



**SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIASON MR BHEKI CELE DURING THE DRIVER
OF THE YEAR CPMEPTITION ON SATURDAY, 17 AUGUST 2008.**

Protocol observed

- The Driver of the Year competition aims to reduce the number of road accidents / fatalities involving trucks and buses, through stimulating education amongst our heavy motor vehicle drivers and consequently improve the standard of heavy motor vehicle driving in our country.
- The competition serves as an incentive for the business sector to invest in advanced driver-training for the drivers of heavy duty vehicles. Skilled drivers contribute to saving of human lives and reduction of vehicle maintenance costs, including fleet management.
- But I want to emphasize that this competition also needs to focus on educating drivers about human relations and tolerance on the road. We need to do away with the perception that South African drivers are bad drivers and show that we can be good drivers who are sensitive to road safety. We really need to improve our conduct on the road.

- Always remember that road accidents kill people who are very economically active people. People who drive their cars or travel in public transport are mostly working and have dependants. Another thing is that the impact of fatalities is seen on people left behind.
- I am aware that some people say that they are tired of Cele, he talks too much. I want to emphasize that the Department of Transport has a constitutional responsibility to ensure that our people have a safe and reliable transport system in the province
- How can we be quiet when we have to see the members of the bereaved families who carry the permanent scares of losing their loved-ones or having to take care of maimed and disabled loved-ones.
- You will endure it silently, not me – as MEC for Transport it is my responsibility to say enough is enough! If road safety is not effective, then we are left with no option but to crack the whip. We shall not hesitate to use our full law enforcement agencies to force people to toe the line on our roads.
- Soon we will deprive drivers of the privilege of driving on our roads if they are reckless because every bad driver is a potential killer. Soon we will have to take your license if you are a repeat offender and thereby preempt your committing a crime of murdering someone on the road.
- In conclusion, I take this opportunity and thank all the participants. I am glad also that this competition has a special category of female bus driver even though it still does not exclude women from competing with men in the other categories.

- I urge you as drivers in KZN, to always support government in its efforts to decrease road accidents. Drive safely – a healthy driver means that there is a healthy nation. An unhealthy driver poses a potential road risk. Let us respect human life, and treat road carnage with the seriousness it deserves.

I thank you