, we wish to provide the following update to the members of the fourth estate and the public at large:

- N11 - Ladysmith to Newcastle *OPEN*
- N11 AMAJUBA PASS *OPEN*
- R33 - Vryheid to Dundee *OPEN* but water damping on the road at Cotswold
- R34 - Newcastle to Memel *CLOSED HIGHER UP*
- R34 - Newcastle to Bloodriver/Vryheid *OPEN*
- R33 - Vryheid to Paulpietersburg *OPEN*
- R34 - Vryheid to Melmoth *OPEN*
- R69 - Vryheid to Pongola *OPEN*
- N2 - Richardsbay to Piet Retief *OPEN*

In the meantime, motorists are requested to cancel any unnecessary travel.

We extend our appreciation to the private sector and many other non-governmental organizations that are taking part in this important rescue operation.

#LetsDoMoreTogether

Ends

Issued by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements

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