



**SPEECH NOTES BY THE KZN MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR B.H. CELE AT THE OPENING OF THE PROVINCIAL WORKSHOPS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2009-2015 ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY MANAGEMENT PLAN IN DURBAN ON 18 NOVEMBER 2008**

**Protocol observed**

- I would like to welcome you all here today on this very important and memorable occasion in both my capacity as the MEC, amongst others responsible for road traffic matters in the province; as well as being a member of the Shareholders Committee of the Road Traffic Management Corporation, the RTMC.
- Our country, like many other countries, has challenges and one of South Africa's greatest challenges is to significantly reduce the carnage on our roads. This is the reason why we have gathered here today in this fashion – with key purpose to jointly develop a Road Traffic Safety Management Plan for 2009 to 2015.
- On a continuous daily basis there are a great variety of role-players and stakeholders from many functional areas involved in efforts to achieve the desired reduction. The coordination of all these efforts; as well as to provide overall leadership in this regard, is the legislated responsibility and function of the Corporation, in terms of the RTMC Act.

- With regard to partnerships in road traffic, I would like to refer to some of the objectives of the RTMC Act No. 20 of 1999, which states as follows:
  - The Road Traffic Management Corporation is established as a partnership between national, provincial and local spheres of government by:
    - effecting the pooling of road traffic powers of the Minister and every MEC and the resources of national and provincial spheres of government responsible for road traffic management, in support of enhanced co-operative and co-ordinated road traffic strategic planning, regulation, facilitation and law enforcement;
    - strengthening national and provincial governments' collective capacity to govern road traffic through partnerships with local government bodies and the private sector; and
    - focussing government on effective strategic planning, regulation, facilitation and monitoring, with the view to enhance the overall quality of road traffic service provision and, in particular, to ensure safety, security, order, discipline and mobility on the roads.
- In order to perform the prescribed duties of the Corporation, the Act provides for the establishment of the following ten main functional areas:
  - Road traffic law enforcement;
  - Training of traffic personnel;
  - Vehicle registration and licensing;
  - Vehicle and roadworthiness testing;
  - Testing and licensing of drivers;
  - Road traffic information;
  - Accident investigation and recording thereof;
  - Communication and education;
  - Infrastructure safety audits and traffic engineering; and
  - Administrative adjudication of road traffic offences (AARTO).

- The main purpose of this workshop is to focus government on the effective strategic planning for the period 2009 to 2015 for the above functions within the road traffic management arena that I have just mentioned.
- We need much better instruments of management and coordination within government. We need further changes to legislation and regulations. This must and will include much stiffer penalties for road offences, the social stigmatisation of persistent offenders and the pursuit and imprisonment of corrupt officials.
- I trust that such changes will be brought about by the implementation of AARTO, the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences Act, which is at the moment being piloted in Tshwane, Gauteng.
- We will be putting more muscle into the system by bringing forward a raft of legislative and regulatory changes to tighten enforcement, step up penalties for infringements and regulate tightly in such areas as vehicle design and fitness and the training, health and working conditions of professional drivers.
- In my opinion there is a quick-fix which we must pursue – a dramatic change in the way we plan and perform road traffic law enforcement, particularly with regard to the critical offences that contribute to road crashes. It is now the responsibility of the Corporation, with the support of all traffic authorities to ensure the expeditious and successful implementation of the National Road Traffic Law Enforcement Code.

- However, the best strategy in the world can only work to the full if it is complemented and underpinned by a powerful culture of voluntary law compliance and care for our fellow citizens. This is what we have to build. This means you and me.
- Virtually all South Africans are road users, and, as such, critical elements in the stability or instability of the system. Indeed, we are all part of the problem of road safety or part of the solution.
- Therefore, over the long term we also need to build much stronger and more active partnerships between all spheres of government, road transport associations, trade unions, business sponsors, schools, churches and the many other grass-roots organisations that can help society as a whole to take ownership of the many projects which make up an active culture of road safety.
- In conclusion, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that we can only achieve if we work together towards a common goal. I wish you a very successful and fruitful workshop over the next two days.

**I thank you**