

**Six people have perished and one injured in a horrific accident in Newcastle: Duma receives a report from the Road Traffic Inspectorate and indicates that the figure may change depending on the results of SAPS Forensic investigation**

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

04 July 2026

Inkosi Mhlabunzima Maphumulo House: A dark cloud is hanging over KwaZulu-Natal following the death of six people in a head-on collision involving two VW Polo vehicles along the R34 Memel Road in Newcastle.

The accident occurred between 15h30 and 16h30.

Sadly, our Road Traffic Inspectorate team, which is still at the scene of the accident, has just reported that as a result of the devastating impact, one VW Polo caught fire.

It is suspected that two victims traveling in this VW Polo were entrapped and perished instantly.

This number may change depending on the results of a forensic investigation to be conducted by the South African Police Service.

Last week, we also lost three members of the Msomi family and their helper in another head-on collision involving a light motor vehicle and a truck on the R612 at the Rydal intersection in Highflats.

The four victims were burnt beyond recognition when the family car caught fire.

RTI is working very closely with the SAPS who have launched a criminal investigation around this accident.

On the 16th of June, we raised our concerns about the fact that the winter holiday season is characterized by increased day and night travel.

Many families are visiting their loved ones and travelling to various destinations to enjoy winter holidays.

Critically, we reported in the past that in our interaction with the Road Traffic Management Corporation and the Road Accident Fund last year, we were informed that the RAF paid out R43 billion for injury benefits to young accident survivors aged between 15 and 34.

According to our previous reports, most fatalities involving the youth occur on Saturdays and Sundays between 5pm and 9pm.

RTMC published the following national fatalities for the previous years:

- June 2021 – 902 road fatalities.
- June 2022 - 873 road fatalities.
- June 2023 – 833 road fatalities.
- June 2024 -923 road fatalities.

The Head of the Department, Zibusiso Dlamini, is currently working on the relaunch of the Road Safety Campaign involving key stakeholders.

In the meantime, RTI and Operation Shanela teams will continue to be visible on our road networks throughout the province.

Ends

Issued by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements

Enquiries

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