



KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT'S ANNUAL SUMMIT

27 MAY 2005

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
MR B H CELE
MEC FOR TRANSPORT,
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON**

Chairperson
MEC's Present
Amakhosi Present
Members of Provincial Parliament Present
Mayors and Councillors
Head of Department
Delegates
Members of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed my pleasure today to report back to you at our tenth Annual Report Back Summit. The first KZN Department of Transport Summit was held in 1996 at the Exhibition Centre in Durban.

The primary purpose of the Summit is to inform you about what services the KwaZulu-Department of Transport has provided, what we are busy providing, and what we intend to provide in the future.

Since 1994 our government has adopted a consultative approach to decision-making processes. In line with this approach, four commissions were convened yesterday as part of this Summit, in order to encourage and facilitate public participation.

This gathering today provides an opportunity for me, as your MEC for Transport, to report back to you on the progress made in implementing various KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport policies and programmes. It also provides an opportunity for you, the public, to communicate your views on how my department can improve its performance.

All of us present here today know full well that the foundation of any democracy and just society is a well informed public. It is well-known that my Department has a proud record of assisting communities and stakeholders to organise themselves so that they can be kept properly informed about new developments in order to take full advantage of new opportunities.

Our department takes pride in recognizing the hard work of our various stakeholders. Through various awards we encourage them to improve their performance. The many trophies on display here today bear testimony to this fact. Later today awards will be made to the:

- Best Public Transport Bus company
- Best Community Road Safety Council
- Best Individual Vukuzakhe Contractor
- Best Vukuzakhe Association
- Best ARRUP – Project Liaison Committee
- Best Rural Road Transportation Forum
- Best Zibambebe Contractor

- Best Zibambele Saving Clubs

However, the real winners are the citizens of our province who will receive better levels of service delivery from the people who receive these awards.

This Summit is an occasion for me to reflect back on my performance and that of my Department over the past year. In the 2004/05 financial year I was allocated a budget of R1, 810 billion and R1, 810 billion (not a cent less, not a cent more) was spent on providing transport services to the citizens of KwaZulu-Natal. However, we were still unable to meet all the challenges we face as a Department.

The theme for this year's Summit is, "Defending the Weak". This theme captures the ethos of how I interpret my mandate as your MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison

ACHIEVEMENTS

1. ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

- Zibambele contractors – we promised 22 000 Zibambele contracts, and we actually achieved 22 980 contracts. The Department aims to award at least 40 000 Zibambele contracts by the year 2009.
- Black Economic Empowerment – we promised R600 million and we spent R750 million.
- Light and heavy rehabilitation of surfaced roads – 880 000 square metres.
- Maintenance of surfaced roads (resealing and blacktop patching) – 840 000 square metres.

- Upgrade to surfaced roads – 64 kilometres.

All the above targets were achieved bearing in mind that it costs approximately R3 million to blacktop one kilometre of road.

2. ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC LAW ENFORCEMENT

- No. of crossing patrols provided – 70
- No. of learners educated – 1 140
- No. of adults educated – 30 000
- Awareness campaigns – 20
- No. of vehicles weighed – 220 000
- No. of weighbridges maintained and calibrated – 13
- No. of vehicles screened for speed – 6 million
- No. of vehicles checked in roadblocks – 35 890
- No. of kilometres patrolled – 2, 7 million
- No. of days roadside courts in operation – 145
- Last year our department was invited to present a paper on roadside courts in the UK which was very successful.
- Our road safety campaigns were successful and resulted in a significant reduction in deaths on our roads.

3. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- We are in the process of finalizing the integrated transport plan for the province.
- We are happy to announce a significant decrease in the levels of taxi violence.
- The Department officially launched the Freight White Paper last year. This White paper deals with broad issues affecting all

applicable modes of transport in order to maintain and develop an effective and efficient freight transport system in KZN.

4. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

A state of-the-art Technology Transfer Centre has been established at our Head Office in Pietermaritzburg, and I am proud to announce that our Department will host the International Technology Transfer Conference in September this year.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The following are just a few of the recent developments within my department.

- A “rights” audit has been completed of all Zibambele households, in the Durban and Pietermaritzburg regions, to ascertain the extent of their legitimate access to social grants. These findings will be used to access Zibambele households to the Department of Social Services and Population Development in an orderly and cost efficient way. A rights audit will be extended to the remainder of KwaZulu-Natal in the near future.
- All Zibambele contractors have been organised into savings clubs. A systematic programme to access savings clubs to other Departments pro-poor support programmes will also be implemented.

- The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport is once again a leading Province on its Zibambele programme. It is pleasing to report that the National Department of Transport has vowed to take this programme an extra mile. Minister Jeff Radebe together with the new Director-General of Transport, Ms. Mpume Mpofu have committed all departments of Transport in the country to incorporate the Zibambele programme in their portfolios.
- We have identified the land, agriculture, water and other development potentials that exist around our road construction programmes, e.g. ARRUP as well as Roads for Rural Development Programmes. Thus, for example, in our Nongoma Project comprising the upgrading of main roads 235, 49 and 52, the above initiatives have already been implemented or are planned under our ARRUP and Roads for Rural Development Programmes approach to integrated and sustainable rural development:
- Through the African Renaissance Roads Programme, many towns such as the small rural town of Hlabisa has been made more safe with new sidewalks, paved areas and public transport facilities.

CHALLENGES

1. FLOOD DAMAGE

The winter of 2004 was unusually hot and dry resulting in many areas of the country experiencing severe drought conditions. The drought was partially broken in early December when major storms occurred in many

parts of the province. Several areas were inundated with calls for assistance to repair damaged roads and river crossings. The worst affected areas were uMzinyathi and uThukela. Further rainfalls during March 2005 further exacerbated these conditions. Working through the Rural Road Transport Forums, the estimated cost to repair the damage to the roads was approximately R256 million. A memorandum was submitted to cabinet to seek additional funding for these repairs, however only R35 million was received. The shortfall in funding is R221 million. The flood damage needs to be repaired and if no additional funding is forthcoming then the Department must use its maintenance funds for flood damage repairs. This action will postpone essential maintenance and ultimately reduce the asset value of the road network.

2. RURAL PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO COMMUNITIES

Pedestrian bridges provide all-weather river crossings that make rural schools, clinics, police stations, heritage sites and other community facilities more easily accessible to pedestrians. Pedestrian bridges are also required to eliminate hazardous locations where pedestrians need to cross high volume, high speed roads in urbanised areas.

The department is committed to providing access to all communities of KwaZulu-Natal within its limited budget. In an attempt to do this, more emphasis will be put on pedestrian bridges. The demand for these is very high particularly in rural areas, where one witnesses the plight of teachers and pupils. Education to these children ceases to be a basic right and becomes a privilege enjoyed only by those who have access to schools.

I would like to bring to your attention that increasingly communities are requesting my department for pedestrian bridges. To date, the total cost of community requested pedestrian bridges amounts to R205 million. Many of these requests relate specifically to community concerns for pedestrian safety.

The department contributed to the revised Provincial Growth and Development Strategy during the year, and continued to highlight the integral role of transport with regard to the various sectors targeted for development and key development initiatives in the province. These include the tourism and agricultural sector, trade and industry, spatial development initiatives, urban renewal strategy and integrated sustainable rural development programmes.

3. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

4. PUBLIC TRANSPORT SUBSIDIES

5. TAXI RECAPITALISATION PROGRAMME

6. TAXI ENFORCEMENT

7. TAXI ELECTIONS

8. RAIL BRANCH LINE REVITALISATION

9. FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION AND OVERLOAD CONTROL

10. TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT

2010 CORRIDORS - INTERCITY

Corridors have been identified which will exploit the opportunities associated with the 2010 Soccer World Cup. The corridors identified are the following:

- Pietermaritzburg – Durban
- Ladysmith – Durban
- Empangeni – Durban
- Port Shepstone – Durban

The design of such corridors will be completed by the end of December 2005.

The department has embraced the growing awareness that transport corridors, especially freight transport corridors, are also transmission corridors for communicable diseases. The department has now included a communication and education component in its programme to raise awareness of appropriate preventative measures for avoiding the transmission of communicable diseases such as HIV and AIDS and TB.

ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC LAW ENFORCEMENT

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. Human error refers to:

- Driving under the influence of alcohol
- Driving without a valid driver's licence
- Driving recklessly at speeds in excess of the established limits
- Driving a vehicle which is not roadworthy

- Driving a vehicle which is overloaded
- Jaywalking
- Pedestrians illegally crossing a busy freeway

Most road accidents are therefore avoidable.

On 13 December 2004 the Department of Transport launched the new slogan which is “From Zero Tolerance to 100% Compliance”. This is an extension of the original slogan “Zero Tolerance 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 as government we have the capacity to enforce our laws.

The slogan “From Zero Tolerance to 100% compliance” is relevant because for more than a decade we have championed the view that, for the most part, road collisions are due to human error and could have been avoided. It is thus befitting that government ensures that all road users comply fully with the law as they use our roads. Our roads cannot be reduced to playing fields for non complying individuals.

MPIMPA HOTLINE

Adopting a culture of road safety means that the public themselves assist the road traffic authorities in rooting out anti-social road behaviour. Use the Mpimpa Hotline 086 221 10 10. Report bad driving. Report unroadworthy vehicles, especially public transport vehicles. Do not get into a vehicle when you know that the driver is drunk or unlicensed.

CONCLUSION

The department is committed to managing the rollout of the EPWP for KwaZulu-Natal. This will involve working with the provincial and municipal

spheres of government to develop joint programmes that will ensure the necessary co-ordination in the province.

It is also the intention of the department to consolidate the right of poor people to share in the economy of KwaZulu-Natal. Programmes such as *Zibambele*, *Vukuzakhe* and public transport subsidies continue to create work and enterprise development opportunities for poor and vulnerable citizens. It is the intention of the department to build on its solid platform of empowerment programmes and prepare for an exponential growth in the construction and transport sectors through the development of major infrastructure projects as well as infrastructure investments and opportunities. Such projects include the Dube Trade Port and the upgrading of the Gauteng/KwaZulu-Natal transport corridor, as well as the infrastructure investments associated with the 2010 Soccer World Cup.

Finally Chairperson, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my Department under the leadership of Dr. Kwazi Mbanjwa as well as all our delegates, and in particular Amakhosi, Members of Parliament, Mayors and all other stakeholders for their contribution to this summit.

I thank you.