

**Duma confirms 10 fatalities (revised from 12) from the R34 horrific accident. This is after visits to the scene, mortuaries, and hospitals. Dismembered body parts examined. Truck and bus drivers are alive**

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

17 June 2025

R34, Vryheid: First and foremost, we wish to express our deepest condolences to the families of the victims of this morning's horrific accident involving a truck and a bus on R34, Vryheid.

I have also personally conveyed our sympathies to Marshall Dlamini, the Secretary General of the Economic Freedom Fighters.

I have also inspected the scene of the accident. And I witnessed a trail of destruction left behind.

Innocent lives have been lost, and the lives of many families have been altered and turned upside down.

Reduced visibility in the early hours of the morning and dismembered body parts resulted in miscalculation by RTI and Emergency personnel.

After my interaction with a highly efficient team from the Road Traffic Inspectorate together with the South African Police Service, we wish to confirm the following:

1. Ten (10) - Dead

- Females—Three (3)

- Males – Seven (7)

2. Thirty Three (33) Victims – Able to Walk

3. Three (3) Victims – Hurt but not critical

4. Two (2) Victims – Critical

We have visited mortuaries and hospitals. The bodies of the deceased have been moved to Dundee Mortuary. The Truck and Bus Drivers are alive and in hospitals.

The South African Police Service and Road Traffic Management Corporation will conduct a comprehensive investigation to establish the cause of the accident.

We have received conflicting versions about what happened from the survivors.

There are allegations that the bus driver tried to overtake. Other survivors have alleged that the bus driver fell asleep at the steering wheel.

We do not want to speculate at this stage. We are confident that the investigation will shed light.

Critically, we have in the past expressed our concerns about accidents involving trucks.

Trucks are not supposed to be on this road in the first place and should be using the N2.

Many innocent lives have been lost as a result of a huge number of trucks on our roads.

We have been informed by Transnet that in the 2024 financial year, over 303,000 trucks used the Richards Bay port, averaging nearly 6,000 per week.

It has been stated that the port's infrastructure was originally designed for a much smaller volume of trucks, approximately 200 per day.

We continue to receive briefings from the Minister of Transport, Barbara Creecy about efforts to resuscitate the rail network.

Working with the national government, we are doubling our efforts to ensure that we strengthen plans to move cargo from road to rail.

Ends

Issued by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements

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