

**SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR WILLIES MCHUNU AT THE LAUNCH OF THE INTEGRATED TRAFFIC LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE AT THE DURBAN EXHIBITION CENTRE ON 19 JULY 2011**

Programme Director;  
Members of the Executive Council;  
Transport Portfolio Committee;  
Members of the Legislature present;  
Ethekwini Mayor;  
Councillors;  
Senior Officials of Government Departments (including municipalities);  
Private Sector representatives;  
Law Enforcement Agencies;  
Members of the Media;  
Distinguished Guests;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;  
Protocol Observed.

I would like to start by taking this opportunity to thank all of you for being part of this important event today. This is indeed a significant milestone in the history of traffic law enforcement in KwaZulu-Natal.

Acting on the Government mandate, the Provincial Department of Transport started long ago to embark on an initiative to encourage safe driving habits. In short, Government is making meaningful efforts to ensure that road users are safe.

It has become a trend now that as Government, we step up our road safety campaigns around particular times of the year when traffic volumes are at their peak. The festive season and Easter holidays are always targeted for this. The truth is that we are losing a number of people during the course of each year on our roads. This country has been experiencing more than 16 000 road fatalities which cost an estimated R56 billion annually that is spent on medical and legal expenses.

We continue to see an alarmingly high number of drivers and pedestrians not taking responsibility with regard to road safety. In view of this, today we are launching an Integrated Traffic Law Enforcement Committee (ITLEC) to co-ordinate and harmonize the efforts of all stakeholders involved in law enforcement.

This Committee's prime aim is to work towards the attainment of the goal of preventing road crashes and offences that lead to fatalities.

It is our priority to continue to force road-users to worry about not breaking traffic laws more than they do now. Presently, they worry more about being caught than the fact of the possible consequence of committing a traffic offence, which could be injury or death. We are therefore readying ourselves to make this costly tendency to use the road irresponsibly unfashionable or old-fashioned

We are saying that it is not fair that we need to spend millions of rands on public awareness campaigns and that the taxpayer is saddled with this huge bill of having to pay for the rich to be reminded of the rules of the road such as: "Wear your seatbelts." It is almost an insult, if not a waste of money to have to remind a qualified driver not to drive a vehicle that is not road-worthy with huge billboards that read: "Speed Kills!" or "Don't drink and drive." This should not only be general knowledge by now, but it should be second nature for the driver to behave accordingly.

This launch is a follow-up to the Road Safety Summit held at the Durban International Convention Centre on the 25<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 2011, which instructed the KZN Department of Transport, to immediately implement the creation of this Committee which we are launching today.

Therefore, having been supported by the Justice Crime and Prevention Security (JCPS) Technical Cluster, and endorsed by the Provincial Cabinet, this Committee is created as a permanent sub-committee of the JCPS, under the leadership of Advocate Simo Chamane of the KZN Department of Transport.

If we are to win this battle, we need a well co-ordinated law enforcement plan to work on.

Traffic Law Enforcement is critical in the plans to reduce road accidents through sustained detection and prosecution of offenders. The success of this, however, hinges on the workability and efficacy of the manner in which we coordinate all law enforcement agencies.

It is worth to note that amongst the key resolutions that were taken at the first Global Ministerial Conference on road safety held in Moscow in November 2009, were the following:

- To reinforce government leadership and guidance in road safety, including designating or strengthening agencies and related co-ordination mechanisms at national and provincial levels;
- To encourage collaborative action by fostering co-operation between relevant entities or public administration;

To this end, it is clear that in order to achieve a sustainable and effective road safety program, of which enforcement is a key component, efforts of all stakeholders should be co-ordinated in a way that seeks to achieve a common goal of reducing road crashes and improving safety and security of road users in this province. This is the bottom line and failure to achieve this cannot be justified if we do have the required human, financial and technical resources to materialize our mandate.

The primary function of traffic law enforcement resides with provincial and municipal authorities and to a lesser extent with SAPS. In KZN the responsible authorities are the Provincial Department of Transport, EThekweni Metro Police and the various Municipalities who by their nature are autonomous bodies.

The KwaZulu-Natal Co-ordinating Traffic Committee was established a number of years ago with the purpose of co-ordinating the actions of these law enforcement agencies in the interest of the promotion of a sound road traffic management system and the implementation of appropriate action.

The Committee has been meeting regularly as outlined in its constitution. However, the effectiveness in achieving its mandate is severely hampered due to the following reasons, amongst others:

- The lack of commitment by various role players, specifically from the law enforcement agencies who not seem to be providing a meaningful input;
- Limitations of the terms of reference which negatively impact on its effectiveness;
- Lack of proper reporting processes;
- The perceived inability to hold members accountable;
- Its inability to adequately measure success because of the absence of measured outputs.

A further opportunity to harness the support of the prosecutorial arm has not been properly co-ordinated. However, local initiatives to build relationships with prosecutors are bearing fruit. The independence of the judiciary is respected and supported and to a large extent magistrates have in certain areas provided, in our view, appropriate sanctions. However, much more could be done to ensure that water-tight cases are brought before the courts on a regular basis in order to assist judicial officers to reach an appropriate decision.

The members of this Integrated Committee which has been tasked with a strategic role to co-ordinate for effective action includes the following role players:

- The South African Police Services
- The Provincial Department of Transport
- EThekweni Metro Police
- Municipal Police
- The National Prosecuting Authority
- The Department of Justice
- Business Against Crime
- The Department of Home Affairs
- South African Revenue Services

- Cross Border Transport Agency
- Emergency Medical Rescue Services

These are primary members, but other stakeholders that the committee may co-opt from time to time will be included.

The aim of the committee is to oversee the implementation of traffic law enforcement in the province and therefore, its objectives are:

- To drive the integrated provincial traffic enforcement initiatives and programmes as well as develop research aimed at curbing the high levels of road accidents and fatalities;
- To develop lines of accountability relative to traffic law enforcement amongst all role-players who are serving within the committee;
- To monitor and evaluate the program and report progress to the JCPS.

We are also planning to decentralise the work of the Committee by forming regional clusters to complement the provincial structure. These will be able to deal with specific challenges in their specific areas. We want to see vigorous enforcement of the in all areas including rural, townships and cities. We want to ensure that we focus our attention on road safety 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year,

Before I conclude, I want to thank all those who will be participating in this programme. You must be determined to tackle the problem of road crashes and root out all criminal behaviour on our roads. Remember that your behaviour can either invite or chase away more potential offenders from our roads. Never indulge yourselves into corrupt practices like bribery.

It would defeat the purpose of what we are trying to do, and the long arm of the law will also catch up with you. This government has no place for corrupt officials. You may be polite and professional when talking to road users but be firm in situations that demand you to be so.

Finally, as we intensify our road safety enforcement programs, it is our hope that one day the roads of KwaZulu-Natal will be free from unnecessary and preventable road crashes. We want to see positive and tolerant attitudes amongst of all road users.

In short, we want a road environment that is devoid of killing machines, an environment that has decent drivers who are moving to and from without life-threatening and expensive road crashes that produce widows and widowers as well as orphans – road crashes that deprive our country of skilled and talented people in all walks of life, especially the youth.

The collective approach of the Integrated Traffic Law Enforcement Committee will see KwaZulu-Natal reaping positive benefits against road carnages and against crime on our roads. This is the year of

Activism Against Road Carnages. This is the year of People's Action Against Crime. Let us as Law Enforcement Officers in KwaZulu-Natal actively play our role in these noble causes. Let us build a United Front Against Crime

**I thank you**