



**SPEECH (NOTES) BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,
COMMUNITY SAFETY & LIAISON, MR. B.H. CELE AT THE SUMMER
HOLIDAY ROAD SAFETY LAUNCH HELD AT MOOI RIVER ON TUESDAY, 29
NOVEMBER 2005.**

All Protocol Observed.

- Road safety is a fundamental right of every road user.
- One of the mandated development goals of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport is to create a safe road environment through the reduction of road crashes.
- This is achieved primarily through traffic law enforcement, road safety education and the analysis and re-engineering of hazardous locations.
- To this end, earlier this year we launched the “KEEP LEFT, PASS RIGHT” campaign and just a few weeks ago we launched the “NO TO FAKE LICENCES” campaign, which has proved to very successful.

- Government's commitment to reduce the number of deaths on our roads extends to ensuring that the pillars of civil society join us in our fight against road related crime.
- It is our intention to continue to consolidate our relationship with civil society institutions and, in particular, to focus on securing the support of KwaZulu-Natal's religious institutions and religious leaders to ensure that the culture of road safety truly becomes everyone's business.
- It is against this background that we have hosted and are continuing to host Siyabhakhumbula Road Safety Prayer Days, with religious leaders and their congregations from various religious faiths, who come together to pray with officials from the Department of Transport, for divine intervention in our efforts to reduce deaths on our roads.
- We will continue to reinforce our "100 % compliance" policy which includes programmes that inform and educate the community at large about correct road safety behaviour. We will continue to improve the road environment through appropriate and innovative engineering measures. WE WILL CONTINUE TO ENFORCE THE LAW.
- Road crashes in South Africa claim more than 10 000 lives every year, and a further 36 000 people are seriously injured on our roads annually.
- The number of fatal crashes in South Africa during January to August 2005, increased by 640, from 6 861 in 2004 in comparison with 7 501 during the same period in 2005.
- The estimated number of fatalities increased by 838 (10, 19%) from 8 225 fatalities during January to August 2004 to 9 063 fatalities during January to August 2005.

- At an estimated average cost of R839 570 per fatal crash, (as per the CSIR report), the estimated cost of the above 7 501 fatal crashes is in the order of R6 298 billion, which is only for the first eight months of 2005.
- The main contributory factor to the majority of these crashes is ATTITUDE. Most of these crashes can be avoided if the majority of us change our ATTITUDE and become lawful road users.
- It is well-known that the Christmas / New Year period results in an influx of people from all over South Africa as well as international tourists, to KwaZulu-Natal.
- Also, during this period migrant workers travel home, especially to KZN and the Eastern Cape to spend time with their families, utilizing mainly buses and taxis and travelling long distances.
- This influx of people results in increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Annually during this period, South Africa is faced with a number of road deaths, many of which could have easily been avoided.
- During the festive season last year, 245 people died on KZN's roads, as compared to 229 in 2003.

- An analysis of the causes of these crashes indicates that speed, alcohol, driver fatigue, reckless and negligent driving, un-roadworthy vehicles and pedestrian deaths require specific attention.
- The primary objective of our Summer Holiday Road Safety Programme is to create a safe road environment and to curb the number of road crashes during the festive season, primarily through education and enforcement.
- There will be visible stringent and regular enforcement operations conducted by all our law enforcement officers all over the province.
- Our traffic officers will be utilising hi-tech equipment such as card verification devices, which will enable them to scan your driving licence at the side of the road, and verify all your particulars.
- Our goal is to intensify high visibility patrols, increase law enforcement on critical offences and critical days, as well as ensure the integrated and coordinated efforts of all role-players.
- In order to achieve this, our departmental Holiday Planning Committee consulted broadly with all relevant stakeholders such as the KZN Coordinating Traffic Committee, SAPS, SANDF, Durban Metro Police, Road Traffic Inspectorate (RTI), the national department

of transport (NDOT), local and district municipalities, department of health, taxi associations, TOLCON, SANRAL and other interest groups.

- As part of our operations we will target all unlicensed and un-roadworthy heavy motor vehicles, drivers without valid driving licences or PRDP's, as well as those driving under the influence of alcohol.
- Unlicensed vehicles will be impounded until a valid licence is produced. In the case of unlicensed drivers, the vehicle will also be impounded and only handed over to a licensed driver.
- Our highly specialized Public Transport Enforcement Unit (PTEU) will be deployed at high accident frequency areas and will specifically deal with all public transport vehicles. These areas include the R56 (Richmond road), R617 (Boston / Bulwer road), R34 (Richards Bay to Vryheid) as well as the R66 (Ulundi and Nongoma).
- Random pedestrian blitzes will also be carried out at various locations on the N2 and N3. A special bus will be used to pick up pedestrians on these routes.
- I want to warn both drivers and owners of public transport vehicles, especially the bus and taxi industry to take responsibility for the safety of their passengers.

- Just one bus or taxi crash can result in many deaths and several injuries. You have been warned – we will show no mercy to any driver or owner who breaks the law.
- Our Road Safety Councils have also been included in our planning sessions and have made a valuable contribution towards addressing certain road safety problems.
- Motorists are encouraged to drive with their headlamps on dip, “passing beam” or “low beam” during the entire period. This is highly effective on single lane roads where overtaking offences are prevalent and head-on collisions are potentially fatal. All law enforcement officers must lead by example. If you are seen, you are more likely to be safe and being visible is entirely your own responsibility.
- **The key elements of our 2005/6 Summer Holiday Road Safety Plan include:**

1. OPERATION TATA / NIYABONWA CAMPAIGN

Of the 245 people killed on the province’s roads last year, 121 (more than 50%) were pedestrians, many of whom were drunk. Niyabonwa, which means "you are seen", is aimed at cutting pedestrian deaths in road accidents. Thousands of pedestrians die each year simply because they are not clearly visible to motorists. This campaign will address the safety of pedestrians by encouraging them to ensure that they are visible to motorists. Also, pedestrians found walking on freeways will be arrested.

2. PROJECT BLUE LIGHT

Law enforcement officers will patrol with their blue lights on during adverse weather conditions, at night and also during selected times during the day when traffic volumes are high so as to be clearly visible.

3. LONG DISTANCE DRIVER AWARENESS PROGRAMME (MINIBUS TAXI'S AND LONG DISTANCE BUS OPERATORS)

This is a joint project with the taxi industry, Local Authorities, PTEU, RTI, and Durban Metro Police. All long distance taxi associations and bus operators will be provided with educational material and training on vehicle fitness, overloading, tyres, driver fatigue and so on.

4. SOBER IS SAFE CAMPAIGN

The target audience for this project is people partying at hotels, restaurants, clubs, etc, mainly in and around major towns and cities. Each "party" is encouraged to have a "safe sober driver" who will be responsible for the "party" to be driven home safely. Each designated driver will receive a key ring which reinforces a road safety message. He /she will also receive free soft drinks for the evening from the hospitality industry.

5. REST STOPS

The aim of rest stops is to encourage motorists to stop and rest after every two hours or 200 kilometres in a safe area. These rest stops will be manned along the N2 and N3. Rest stops will also be set up at service stations along alternate routes.

6. FREE VEHICLE INSPECTIONS

Free vehicle inspection in terms of roadworthiness will be conducted at designated vehicle testing centres around the province and motorists are encouraged to make use of these facilities.

7. OPERATION KHIPA S'KHOTENI

This operation is aimed at the freight industry and will include late night speed enforcement exercises. Motorists travelling at high speeds are warned that you will be arrested and detained. This operation has started and has already yielded positive results.

8. ROAD SAFETY BEACH FESTIVAL

Our Road Safety Directorate in conjunction with other stakeholders will host a major awareness campaign at the Ethekwini beach front. Messages on alcohol consumption, pedestrian behaviour, fatigue and AIDS will be reinforced. Students and matriculants are urged to control their emotions and not to become another road statistic this Christmas.

9. MPIMPA CALL CENTRE

The Mpimpa Call Centre will be fully operational 24 hours a day during this period. Road users are encouraged to report any traffic offences or emergencies to the call centre on 086 221 1010. Other useful 24-hour contact numbers are our RTI Control Centre 0800 33 99 11 and EMRS 10177.

- In conclusion, I want to plead with all road users to take extra care on our roads during the festive season, when traffic volumes increase substantially.
- You can be rest assured that “100% compliance” will be implemented and should you commit any offence, you will be caught and you will face the full might of the law.

THANK YOU.