

Deputy Minister

Senior officials from National, Provincial and Local Governments;

The organisers of this event;

Distinguished members of the media;

The RTMC; and

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is indeed with honour that I am here today to address a full-house contingent of the media. I am also pleased to note that our Arrive Alive campaign has raised a huge interest in the local media during the festive season.

Today, as Minister of Transport, I am declaring the December 2006 to January 2007 Arrive Alive Festive Season Traffic Report.

Can we all stand and observe a moment of silence in the honour and remembrance of all victims of motor vehicle accidents. Thank you.

My sincere appreciation goes to all my Provincial colleagues and comrades, MECs for Transport, Roads, Traffic and Public Safety in all nine provinces for their initiatives, their participation and dedication to this nationwide safety programme. As you all know, our MECs were on the ground during the festive season. Most of them were in their reflective jackets and traffic uniforms at roadblocks issuing information pamphlets and interacting with the public.

I also took time to join our law enforcement officers to give them support for their excellent contribution in saving lives. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank all our law enforcement agencies under the co-ordination of the RTMC, our traffic departments both at provincial and local levels, the South African Police Service, the South African National Defence Force, the Emergency Services (our Ambulance Service and Fire Brigade), the Department of Health. (Our doctors

and nurses are often forgotten. They continue to play an immeasurable contribution at hospitals).

The following factors contribute to the high number of traffic offences:

- Public attitude towards road safety
- Lack of effective and consistent policing
- Poor road conditions
- Poor driving skills/bad driving habits
- Poor roadworthiness of vehicles
- Pedestrian and or animal presence and
- Rapid urbanization.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I remind you that the main objective of the **Arrive Alive** campaign since its inception has been **"to reduce the crashes and resultant fatalities (as compared to the same period the previous year)"**.

Number of Fatal Crashes

During the December 01, 2006 to 10 January 2007 holiday period, the number of fatal crashes reduced by 59 (4.13%) from 1 428 during the same period last year to 1 369.

Road fatalities reduced by 81 (4.67%) from 1 726 to 1 645 over the same period. In short, we have achieved a reduction of 4.67% in fatalities and a reduction of **4,13%** in the number of fatal crashes as well as a reduction of **4,5%** in the number of vehicles involved.

The provincial breakdown of fatalities is as follows:

- Gauteng: from 327 to 334 (change 7);
- KZN: from 347 to 331 (change -16)

- Western Cape: from 176 to 150 (change –26);
- Eastern Cape: from 201 to 212 (change 11);
- Free State: from 139 to 138 (change -1);
- Mpumalanga: from 178 to 153 (change –25);
- North West: from 123 to 135 (change 12);
- Limpopo: from 177 to 128 (change -49); and
- Northern Cape: from 57 to 64 (change 7).

With the exception of the Free State and North West, the seven (7) other provinces all recorded a reduction in fatal crashes. On a provincial percentage basis the biggest decrease was recorded in Limpopo with a reduction of 33 (23.24%) from 142 crashes to 109. The Western Cape recorded a decrease of 18 (11.84%) and Mpumalanga a decrease of 14 (10.07%).

Five provinces recorded decreases in the number of fatalities. Limpopo recorded the biggest decrease of 49 (27.86%), followed by the Western Cape with a decrease of 26 (14.77%) and Mpumalanga with a decrease of 25 (14.25).

On a provincial percentage basis the biggest increase in the number of fatalities was recorded in the Northern Cape where the number of fatalities increased by 7 (12.28) from 57 to 64, North West by 12 from 123 to 135, Eastern Cape by 11 from 201 to 212.

Road user fatalities changed as follows:

- Driver fatalities: decreased by 4 (0.82%) from 434 to 430;
- Passenger fatalities: decreased by 4 (0.65%) from 574 to 570; and
- Pedestrian fatalities: decreased by 73 (10.21%) from 718 to 645.

Number of vehicles involved in fatal crashes:

The total number of motorised vehicles involved in fatal crashes increased by 57 (3.40%) from 1 673 to 1730.

- Minibuses: increased by 58 from 106 to 164;
- Minibus taxis: decreased by 59 from 84 to 25;
- Buses: decreased by 2 from 40 to 38; and
- Trucks: by 2 from 139 to 137;
- Cyclists: decreased by 11 from 39 to 28.

Implementation of the Road Safety Strategy

The ever-growing number of road traffic crashes and related deaths demonstrate that we need to strengthen current programmes and interventions. Poor level of safety on our roads is directly related to the degree of lawlessness on the roads, which is unacceptable and intolerable. In order to improve the level of law compliance we will accelerate implementation of the road safety strategy in the following key interventions:

- An increase in the number of traffic officers to at all traffic authorities to keep pace with the increase in the number of vehicles and level of lawlessness, which should also provide for the expected increased demand during 2010 Soccer World Cup event;
- Dedicated traffic patrol teams to undertake daily uninterrupted patrols at dangerous locations;
- Improved and participative road safety education programmes at schools and other training institutions as well as within communities, will be developed and rolled out.
- Work with road authorities to accept a pro-active approach in the identification of pedestrian hazardous locations on the street and road network such remedial measures in the form of street lighting, traffic signals and traffic calming where feasible.

- Coordination is necessary with all stakeholders in government at all levels (local authority and provinces) but also with other government departments – Health, Justice, Safety and Security, Labour, Education and others and stakeholders in business and industry, as well as the NGO community and with transport organizations such as NAAMSA, Business against Crime and the Road Freight Association

As you all know, we have launched South Africa's comprehensive new road safety strategy, which we have called new ***The Road Safety Strategy***. The strategy is about getting to grips with the underlying causes of crashes and deaths on our roads. It looks at systems and structures and proposes a wide range of interlinked investment programmes and reform actions to radically improve the safety of the total road environment.

We will therefore invest in creating better, more responsible drivers and educated, road-conscious pedestrians. We will introduce strong measures to improve vehicle safety and we will upgrade the condition of our road network where it counts most, starting with remedial engineering works and improved signage at the most critical hazardous locations that the provinces have already identified.

The strategy puts a high priority on coordinated action in all the key areas of road safety: law compliance, driver fitness and training, vehicle condition, fleet regulation, overload control, pedestrian education, direct community road safety participation and active passenger and public empowerment. It will build the institutional capacity and public support required to stamp out fraud and corruption, effectively penalise serious traffic offenders and build a culture of careful and responsible road use.

For this year and beyond, let us commit ourselves to safety on our roads. I call upon communities to volunteer themselves in making our roads a safe place. With these I thank you for your attention and patience.

Arrive Alive.