



**SPEECH NOTES FOR THE KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,  
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR BHEKI CELE DURING THE  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE KWANATACO, 05 DECEMBER 2008.**

**Protocol Observed**

- It is a great honour for me to be present here today during the Annual General Meeting of the KwaZulu-Natal Taxi Council (KWANATACO). It is meetings such as this one that always give me a sense of hope about the future.
- I know that there are many positive things in the taxi industry that are not communicated to the public. I also know that there is a perception that government wants to get rid of the taxi industry. But I want to assure you that the intention of this government is to improve the industry to be better than before.
- It is on that score that, our government has invested R6 million during this financial year to assist the taxi industry in its administration work in the province.
- The 2010 Soccer World Cup is upon us and if the relationship between transport operators and commuters is not amicable, we risk the danger of failing to accommodate and transport comfortably our visitors for this prestigious event.

- I must say we ought to be able to overcome these challenges before we can be complacent that we will manage the more than 350 000 spectators that will participate and watch the 2010 Soccer World Cup.
- I therefore urge and encourage transport operators, to conduct their businesses with due care for the safety and security of the public and to ensure that the working conditions for their employees are better. The Transport Academy we have launched will see our transport systems efficient post the FIFA 2010 World Cup.
- The Department is moving away from promoting individual taxi and bus ranks. The focus now is to ensure that all modes are integrated into one facility. This will assist in promoting public transport operations within the province, it will also benefit commuters.
- In KwaZulu-Natal and in South Africa generally, we are still faced with a situation where previous town planning did not accommodate our public transport. This is a task that municipalities must respond to squarely in designing their public transport plans, infrastructure development, and land use policies.
- The taxi industry needs to change the damaging perception that they are murderers. This must be by exposing those bad apples among themselves so as to protect the industry. You need to show that the taxi industry is one worthy of investors to place their hard earned money in. Your behaviour will determine whether you, as an industry, survive or not.
- If you as taxi people turn to each other not against each other this will demonstrate the seriousness you have about your livelihood. It is this seriousness that will show your detractors that you are worthy and a serious economic force to be reckoned with.

- If you continue to persecute the very people that support your businesses - the customers along with other road users - you will not prosper. In some cases, government has to act firmly and decisively in dealing with taxi conflicts so as to protect the lives of innocent people.
- As government we cannot let hundreds of people to continue dying in minibus taxis as a result of the poor conditions of vehicles, or lack of adequate training for drivers, and general disregard for human life. We cannot allow the killing of innocent people simply because various taxi associations can't agree on which one should use which route
- I am sure that we are dealing with mature business minded people who only want economic progress. Your industry is the single biggest black economic empower sector. As government it is our duty to assist this and other entrepreneurs to prosper, but we cannot do it without your cooperation.
- In conclusion, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport is fully equipped and ready to deal with any form of misbehaviour. If you think of breaking traffic laws this festive season, please bid your family farewell and start preparing for your long prison sentence. You may run but you may not hide.

**I thank you.**