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Management Corporation

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The Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC)  
is an Agency of The Department of Transport and a  
Member of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**To : All News Editors**

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**Attention : News Reporters / Transport Reporters /Newswires**

### **RTMC AND SANTAM LAUNCH PARTNERSHIP TO REDUCE ROAD COLLISIONS INVOLVING SCHOOL CHILDREN**

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**GAUTENG:** South Africa is experiencing an unacceptably high proportion of children who lose their lives in road-related incidents.

In a bid to amplify the campaign for safer roads and to raise awareness around this important issue, the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) has partnered with Santam to launch a Scholar Patrol initiative in the under-resourced Sedibeng District Municipality, in Gauteng.

Neptal Khoza, Head of Market Development at Santam says that Scholar Patrols have become synonymous with road safety for learners in many urban areas throughout the country.

There are currently 2002 registered Scholar Patrols in South Africa, with more than 24 000 participants, volunteers, and supervisors. "We have however, identified a need to roll Scholar Patrol projects out in townships, where many children walk or commute to school without adult supervision and often need to cross dangerous, multi-laned roads.



**Board of Directors:** Ms N Mufamadi (Chairperson), Prof. M Mphahlele, Ms T Thankge CD(SA), Dr E Thebe, Adv. X Stemela, Ms L Magalo, Prof C Twala, Mr NJ Kudzingana, Adv. J Makgatho\*  
**Chief Executive Officer:** Advocate MS Msibi  
**Company Secretary:** Ms S Petse  
*\*Departmental Representative*

“Through this initiative, we will make it possible for children in three of Sedibeng’s most populated townships, to benefit from this same level of attentiveness and care,” he adds.

### **Child safety concerns warrant an urgent call-to-action.**

According to the RTMC, the most affected road user groups in car accidents are pedestrians (43%). Furthermore, of the over 12 436 road deaths that occurred in South Africa in 2022, ten-point-two percent (10.2%) involved children under the age of 14. Research has also found that more than 60% of children between the ages of 5 and 14 are involved in fatal crashes as pedestrians between the hours of 12H00 and 19H00.

This time is critical for child safety as it is time when the school day has ended and marks recreational time without adult supervision.

### **Leading the way towards safer SA communities**

The number of schools involved in school safety programme has shown a remarkable increase in the past year.

To further amplify these efforts the RTMC has partnered with Sanlam to roll out the Scholar Patrol project in the Sedibeng District Municipality, Santam aims to address the pressing need for safe road crossings and greater awareness among young pedestrians.

Santam will set up Scholar Patrols at 10 schools, with the goal of expanding the project to other provinces. Safety patrollers on duty will be trained effectively, given the appropriate uniforms and equipment, including umbrellas and rain ponchos during the rainy season. Patrollers will also receive certificates of recognition for their participation.

The initiative will also provide much-needed temporary employment opportunities for the surrounding communities. Post-matric, unemployed youth will be recruited as patrollers in a bid to contribute towards the government’s objective to provide an

avenue for labour absorption and income transfers to poor households, in the short-medium term.

Khoza said: “The project has the potential to prepare youth for future careers in road safety, traffic police, and general law enforcement. This project is one of many initiatives that we will plug into the existing community enhancement structures in achieving our broader goal of building more resilient communities., We foresee that learners as well as their families and communities will benefit immensely from this service.

We call on other corporate and private sector entities to join us in partnering with the public sector in ways that can benefit greater society and ultimately provide existing initiatives with the boost they need to reach their full potential.”

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Status Report on Road Safety of 2023 cites that road traffic injuries remains the leading cause of death for children.

“Pedestrian safety remains the most significant road safety challenge in South Africa. Our records as the RTMC indicates that on average of 10,2% of pedestrian fatalities are of the 0 to 14 age brackets. For the past three years 47% of fatal crashes involve pedestrians, Gauteng as one of the main contributors to the high pedestrian fatality rate, according to RTMC spokesperson Simon Zwane.

“Funding for road safety remains a challenge for the RTMC. There has been continuous effort to engage the private sector for collaboration on implementation of road safety initiatives. The school intervention by SANTAM in the road safety programme will go a long way in creating safer communities and save more lives”. Zwane said.

The Scholar patrol not only enhances the safety of children at school, but also plays an important role in teaching them about road safety and responsibility. Children in most cases bear the brunt of the irresponsible, inconsiderate, and reckless behaviour of adults seen on our roads, this renders children as the most vulnerable road users

since their lack of protection and limited body tolerance to violent forces if hit by a vehicle. The RTMC supports the UN recommendations for speed limits to be reduced around schools to 30km/hour and the construction of speed calming measures around schools to protect the lives of our children.

We further call upon motorist on South African roads to take all reasonable steps to protect the lives of children as vulnerable road users. Save the lives of children now.

ChildSafe Spokesperson and Executive Director, Zaitoon Rabaney said “We continue to advocate for the 30 km/ h speed restriction around schools as well as environmental modifications that influence driver behaviour to adhere to slower speeds in school areas. “Equipping our children and their families with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate roads safely is paramount. Through educational programs, campaigns, and targeted outreach efforts, such as the Scholar Patrol initiative, we can foster a lasting positive impact on the safety culture on our roads, especially around schools. These alarming statistics, however, highlights the urgent need for comprehensive road safety measures, particularly those focused on protecting our most vulnerable road users – children. “

ChildSafe emphasises that various factors contribute to the increased risk, such as inadequate road infrastructure, a lack of supervision, and the necessity for many children to walk as their primary means of transport. As such, it is imperative that interventions are implemented to make walking safer, ultimately reducing the vulnerability of pedestrians, especially children. Traffic calming measures and comprehensive road safety strategies has become an urgent necessity.

**ENDS**

**ISSUED BY: THE ROAD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (RTMC)**

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## About Santam, Insurance, Good and Proper

Santam is South Africa's largest short-term insurer with a market share in excess of 22%. Listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), the Santam group provides a diversified range of general insurance products and services in Southern Africa and internationally through a network of over 3 300 intermediaries and direct channels.

The group's more than 1 million policyholders range from individuals to commercial and specialist business owners and institutions, including 80 of the Top 100 companies listed on the JSE. The group employs over 6 000 employees and was certified as a Top Employer by the Top Employer Institute for the eighth consecutive year in 2024.

## About the Road Traffic Management Corporation

The Road Traffic Management Corporation is the South Africa's lead agency on road safety.

It was established to strengthen national and provincial governments' collective capacity to govern road traffic through partnerships with local government bodies and the private sector. Furthermore, it has to enhance the overall quality of road traffic service provision ensure safety, security, order, discipline and mobility on the roads.