



SAFE TRAVEL TO SCHOOL PROGRAMME

Presentation to GRSP Africa Seminar

Cape Town 12 – 13 August 2014

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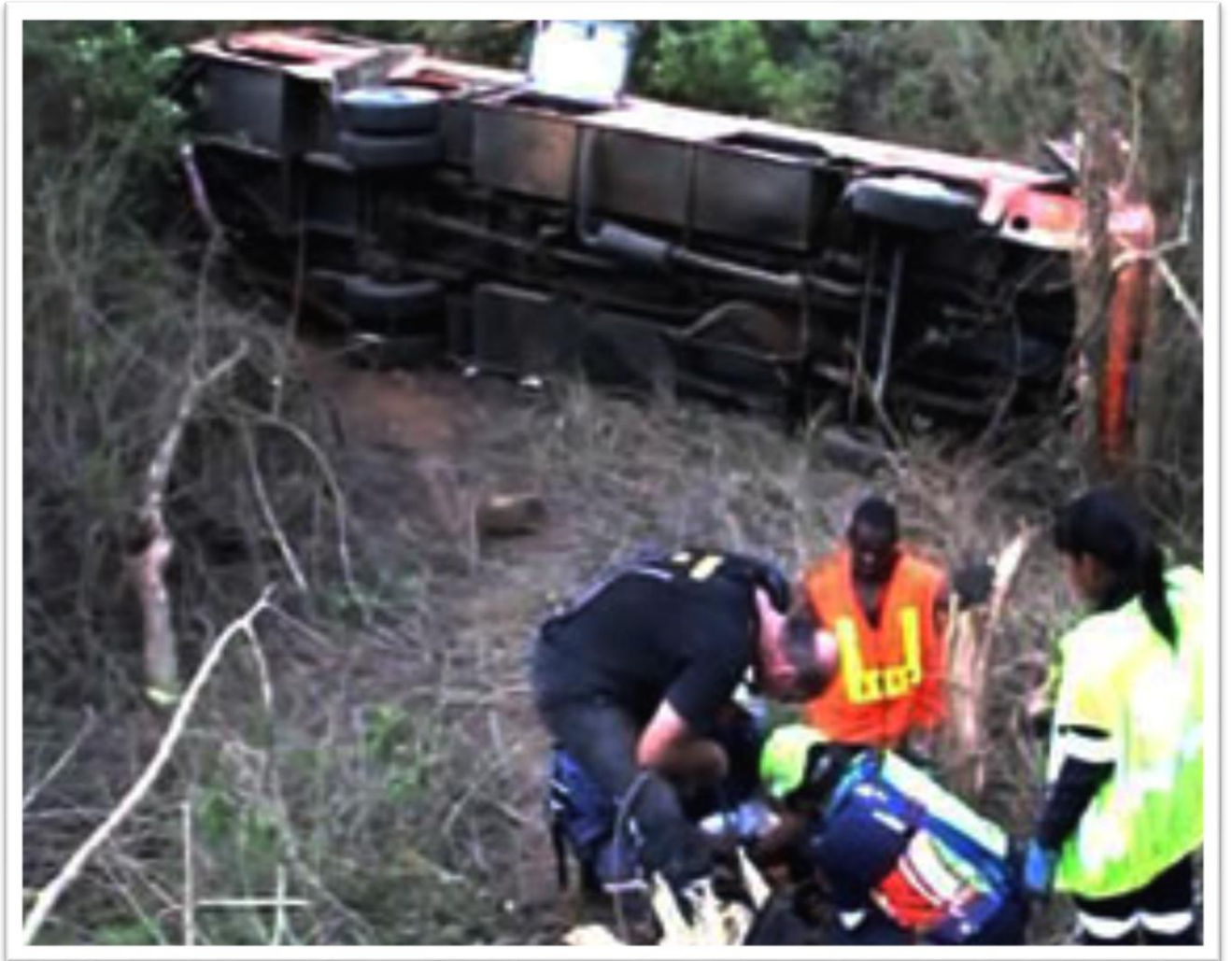


Why have we established this programme?

In Cape Town this year, a school bus driver tries to make it across a railway crossing, and 9 children die.

In KZN, a bakkie bearing 29 school-children loses control, goes down an embankment – 5 children dead.

This project is not only opportune, though, it's unique....



Aims of the Safe Travel to School Programme

- To monitor the driving behaviour of selected groups of scholar transport drivers who regularly transport children to and from school along high risk routes in the Cape Town area.
- Through regular feedback and other interventions, to encourage drivers to positively change their driving behaviour, and so help prevent road accidents involving school children

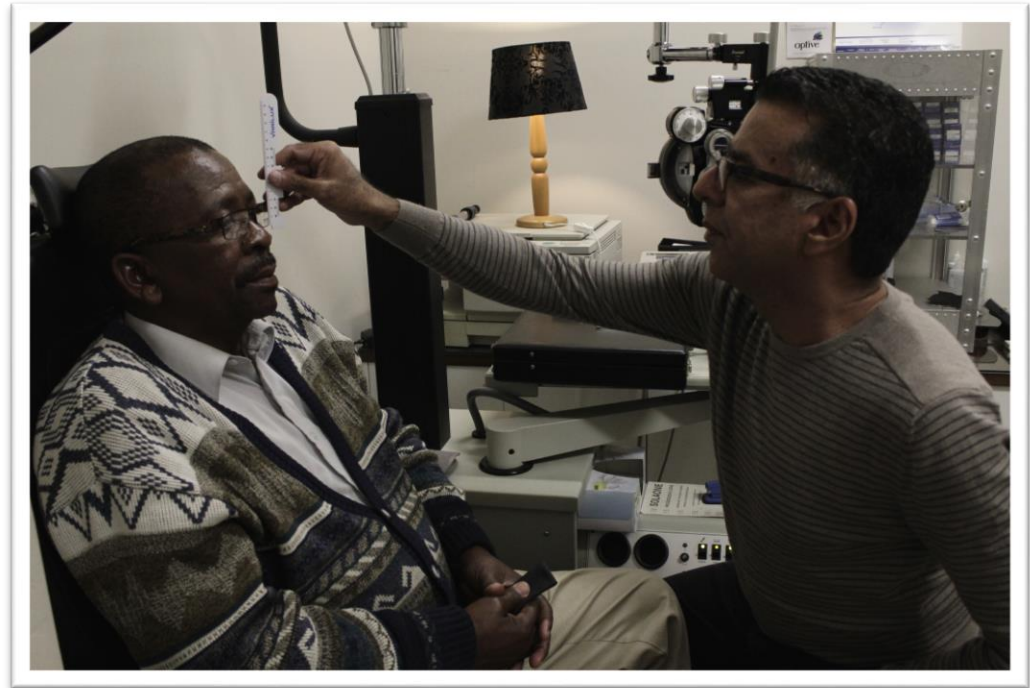
Recruiting licensed scholar drivers who drive children to schools along high risk routes



Checking vehicle roadworthiness



Facilitating eye exams



Installing the DQ device



Meetings and discussions with drivers



Public launch at primary school in Athlone 30 January 2014

Drivers



Panel: Childsafe, DDG Transport,
Discovery Insure



Progress to date: ***

- We have spoken to more than **150** drivers
- We have had **4** information workshops for drivers
- **32** vehicles have been fitted with the DQ device
- **25** drivers have had their eyes examined; most have been provided with glasses

- The launch was attended by about **150** people and included drivers from **3** high risk areas
- We have had regular consultative meetings with **3** principals of schools along high risk areas
- More than **30** educators (subject heads mostly) have been involved in curriculum enhancement
- About **240** scholars participated in art and colour-in competition at the launch school

- About **1 800** scholars have been part of awareness interventions, and **1 000** more soon
- Awareness materials are being prepared for the caregivers of about **2 000** school children
- We facilitated **1** information workshop for **80** drivers conducted by the Department of Transport
- We have held **3** data analysis discussions with drivers of the first group
- It's taken us, part-time, **10** months

Continuing...

- First aid training course for drivers, conducted by the SA Red Cross Society (6 X 3 hour sessions). Other training interventions to follow.
- Continuing implementations of processes: roadworthy and eye tests, etc
- TARGET – **75** drivers before the end of the year.

Establishing a good working relationship with govt depts has been crucial -

- The Department of Transport issues the licences which make drivers compliant
- City depts. and law enforcement (Traffic Services) enforce compliance, often randomly
- The Dept of Community Safety assists with road safety awareness interventions in schools
- The Dept of Education needs to know what we are doing in the schools, and give their support

Definite synergy between aims of this programme and what is planned by government

- Public utterances by Minister in the wake of scholar transport crashes
- Encouraging recent discussions and collaborations between Childsafe and govt depts
- Portfolio of Transport Minister has been retained by the incumbent, Dipuo Peters, who has been briefed on the programme and supports it
- **HOWEVER:** government processes are typically very slow....

NB to note..... and deal with.....

- The issue of scholar transport is a complex one: it is characterised by diversity - of experiences, location and historical factors; political and personal dynamics; political histories, govt priorities, regional politics, competition and rivalries....
- The majority of scholar transport drivers are not compliant: no licences, vehicles not roadworthy, schools not supporting them; slow and sometimes difficult application processes

So, out of necessity, we have had to play a conscientising and organising role:

- Interceding for drivers with the Transport Dept and licensing board
- Assisting drivers with the application process and followup
- Meeting drivers wherever they park and encouraging them to apply for licences and join the programme
- Going to meetings of informal driver associations to talk about the programme, their issues and concerns.

Future plans:

- Pilot phase of the programme closes mid-2015 (year and a half for impact measurement)
- Rollout begins: Programme expands to other high risk areas in Western Cape
- Start investigating and preparing for expansion to KZN (RTMC ranking)
- Preparations for rollout to other provinces

Vision:

Cohorts of scholar transport drivers who are good drivers, road safety aware, skilled, recommended by schools and supported by government



We are trying to change behaviour – this takes time.

- Our aim is to make the journey to and from school safer for children.
- To do this effectively, and effect permanent changes in driver behaviour. We must study and make sense of the issues, and take into consideration all aspects of the environment and context as we plan going forward.