



**TRANSPORT MINISTRY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, MS SINDISIWE CHIKUNGA,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE RELEASE OF THE EASTER ROAD SAFETY
STATISTICS**

RTMC OFFICES, WATERFALL, JOHANNESBURG

14 APRIL 2023 AT 10H00

- **Programme Director**
- **Members of Executive Councils responsible for traffic matters**
- **Director-General, Adv James Mlawu**
- **Chairpersons of our Roads Entities**
- **CEOs of our Roads Entities**
- **Ladies and gentlemen of the media**
- **Fellow South Africans**

Just this morning we visited one of our smart DLTC here in Waterfall. And now we gather here today to deal with the most difficult process of announcing. people who have lost their lives in our roads. These are not just statistics but our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, relatives and children. It is in that regard that I would want us to pose and observe a moment of silence in their remembrance... May their souls rest in eternal peace and rise in glory.

As the Ministry, and a department responsible for transport through our agencies, we developed an Easter Road Safety Plan that was informed by scientific data, including identified road collision hotspots and the times of the day at which crashes commonly occur. The Plan was to be implemented by provincial and municipal authorities, whom were also allowed to customise additional interventions in response to their peculiar challenges that required specific measures. Central to the plan was the deployment of traffic law enforcement resources on certain areas on a 24/7 basis to curb lawlessness, improve compliance with road regulations to prevent and reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

We equally mobilised stakeholders in the private sector, faith-based, and non-government also organisations to join forces and re-affirm the message that road safety is everyone's responsibility. We also heightened awareness and road safety education.

The implementation of our plan was commendable, and the country experienced incidents with only one major crash on the last day of travel when a multiple vehicle piled up occurred in misty conditions on the N3 near Hilton in KwaZulu Natal. Apart from this unfortunate and regrettable

collision there were no other major collision involving multiple vehicles or more than five fatalities during the entire period.

Hundreds of thousands of motorists travelled from urban centres to the countryside, to various places of pilgrimage, and holiday destinations and arrived safely.

Reports from the SANRAL toll gates indicate that we had increased traffic volumes on our major highways leading to and from Gauteng.

At the start of the Easter weekend on Thursday, SANRAL recorded an average of 2 000 vehicles an hour passing through the toll-gates. The highest volume of 2 287 vehicles an hour was recorded between 16H00 and 17H00 at Pumlani Plaza on the N1 towards Limpopo.

At the end of the Easter weekend on Monday, 10 April 2023, the highest traffic volume was recorded between 17H00 and 18H00, when 3 244 vehicles were recorded passing through the Pumlani Plaza into Gauteng.

At the end of the holiday period on Monday, the highest traffic volume was recorded between 17H00 and 18H00 when 3244 vehicles were recorded passing through the Pumlani Plaza into Gauteng.

Our law enforcement officers maintained visibility throughout the period and dealt with the intransigent drivers who could not resist the temptation to break the rules of the road and share the space responsibly. As a consequence, 30 934 traffic fines were issued, 430 vehicles were discontinued because of road unworthiness related issues, 1 625 were impounded for displaying invalid or fake discs, and operating in violation of permits, while 1 716 drivers were arrested for excessive speeding, drunken driving, reckless and negligent driving, and operating public transport without permits.

The top five traffic offences identified were speeding, driving unlicensed vehicles, driving without fastening seatbelts, driving without licences, and driving vehicles with worn out tyres.

The worst speedster was nabbed on the N1 near Lyttleton in Centurion, Gauteng driving at an excessive speed of 198 kilometres per hour in a 120-kilometre zone. The worst drunken driving incident was recorded in the central business district of Harrismith in the Free State when a driver recorded 1.16 milligrams of alcohol in 1 000 millilitres of breath. This was 4.8 times more than the legal limit of 0.24 mg in 1 000 ml of breath.

There can be no doubt that the proactive actions of our law enforcement officers prevented far worse carnage on our roads. We may not be able to quantify the actual number of people that may have died had these reckless and unrepentant drivers not been caught, but we are certain that lives were saved.

Ladies and gentlemen allow me to express my profound disappointment and displeasure at the high rate of crashes and fatalities experienced during this Easter long weekend. The total number of fatal crashes this year is 185 resulting in 225 fatalities as opposed to the same period the previous year when we recorded 135 fatal crashes that resulted in 161 fatalities. The statistics on gender classification shows that in there was a decrease in female fatalities from 28% in 2022 to 19% in 2023 and male fatalities increased from 67% in 2022 to 70%. Most of these are young aspiring professionals whose careers were beginning to shine. They possessed the skills that are needed to grow our country's economy and to reduce poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment.

An increase in fatalities was recorded in all provinces except in Mpumalanga, Western Cape and the North West and we congratulate these provinces for the work well done. The

other six provinces that recorded an increase which is setback that may impact on our ability to attain the goals set out in the United Nations global road safety campaign to reduce road carnages by half in 2030 if not changed m.

The high number of road users who perished on our roads are pedestrians, who accounted for 44,4% of all fatalities, followed by passengers at 27,7%. Drivers accounted for 25.6%;cyclists at 1,3% while the road user status of 1% could not be determined.

The highest number of pedestrians died in collisions that happened in the Western Cape, Limpopo, Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal.

The highest number of fatalities occurred on Friday and the lowest number was recorded on Thursday. Most of the fatalities occurred at 15H00 and 22H00 and were predominantly characterised by hit and run crashes, single vehicle overturned, pedestrian collisions and head on collisions.

Human factors, which include reckless and negligent driving, was the most prominent contributing factor in all fatalities at

96,2 followed by road and environmental factors at 4.5% while vehicle factors were the least contributor at 1,1%.

The unacceptably high contribution of human factors reflects poor driving habits of our motorists and is also a reflection of the high number of incompetent drivers on the roads. We are scaling up anti-corruption interventions including the use of technology such as the computerised learner licence testing sheets including the smart DLTs which we saw this morning, which we will be rolling out throughout the country.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We remain resolute that we will succeed-and turn the tide on the carnage on our roads. We are continuing to strengthen our measures that seek to make our roads safer. And, we continue to learn invaluable lessons and will use these to bolster our traffic law enforcement interventions.

In this regard, we will be rolling the 365-day road safety with renewed vigour and determination. We owe this not to ourselves but to the next generation that must inherit a better place than we found. We have instructed our traffic officers to enforce the law.

Our efforts to stem the tide of fatalities on our roads will not falter. We have taken strides that have brought us closer to classifying traffic policing as an essential service of a 7-day, 24-hour job across the country, a move which will transform the face of traffic law enforcement and ensure sustained visibility on the roads. As we continue to put in place building blocks for a robust and resilient traffic law enforcement model which include the new NQF Level 6 curriculum.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all the law enforcement officials and emergency personnel who worked throughout the holiday period.

A sincere word of gratitude also goes to those motorists who respected the rules of the road and conducted themselves in a manner that ensured safety of other road users.

We extend a word of gratitude to the various media houses who repeatedly echoed our message of road safety, and as such partnering with us.

We also extend our deepest condolences to the families, friends and next of kins of those who died on the roads. We

wish a speedy recovery to all those who suffered injuries of different forms and severity who some are still recovering in hospitals and at home.

Let me assure all the citizens of our country that we are determined to reduce road crashes and fatalities.

As a nation, we are renowned for our resilience and fighting spirit. We are still making a clarion call to all our citizens to restrain themselves, that is baZithibe from lawlessness.

Road Safety is a collective national responsibility .

Arrive Alive!

I thank you.