

**Aircraft Crash: Duma continues to comfort families of the victims during this difficult period and reflects on the importance of the air connectivity and aviation industry in KwaZulu-Natal**

Public and media statement by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements, Siboniso Duma

11 June 2025

Inkosi Mhlabunzima Maphumulo House: We wish to inform the people of KwaZulu-Natal that we are in touch with the families of the two pilot students and a medical student who died tragically following the crash of their light aircraft.

It is sad that, during Youth Month, we lose the lives of dedicated and intelligent young people who were destined to take the aviation and healthcare industries to the next level.

Once again, we express our deepest sympathies to the families of the following departed souls:

- Ms Nqobile Biyela (23) - Student Pilot
- Mr Lulama "Lwazi" Msane (23) - Student Pilot
- Mr Siphesihle Buthelezi (20) - Medical Student

The pain experienced by mothers, families, friends, and schoolmates is unbearable. The families have appreciated messages of condolences and the overwhelming support from the people of KwaZulu-Natal. Let us continue to show Ubuntu to the bereaved families.

Officials from my office and Traffic Anchor, Ayanda Msweli are liaising with families as they prepare for the funeral.

We are fully aware that members of the media would like to liaise with the families. Media houses will be informed of the right channels once confirmed by the families.

We commend the SA Civil Aviation Authority and SAPS for announcing their decision to launch an investigation into the crash.

The announcement that an investigation report will be published within 30 days by the Accident and Incident Investigation Division will serve as a source of comfort for the families.

We are fully aware that post-mortem examinations of the victims by trained pathologists will be critical in terms of highlighting causative factors, crash injuries, and survival factors.

Finally, as indicated, we are empowered by the Economic Regulation for Transport Act, to be involved in the aviation sector and air connectivity in particular.

The aviation sector is one of the effective catalysts for socio-economic development. It has helped the province's economy integrate with economies of the world, as demonstrated by Dube Trade Port, King Shaka International Airport and many other regional airports such as Oribi, Richards Bay, Umkhuze, Newcastle, Ulundi, Virginia, Margate, Ladysmith, and many other landing strips.

Ends

Issued by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements

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