

# Part 1

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY



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The 2004/2005 financial year marked my first term of office as the executing authority for this Department. It is during this financial year that we championed our cause of defending the weak in all our activities at Transport. It is indeed a pleasure to report that this view echoes accolades across the Department.

In accordance with our championed cause the Department continually embarks its efforts on being an innovative service provider and creator of sustainable opportunities among the poor. The extent to which we have succeeded in ensuring that previously disenfranchised communities gain a more credible stake in our economy is readily evident from our general procurement performance and specifically evidenced through programmes such as Vukuzakhe, Zibambeke, public transport subsidies and taxi industry empowerment.

Indeed, it is pleasing to report that the National Minister of Transport, the Honourable Mr Jeff Radebe, and his Director General of Transport, Ms Mpume Mpofu, have committed all Provincial Departments of Transport to incorporate the Zibambeke programme within their portfolios. Our Zibambeke programme has also been identified by the National Department of Public Works as "best practice". The National Department of Public Works intends rolling out Zibambeke to all Provinces and Municipalities as part of the Expanded Public Works Programme. It therefore gives me particular pleasure to note that our own Zibambeke programme is on track to reach a target of 40 000 households contracted by 2009. It is anticipated that the Zibambeke Savings Clubs will play a significant role in the establishment of a rural co-operative movement and in securing a better dispensation for women in the agricultural sector.

The fact that 75,3% of the Department's budget is allocated towards the upgrading and maintenance of road infrastructure is strongly indicative of how seriously we take our mandated development goal to provide a balanced road network that meets the mobility needs of all the KwaZulu-Natal citizens, which further supports our National Growth and Development Strategy to provide a logistics platform for South Africa's global trade.

However, as noted, despite significant budget increases over the MTEF period, the budget allocated to road infrastructure is inadequate to meet the road network and mobility needs of all our citizens. This was well illustrated during the 2004 elections when 444 kilometres of access roads had to be upgraded to enable voters to reach polling stations. Further, our budget does not allow us to respond to all emergency situations and natural disasters without first having to motivate for additional funding. This is well evidenced by the recent flood damage to road infrastructure in this Province.

The winter of 2004 was unusually hot and dry resulting in many areas of the Province experiencing severe drought conditions. The drought was partially broken in early December when major storms occurred in many parts of the Province. The Department was inundated with calls for assistance to repair damaged roads and river crossings. The worst affected areas were uMzinyathi and uThukela. It is estimated that the cost to repair damaged roads is in the order of R256m. Our memorandum to Cabinet in this regard resulted in additional funding of only R35m. It is obvious that if the shortfall in funding is to be met out of our MTEF maintenance budget, then this will result in other essential maintenance work being postponed.

Annual floods also highlight the importance of building pedestrian bridges to provide all weather river crossings that make rural schools, clinics, police stations, heritage sites and other community facilities more accessible. Pedestrian bridges are also required to eliminate those hazardous locations where pedestrians are endangered through their need to cross high volume, high speed roads in built up areas. The Department is committed to a programme to construct pedestrian bridges as this will extend community access to essential public facilities.

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Our contribution to the revised Provincial Growth and Development Strategy highlighted the integral role of transport. It is self evident that no Province or Country can develop its full potential without an adequate transportation system. In South Africa, it is therefore imperative, to invest in transport infrastructure to overcome both our apartheid legacy of separate development and our international trade isolation.

Investments in transport infrastructure must necessarily be coupled with investments into a safe, sustainable, affordable and comfortable public transport system. To this end, we must be mindful of the fact that 60% of all commuter traffic in South Africa is carried by the minibus taxi industry which increasingly operates with an aging fleet and is not subsidised. The balance of commuters are carried by subsidised rail and a bus system whose subsidised routes are often still aligned with the needs of industry rather than with the needs of commuters, particularly poor commuters.

For many years now we have campaigned to create a safe road environment for all road users in KwaZulu-Natal. It has been scientifically verified that by and large most road collisions (80%) are caused by human error. The term human error does, in fact, include a failure by road users to observe the rule of law on our roads.

On 13 December 2004 we launched our new slogan which is "From Zero Tolerance to 100% Compliance". This is an extension of the original slogan "Zero Tolerance in KwaZulu-Natal". The intent of the new slogan is to ensure that when the rules of the road are not obeyed our law enforcement agencies act decisively. It is a slogan that says that, as Government, we have the capacity to enforce our laws.

The Department is committed to managing the roll out of the Expanded Public Works Programme for KwaZulu-Natal. This will involve working with all Provincial and Municipal Departments to develop joint programmes between spheres of government. Here it is worth reiterating that our own Zibambele programme has been identified as "best practice" by the National Expanded Public Works Programme. It is now our intention to consolidate and expand the share that the poor have in the economy of KwaZulu-Natal as the Province embarks on many major infrastructure projects, including the Dube Trade Port and the upgrading of the Gauteng / KwaZulu-Natal transport corridor, as we prepare for Soccer World Cup 2010.



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