

Floods in KZN are isolating communities, destroying the economy and undermining feelings of safety

Media Invite and Statement by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements, Siboniso Duma ahead of a meeting over Umzimkhulu River Bridge Closure

15 March 2025

Inkosi Mhlabunzima Maphumulo House: We remain extremely concerned about the sustained prolonged rainfall that continue to leave a trail of destruction.

Our road networks and bridges have been destroyed and washed away.

Consequently, hundreds of communities are being isolated as they can't access hospitals, schools and socio-economic centres.

We are witnessing communities getting displaced and separated from their workplaces, homes and familiar communities.

Challenges facing the public transport system requires a collective approach involving all stakeholders and different spheres of government.

Tomorrow at 13h00, we will engage with key-stakeholders at Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipality Council Chamber under Ugu District Municipality.

Thereafter we will address members of the media.

This meeting follows the destruction of Umzimkhulu River Bridge by sustained rainfall and floods. This has caused concrete cracking, displacement, and rotation of Pier 3.

The damage to Pier 3 is now substantially worse than during our previous joint investigation in November 2024.

We have agreed collectively that as part of prioritizing public safety, the bridge should be closed immediately.

Despite the recommendation for a complete closure, in tomorrow's meeting we will reflect on measures to mitigate the social and economic impacts.

Importantly, we can confirm that we have written a submission to the Minister of Transport Barbara Creecy requesting the South African National Agency to exempt motorists from paying tolls on the N2 as this will be the best alternative route. We do not want to overburden motorists, businesses, and commuters that are living under the yoke of poverty.

The traffic management experts are currently monitoring conditions and flood risks while keeping the bridge open for now until the meeting tomorrow with key stakeholders.

Finally, we send our deepest condolences to the family of a female motorist who died after her car was washed away in Pinetown.

Ends

Issued by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements

Enquiries

Ndabezinhle Sibiya | 082 375 4742 | Spokesperson | MEC for Transport and Human Settlements