



SPEECH NOTES FOR THE KZN MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR BHEKI CELE DURING THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT INDABA ON TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2008-ESIKHAWINI

All protocol observed.

- The underlying purpose of any transport system is to move people and goods efficiently, as cheaply as possible, and safely across or through different modes.
- It is the vision and mission of the government to ensure that these modes work together in harmony in a way that complements each other. Taxis and buses must be able to cooperate in the common endeavor to move people from one place to another.
- As government, we are under no illusion about the magnitude of the task at hand and the obligation we have in ensuring that the public transport system is responsive to national policy imperatives and contributes meaningfully to economic development and growth.
- But, public transport can only improve if we work together as a collective. While it is true that government has a responsibility to regulate the industry and ensure compliance with safety standards, the communities similarly have an obligation to ensure that operators provide the level of service expected by the commuters.
- 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.

- 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.
- Our democratic government is committed to a structured, ongoing consultation process that allows stakeholders to make informed decisions on how best to prioritise their needs, either on public transport, road safety or access roads.
- It is on that score that the KZN Department of Transport is always prepared to interact with the public transport industry through their elected structures. Last year we launched our provincial commuter structure, the KwaZulu-Natal Public Transport Passenger Association.
- In the context of a province having experienced taxi violence, the Passenger Associations are expected to play an important role in bringing about peace and reconciliation. They must promote passenger safety and improve relations between the operators and the entire public.
- To this end, we have embarked on a bold, educational campaign through the establishment of Transport Academy for KwaZulu-Natal, to improve the quality of service delivery in public transport industry.
- Indeed, the little strides we make as stakeholders and communities as a contribution to the broader agenda of improving public transport system must be acknowledged and appreciated. The challenge that lies ahead may be daunting, but it is not unachievable.
- In the final analysis ladies and gentlemen, as government we are determined to ensure that our public transport infrastructure and services are efficient and improve the lives of our people.

I thank you.