

Address by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements, Siboniso Duma | Launch of Transport Month | Pass-out Parade | Pietermaritzburg Athletics Stadium

30 September 2025

Programme Director, Alex Mthiyane

Mayor of Umsunduzi Municipality, Cllr Thebolla Mzimkhulu,

Mayor of Umshwati Local Municipality, Cllr Mandla Zondi,

Acting Head of the Department, Sma Ngubo,

MANCO,

Invited Guests,

Parents,

Commanders,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

We wish to welcome all parents and invited guests to this historic event.

Some call it a graduation.

Others refer to this event as a Pass-out Parade

Importantly, we cherish the opportunity to be with you today.

We strategically decided to use this important event to launch Transport Month activities.

We lost five innocent lives here in Pietermaritzburg as a result of a horrific accident involving scholar transport. The death of these innocent lives should not be in vain.

Secondly, UMgungudlovu is a capital of KwaZulu-Natal.

Having this event here is therefore befitting.

Through the month of October, we will roll-out a series of activities as part of creating awareness about road safety measures we have put in place.

We will interact with key stakeholders in various sectors of our economy and within the transport industry.

Importantly, we took a decision to use the Department of Transport as a catalyst of the growth of all sectors.

We want to be at the forefront of the growth of the agricultural sector as part of ensuring food security.

Commercial and emerging farmers must be able to supply the markets with agricultural products. In this regard, we are constructing roads that connect farmers to the markets.

We want to be the catalyst for the growth of the tourism industry. In this regard, we are maintaining and constructing road networks to various tourism destinations.

We want children to access schools.

We want communities to access hospitals and other socio-economic centres.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are committed towards creating a prosperous KwaZulu-Natal for future generations.

As we build road networks, we understand that there are criminals who are involved in human trafficking.

As we maintain our road networks, we know that there are criminals who are involved in cross-border crime.

Our message to the criminals is that we are ready to take them out.

We are unleashing a new generation of traffic officers who will strengthen our Zero Tolerance, Alufakwa and No Nonsense Campaign.

Over the next 30 years of our freedom and democracy, the more than 177 traffic officers will take our road safety programmes into another level.

Let me reflect on the pass rate.

We have 120 males and 57 females – which makes it 177.

The overall pass rate is 89%

I have given our efficient, dedicated and energetic RTI team a mandate to arrest reckless drivers and those who drive under the influence of alcohol.

The new recruits will have no mercy.

We are injecting energy.

We are injecting discipline.

We are inspiring hope for a better future.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I don't intend to make a long speech because this day belongs to the parents and the new traffic officers.

However, I want to salute the entire RTI team for the successful implementation of multi-disciplinary operations.

Since August 15, we have arrested more than 399 motorists for drunk driving.

This success is a testament to the effectiveness of our Alufakwa and Zero Tolerance campaign.

With the new recruits, we will increase the visibility of traffic officers in order to remove from our road networks reckless drivers and those who drive under the influence of alcohol.

We will have no mercy.

As new traffic officers, you must not tolerate name dropping. Don't be intimidated by anyone who claims to know me. You must phone immediately and I will tell that person to co-operate with you. And you must arrest them.

Serve the people of KwaZulu-Natal with humility.

Serve the people of KwaZulu-Natal efficiently and with a high level of professionalism.

Don't take bribes.

You must not be associated with "the cold drink."

We need you to focus on ensuring behavioural change.

Irresponsible driver behaviour has been seen as the primary contributor to road crashes, with distracted driving, drunken driving, over speeding, and non-compliance with the rules of the road playing a major role.

Apart from arresting reckless drivers – we will enforce behavioural change.

We will name and shame the offenders. I will be attending court cases in support of our dedicated RTI team.

I want them to feel my support every day, every week and every month.

You must arrest everyone irrespective of their profile in society. You must not be intimidated by anyone. Arrest professionals – lawyers – police – engineers – councillors or any other professional.

Critically, you must make sure that you fight the Blue Light Mafias.

Anyone, who is using Blue lights or any other lights illegally – arrest them.

It's important to note that road safety is a shared responsibility.

Research has proven that changing road user behaviour is central to making our roads safer. In fact, statistics have indicated that up to 87 percent of all road fatalities in the country can be attributed to road user behaviour.

This compels us to implement a programme of behaviour change across the road sector, and we urge the public to join us in this effort.

We wish to conclude by thanking members of the public for their support of our campaign against drinking and driving.

Let us hold hands as we roll-out our Road Safety activities underpinned by the Four E's:

- Enforcement (ensuring high visibility of law enforcement);
- Education (creating awareness through educative campaigns);
- Engineering (improving road designs to ensure motorists' safety); and
- Evaluation (assessing what works and how many lives it has saved).

As I conclude, our message to the new traffic officers is that you must be exemplary in your conduct.

Be professional.

Don't take bribes.

Don't be friends with criminals.

Be the window to a prosperous future characterized by the safety of communities and road users.

We thank parents and relatives for supporting these learners.

We pay tribute to the RTI College that has produced the officers.

The people of KwaZulu-Natal are proud of our excellent output.

I have no doubt that KZN will be known as a capital of skilled, professional and efficient traffic officers.

I thank you.

Ends

Issued by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements

Enquiries

Ndabezinhle Sibiya | 082 3754742 | MEC for Transport and Human Settlements