

**SPEECH NOTES BY KZN MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY  
AND LIAISON MR WILLIES MCHUNU AT THE FAREWELL OF THE ROAD  
TRAFFIC INSPECTORATE CHIEF MR JOHN SCHNELL ON THURSDAY 30  
SEPTEMBER 2010**

Programme Director;  
Transport Head Mr Chris Hlabisa;  
Manco members;  
Members of RTI and other various Traffic Authorities;  
Members of the Schnell family;  
All staff members;  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

I thank you all for joining us this afternoon to honour the KwaZulu-Natal Road Traffic Inspectorate legend Mr John Schnell in his retirement. Gatherings of this nature are certainly among the happiest yet most difficult moments for us at the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport and the Provincial Government as a whole.

Many things have been said about Mr Schnell and we all agree that he has certainly made his mark over the past thirty six years. One cannot help but feel pride for the person John has developed into since he joined RTI in 1974. We are indeed proud of the quality of leadership he has shown that has championed RTI's successes both during the apartheid and the present democratic governments.

But I am particularly proud, John, of the calibre of staff that RTI has attracted during your tenure - the foot-soldiers in our crusade for safer roads. Under your leadership, RTI has gained a reputation as the most prestigious law enforcement agency in the country. In many ways the RTI has been a leading agency of change in our provincial government. We know of an era where uniformed enforcement agencies were distrusted by the majority of our people – but RTI has consciously worked to build up the confidence of the community it serves.

Therefore, it is that the RTI's greatest achievement today is how it has been able to transform in a democracy. For this very reason John, may you allow me to use this occasion to also salute many officers for their dedication to duty and outstanding achievements in law enforcement. I am talking about achievements that have been realized through your commitment as staff as well as the levels of service excellence one has come to associate with RTI.

It is true that overcoming the aggression of South Africans that manifests itself on our roads is no easy task nor one that can be accomplished in a short time. Even though we have brought about a turn of the tide, the level of road deaths remains at a completely unacceptable level. In order to move forward we have to build on the good foundations that people like John have laid.

## **Achievements**

1. During his tenure the branding and the image of the Road Traffic Inspectorate had increased substantially and this is evident in the following areas:
  - a. Uniforms and rank insignia
  - b. The branding of Patrol vehicles
  - c. Specialized law enforcement equipment
2. The introduction of Roadside Courts in the province which deal with offenders in a swift and professional manner.
3. Instrumental in assisting the then MEC of Transport Mr Sbu Ndebele in rolling out Project Victoria which originated from the state of Victoria in Australia. It later became known as the Asiphephe Road Safety programme in the Province of KZN.

4. Achievements from the enforcement point of view were the implementation of the reduction of the alcohol limit from 0.08 to 0.05, the introduction of Dragar equipment, the Booze bus, standard operational procedures with regards to roadblocks, the introduction of speed automated cameras and a centralized camera office based in Pinetown RTI.
5. The extension of the speed enforcement programme which now includes fixed cameras as well as the average speed over distance which is the first ever in Africa. This also includes the introduction of the ANPR vehicles which detects stolen vehicles, unlicensed vehicles, outstanding traffic fines etc.
6. The introduction of the computerised learners licence system also the first in the country as well as the mobile learners licence buses which received an award from the African Association for Public Administration and Management in Kenya in 2009.
7. Rolling out of the Alcohol Evidence centres, with Pietermaritzburg being the first in the country and Umdloti and Port Shepstone followed thereafter, Ladysmith is still to be commissioned.
8. The key to any successful law enforcement agency is the ability to train its staff and during Mr Schnell's tenure he was able to ensure the permanent well established college premises which was officially opened last year by the current MEC.
9. Culminating from his expertise in the field of law enforcement Mr Schnell has represented the Department locally, nationally and internationally at various conferences. He also served on various committees which guides law enforcement policies in the country.

10. His greatest achievement to date was the training of more than a thousand traffic officers for KZN.

What more do we need to justify the honouring of such a legend? Our Province needs more people of your calibre and most importantly we wish that your influence may filter through to the rest of our MANCO members as well as all other employees to make KwaZulu-Natal a winning Province, as has always been the case.

**I thank you**