



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

SPEECH BY MEC FOR TRANSPORT, SAFETY, SECURITY AND LIAISON DELIVERED BY THE MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, THE HON Me. MAPULA MOKABA PHUKWANA TO THE SIXTH LEGISLATURE OF THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE AT LEBOWAKGOMO LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER: VOTE 08 (TRANSPORT)

Theme: "Safer Transport services for socio-economic development"

Honourable Speaker, Mme Polly Boshielo

When our forebears met to adopt the Freedom Charter at Kliptown in 1955, they have amongst others declared that *"All shall be free to travel without restriction from countryside to town, from province to province, from South Africa to abroad."* They envisioned transportation as a human right to be enjoyed by all South Africans without banishment, difficulties, segregation and without fear that you may be arrested and not return home due to accident.

The Honourable Deputy Speaker

His Excellency, the Honourable Premier, Mr Chupu Stan Mathabatha;

Honourable Members of the Executive Council;

Honourable Leaders and members of the opposition;

Honourable Members of the Legislature;

Executive Mayors, Mayors and leaders from our municipalities;

Their Excellency's Makgoshi a rena and the entire Traditional Leadership;

Stalwarts and veterans of our struggle against racism;

Acting Director General and Heads of Departments;

Representatives from various faith based organisations;

The Chairperson and members of Operating Licensing Board;

Board of Directors, CEO and staff of Gateway Airports Authority Limited;
Representatives from Transnet Freight Rail;
Representatives from the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa;
Members of the Provincial Taxi Council, Driving Schools;
The Limpopo Chapter of South African Women in Transport;
Chairperson and members of the S.A National Small Bus Operators Council;
Representatives from the Religious Fraternity
Members of the media
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Since the dawn of democracy, the Department of Transport in line with the Kliptown declaration, put into place mechanisms and services aimed at ensuring the realisation of this ideal in honour of our forebears and the public in general.

In the current era of economic transformation of our society, it has become clearer that the provision of affordable, reliable and safe transport systems is a crucial ingredient towards the ideal society envisaged in the Freedom Charter.

To this end, the National Development Plan instructs us in the Transport Sector to:

“establish effective, safe and affordable public transport”. Within that context, the Limpopo Development Plan has mandated us as the Department of Transport to:

Firstly,: bridge the geographic distances affordably and foster reliable and safe public transport within the province;

secondly: to support economic development by easing the transportation of goods from production sites, to manufacturing and ultimately to where they are consumed. This will also facilitate local, regional and international trade;

Three: to promote low carbon economy through offering transport alternatives with reduced environmental damage. .

These policy pronouncements did not only place the Department of Transport on the trajectory to increase the safe mobility of our people and goods. It also placed the Department of Transport and all stakeholders within the transport industry amongst the facilitators to effective social and economic development of our province and South Africa. .

Madam Speaker

On Road Safety, South Africa as a participant in the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety, has endorsed the global undertaking to contribute towards preventing up to 50 million serious injuries by 2020. Through this budget tool, we reconfirm our commitment to the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety and we are certain that we will reach our own provincial target.

Our Road Safety programmes and activities for 2016/2017 financial year will continue to include Road Safety Management, Safer Roads and Mobility, Safer Vehicles, Safer Road Users and Post-Crash Care.

As a province we are also participating with the National Department of Transport in the development of a new Road Safety Strategy which will be tabled in Parliament during the 16/17 Financial Year.

It is for this reason that this budget vote is amongst others, a key part of the 2016 – “365 Days Road Safety” campaign, that instructs all our people to stop ignoring the rules of the roads. The Easter and Festive seasons activities of heightened visibilities are simply the highlight of what we do throughout the year.

Our mantra **“Don’t ignore the road signs”** must echo across all broadcasting platforms every day throughout the 2016/2017 financial year up to until the road accident fatalities are reduced..

We are concerned, **Madam Speaker**, that our roads in Limpopo are among those recording high accident rates in the world. We draw this assertion from the fact, that Limpopo comes second after KwaZulu Natal on the number of fatalities on our public roads. These could be attributed to the number of tourists, visitors we experience as well as being a thoroughfare to our neighbouring countries.

This unfortunate situation was highlighted by the international surveys that placed South African roads among the most dangerous in the world. The country recorded the highest road death rate of 23.5 per 100 000 people in 2014, when the global average was 17.4 fatalities per 100 000 people.

Recently, the Road Safety Activists and other transport stakeholders met at the Land Mark Lodge in Polokwane.

The purpose was to deliberate on how best can we contribute towards reducing road crashes and deaths in Limpopo and the country.

Participants from across the Province made inputs on how to develop a new, goal-based road safety strategy that embodied the principle of safety first on our roads..

Statistics on road safety campaigns tells us that the response to our messages is slow and rules of the road are still being ignored. It is for this reason that, in this province we are geared to turn the tide around. As part of this process we are introducing more stringent measures to compel road users to comply with the rules of the road.

To that extent, we have created special traffic task teams dealing with specific issues contributing to high accident rates. Selection to these special task teams is based on commitment, passion and readiness to go an extra mile with or without additional pay.

This is also to ensure that state resources in officials and executives hand are made to sweat to the benefit of road users and the tax payers in general. Once you switch the state motor vehicle ignition on, you must know that you have started working and as such the citizens must benefit.

To road users and the public, if you are caught disobeying the rules of the road, driving under the influence of any intoxicating substances and other forms of abhorrent behaviour, our law enforcement officers will treat you like any other criminal.

Our Justice sector will ensure that sentences meted out will compare with those of other criminal offences.

Honourable Speaker

Within that context, let me take this opportunity to report to this august house some of the achievements we made in the 2015/2016 financial year.

On Road Safety, the Department has conducted 1126 operations while in law enforcement we have conducted 341 road blocks, 11 347 speed operations, 5 117 weighing operations, 3 201 drunken driving operations. We conducted 1 616 public transport deployment and in total stopped and checked 1 633 212 (One million six hundred and thirty three thousands two hundred and twelve) vehicles.

These operations yielded the following results: speeding 121 arrests, drunken driving 1 622 arrests, overloading 116 arrests, fraudulent drivers' licences 17 arrests, reckless and negligent driving 17 arrests. We have also managed to discontinue 2 837 vehicles for being unroadworthy. We have impounded 2 558 vehicles for operating without proper legal documents.

We are continuing with these operations and as part of the collective effort to make our roads safer during 2016/17 and beyond. We have, together with other national stakeholders, making proposals to consider the criminalisation of all traffic offences because we continue to lose lives.

Madam Speaker,

Knowing and following the road signs starts with the child who crosses the next street to school, to church, playground or spaza shop.

According to Western Journal of Medicine, an increased traffic accident risk appears to be associated with several chronic medical conditions including alcoholism, cardiovascular disease, epilepsy, diabetes and mental illness. Further study probably will show that medical handicaps other than alcoholism are a factor in from 5 to 10 per cent of traffic accidents.

However, in about half of the accidents caused by heart attacks, the individual has no previous knowledge of his illness, and prevention of the accident would not be possible.

Working in partnership with the Department of Education, Health and other relevant entities, we will continue to intensify road traffic education and awareness programs in all the schools and public gatherings.

The School Learner Driver Training programme targets Grade 11 and 12 learners. To roll out this program, accredited local driving schools will be recruited through an open tender system for the training of 1 500 learners. These learners will be selected from various schools throughout the province. An estimated budgeted amount of R8m will be set aside for this purpose.

We have also for the 2016/2017 financial year make financial arrangements of R5m for the procurement of 15 driver training simulators earmarked at strengthening this driver training project.

We have noted that the number of pedestrian deaths on our roads is increasing annually. In this regard, the Department will continue to intensify Road Safety programmes on awareness and education. We encourage pedestrians to always respect the rules of the road and know how and when to cross the road.

We will intensify our engagements with communities on the challenges posed by stray animals on our roads. Farmers, Traditional Leaders and all of us must join hands in an open public education for safer roads to reduce fatalities. We recently distributed about two thousands animal safety reflector belts to various villages for use on stray animals. To our

surprise, on follow ups, we found people wearing those safety reflector belts. This is maybe indicate how people value their own individual safety to that of animals.

We are beginning to engage the private sector in a concerted effort to enhance cooperation in the area of road safety. Their involvement will assist in the effective and efficient use of our roads infrastructure towards realising our social and economic development.

It is through these participatory initiatives that last year we managed to report that road crash fatalities in our province have decreased. This is all because of a multifaceted approach involving all role players under the theme:

“Don’t ignore the road signs” - Road safety is everyone’s responsibility”

Indeed, Madam Speaker, Previously we pronounced that our roads have become slaughter groundwork. We then said most of those accidents could have been avoided if road users adhered to the rules of the road. The strategy to curb this therefore concentrated mostly on changing road users’ attitudes and behaviour.

The Road Safety Strategy which we have been implementing with vigour during this financial year provides us with a blue print for coordinated effort to curb road use offenses. Central to this is the enhanced role of the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) and the key role of Traffic Law Enforcement officers in encouraging improved road user attitude.

The participatory integrated approach on road traffic management involving the road safety stakeholders, national, provincial and municipal traffic officers as well as the South African Police Services is showing results.

During the 2015/16 financial year we bought 126 Vehicles for Traffic law enforcement to enhance response time and visibility on our roads. A new radio communication system for traffic law enforcement has already been purchased and contributes immensely towards improved communication.

During the current financial year we are implementing and enforcing the *Speed over Distance* speed camera on the sections of the N1 to strengthen inter and intra policing interaction on calls. We are also implementing a new Traffic Summonses Management system to improve the management of summonses and to ensure that those in breach of the rules of the road duly pay for their transgressions.

Madam Speaker

The Province has during 2015/2016 revived and launched the provincial chapter on the Anti-Corruption Forum. The launch marked the offensive of the Provincial Government against all forms of fraud and corruption. As Limpopo provincial government, we are resolute in shaping up a structural approach towards a resounding defeat on malpractices and corruption both in the public and private sector.

True to the saying, that it takes two to tango. All incidents of corruption involve the corrupter and the corrupted. Our efforts will ensure that in all cases, the corrupter and the corrupted equally face the full might of the law.

Oiling of Traffic and Law Enforcement officer's hands or the exchanging of money for "cold drinks" will be something of the past soon. The national integration of the law enforcement agencies is among others aimed at dealing with corruption on our public roads.

Honourable Speaker

The Ruling party continue to embrace the principle of a unitary state. In its 52nd Conference held in Polokwane on the five days starting on 16 December 2007, the ANC resolved to rationalise the Police service into a single police service in the country. The Department is participating in the process of rationalisation of the traffic police services.

Hopefully you have all recently noticed on our roads the national traffic vehicles in blue and white colours operating alongside our provincial traffic officers.

The integration process is scheduled to continue into the 2016/2017 financial year under the by the Road Traffic Management Corporation as mandated by the Shareholders Committee. We call upon stakeholders in the province to take advantage of this open window and comment on the implementation of the model.

Our law enforcement programmes will continue to focus on high accident zones. The self-regulation in the transport industry championed by the National Department of Transport in partnership with the Council for Scientific Industrial Research (CSIR) is taking shape. Truck owners and drivers are benefiting from the program using a Performance Based System Programme to test their heavy vehicles before been released into our public roads.

The operations of the programme also regulate and record amongst others the period a driver has spent driving on a particular trip and number of rests taken. On average, we recommend that drivers must at least take a rest after every two hours or every 200km.

Furthermore, the system can also report on medical check-up of drivers for chronic medical conditions, vehicle service records and roadworthy inspection reports.

Madam Speaker

We are quite aware that over speeding and driving under the influence of alcohol is part of the contributory factors to road crashes. As indicated earlier we have established specialised law enforcement teams in each district to focus on the selected enforcement areas. We will continue to deploy these teams to all our sites and measure the impact of this technique in the 2016/17 operational year.

This Past Festive and Easter season was no exception to the challenges that we face every day as a province. We all know that multitudes of congregants flock to the Province for their annual ZCC pilgrimage at Moria and the United Reformed Church at Mavhunga in the Vhembe district.

Last Tuesday t, the Minister of Transport Mme Dipuo-Peters released the preliminary Easter Weekend road accident report for 2016. The report indicates that there were 156 road

crash deaths this Easter compared to 287 during the same period last year. The Limpopo figures were 25 deaths in 2016, compared to the 49 in 2015. This indeed shows that our efforts and new approaches are starting to bear fruits.

The figures on fatalities and road accidents in this province by the afternoon of Easter Monday this year, were 71 road accidents and 17 fatalities. This was lower by at least 61% from last year the same period and unfortunately increased to 25 fatalities after a tragic road crash in the Sekhukhune road D400 between Apel and Leeufontein that saw eight lives lost on the scene. The hit and run in Tzaneen that took the life of one of our own along the R36 road also increased the numbers that were regarded as lower.

The traffic Officer was knocked down whilst trying to signal the vehicle driving at excessive speed to pull over.

I am pleased to report that our Law Enforcement unit hunted the culprit until he handed himself over to the Tzaneen police the following day. I must commend the seriousness of our justice system for amending the charge from homicide to murder.

Regrettably, one more death on our public road is one too many. May all those who lost their lives during these Easter weekends have their souls rest in peace. May the bereaved comforted in the Lord's name.

Honourable Speaker

I must emphasise at the same breath that going into 2016/2017 we will continue to prosecute all those offenders who undermine our government intentions to provide safer roads to all. The province is ready for the implementation of the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences (AARTO). The de-merit point system will be in full force this year and we will roll it out throughout our regions soon.

The implementation of the AARTO through the RTMC will accelerate the most awaited merit and demerit system on driver's licences. The system would go a long way towards eliminating and rehabilitating habitual traffic offenders and reckless drivers.

The approaches are aimed at changing road users' mind-set and reduce bloodshed on our roads. The reduction on road accidents and its inherent consequences would consequently reduce the financial burden on the already over stretched Road Accident Fund (RAF).

The Department together with the RAF is engaging in a continuous war against unscrupulous lawyer defrauding both the RAF and victims. We can report Madam Speaker that our joint efforts with RAF have saved about 30 000 road accident victims t with their claims. These claims were directly submitted and settled without ridiculous legal consultancy fees.

Honourable Speaker,

We are working tirelessly in co-operation with the police and whistle blowers to eradicate duplicate operation permits. Internal disciplinary processes against corrupt departmental officials have been accelerated and many are repenting or leaving the public service through disciplinary processes.

Using the 85 South African Post Office sites to render renewal of vehicle licences is testimony to our effort to mitigate corruption in the system. These guarantees our communities access to efficient and effective service delivery since certain Post Offices are now operational over weekends.

We are currently reviewing traffic stations accessibility serving as Registering Authorities to ensure fair locational distribution of these service delivery sites.

We are encouraged on these initiatives by end-user feedback received from stakeholders such as Mr. Mashimbe from Soutspanberg Taxi Association and a journalist from the "Mirror Newspaper" whom we have invited here in the gallery.

Madam Speaker may you allow the two visitors to stand up for the house to acknowledge their presence. Mr Mashimbe is amongst many of the people in our province who have appreciated the decentralized services. The bringing of these services to taxi operators was a positive initiative from the Department of Transport.

On Public Transport, the Department is forging ahead with the implementation of the Rural Transport Strategy. Amongst the programmes we are busy with is the **Shova Kalula Bicycle Project**.

During 2015/16 Financial Year the Department distributed 275 bicycles to various schools throughout the Province. We expect to distribute a further 300 during the the 2016/17 Financial Year..

On Gateway Airport Authority Limited (GAAL) The challenge of capacity at Gateway Airport Authority Limited remains disturbing to date. In collaboration with the newly appointed board of directors, we are determining the most appropriate interventions from the available options. Some of the possible solutions are already identified for implementation at the Polokwane International Airport in order to have it to perform to its optimal advantages.

We are also conducting a feasibility study to determine the contribution of Lephalale, Musina, Giyani and Mphephu airports to aviation development in the province. The intention is to determine how these airports can support the socio-economic development of the province and the south of Sub-Sahara region.

Honourable Speaker

Municipalities are by definition the Transport Planning Authorities and should play a bigger role in addressing transport planning. We have, as the Provincial department of Transport during the period 2015/16, undertaken the development of the Integrated Transport Plans (ITP) for Greater Tzaneen Municipality.

We have also, in this last quarter of 2015/16 commenced with the review of ITPs for Musina and Greater Tzaneen Municipalities. Going forward, we will during 2016/17 Financial Year assist in the development of the ITP for Mogalakwena Municipality. Plans for 2016/2017 are afoot to commence with the development of the Provincial Integrated Transport Masterplan, which will be a Chapter of the National Transport Masterplan (Natmap) 2050.

The Department has conducted the structural assessment and load-test for the Thohoyandou Taxi Facility this year.

We are pleased to announce that we have finally determined that a few minor structural adjustments will render the building safe for use. We will in 2016/2017 in consultations with the Thulamela Municipality and affected stakeholders work on details regarding the operations and management of the facility.

Honourable Speaker

The provisioning of bus transportation subsidy helps in maintaining steady and strong family structures as bread winners and parents in general. The Department will continue in 2016/2017 to provide much needed subsidy to contracted Bus Companies.

To that extend, during the 2015/2016 financial year, the Department had subsidised spending on Bus Companies benefitting more than 30 million passengers trips at a cost of R 650 million per annum..

As an economic spin-off, well over 2000 permanent jobs were created in the form of Bus drivers, dispatchers, mechanics, Operations Managers as well as clerical and admin staff.

We have set aside R680 million for the bus subsidy programme for the 2016/17 financial year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We will gear up for the introduction of a value for money systems improvement. In this regard we will introduce within the next 12 month, an electronic bus monitoring system which will provide reliable monitoring reports and passenger information.

On taxi Operations, The Department has set aside an amount of about R5 million for the Limpopo Provincial Taxi Council (LPTC) in 2016/2017. The Department is servicing all together over 121 taxi associations in the province consisting of an estimated 13 000 members.

The Taxi Council has been established to be a strategic instrument for the total transformation of the taxi industry to become the main public transport of choice for the accessible, affordable and reliable transport for our taxi commuters.

To this end, the Department will work closely with Municipalities as local planning authorities through their Integrated Transport Plans to audit all the taxi routes. The public transport rank facilities and the issuing of new operating licences where there is a need.

In this financial year, the Taxi Council will be expected to play its role as a catalyst for change by increasing the facilitation of capacity building programmes for the 121 taxi associations in the Province.

The transformation of the taxi industry is always undermined by the persistent conflicts among operators and taxi associations. The root cause of these taxi conflicts is mainly greed which becomes evident in fights over routes and non-licensed operators operating without operating licences.

The Department will intensify joint law enforcement operations and increase cooperation with our sister provinces to enforce compliance in our public roads and public transport rank facilities.

Honourable Members

The total earmarked collection revenue for the coming financial year is estimated to increase to R450 million from the increased motor vehicle licensing.

The broader mandate of government is the fight against the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality. We will not defeat these challenges if we continue to operate in silos.

In the 2016/2017 financial year we will continue to provide safe and secure systems with a net value -add transport intermodal organ. The initiative will ensure the provincial domestic and international comparative advantages.

Madam Speaker

The period ahead deserves more work and less talk. We need rail, road, air and other modes of transport for jobs and growth.

The transport portfolio, Honourable Premier must form part of the struggle to reverse the characterisation of Limpopo as a labour pool. As indicated earlier, the function must be appreciated for being the centre piece of all planning in the province. Transport is a high level determinant that directs where investment goes, a spark for local economic development.

By the year 2020 the province should have transformed from Basic Commuter Operations to Accelerated inter-Modal systems and Integrated Rapid Public Transport Networks. .

MECs Matshoge and Sekwati will appreciate the very idea of the imaginary role of the airport with regard to a clear cost and benefit analysis of moving goods to international ports. We need to integrate our development plans around the increased use of the Polokwane International airlift for the benefit of our economy.

Whereas almost 70% of Tourists coming to the republic end up in the Kruger National park, which is partly in the Limpopo province, with mining and Agriculture as economy drivers. Limpopo and more specifically the GAAL will take advantage of the existing ports of entry and increase their reception and hauling capacities.

Honourable Speaker

In the 2015/16 financial year we enrolled fifty five interns in the many programs that we host, through our partnership with the Transport Education and Training Authority (TETA). Over seventy eight workers within the Government Garages section are on an Artisan Development Programme which will be completed in the 2016/17 financial year.

In partnership with the Department of Higher Education and Training we are ensuring that the Transport Sector Education and Training Authority effectively utilise the entire allocated budget. We will prioritise training and staffing in areas of scarce skills, such as engineering, technical knowledge, traffic police, supply chain and public transport operators.

In terms of equity targets, **Honourable Speaker**, the Department registered a serious improvement in respect of promoting previously disadvantaged segments of our society to achieve this valuable transformation agenda.

The 215 Traffic Trainees we graduated are accordingly permanently appointed as Provincial Inspectors effective from first May 2016.

The training and development of all traffic officials remains one of the department's highest priorities undertaken in partnership with the Road Traffic Management Cooperation. We will in the 2016/2017 financial year interact with the RTMC to ensure a further uptake of trainee traffic officers to curb under deployment of personnel on our roads.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We take this opportunity also to report to this august house that we are recovering well from the section 100 (1) (b) hangovers. Our finances have stabilised. We are now able to fill vacant critical skill posts within our core mandates.

We have set in motion a systematic plan to align the Transport, Safety and Security Portfolio in the MTEF period. The objective of such merger is to rationalise our activities and minimise duplication of functions for improved administration and resource utilisation.

Again **Madam Speaker**, we have overseen twenty skills programmes implemented for both our Core function and Support Staff in the past year. We managed to do three learner ship programmes to enhance the skilling of employees at lower level.

In an endeavour to capacitate the Department to deliver on its mandate and strategic objectives and also give leverage to the achievement of the National Development Plan (NDP) and the National Youth Policy objectives, the Department shall implement 20 skills programmes focusing mainly on the core functions and finance areas.

An elaborate two pronged learner ship programmes for unemployed youth and the one aiming to assisting lower level employees to acquire accredited qualifications will be rolled out in 2016/2017.

Honourable Speaker,

I hereby present the budget estimates for the Department of Transport amounting to R1, 9 billion for the 2016/17 financial year allocated as follows.

- Programme 1: Administration: R 527,33 million
- Programme 3: Transport Operations: R 850,75 million
- Programme 4: Transport Regulations: R 501,07 million

In conclusion, we draw our mandate from schedule 4 the Constitution of the republic which governs the transport function. We will continue to observe concomitant application of transport regulations in the province.

Let me hasten to thank men and women in uniform, HOD and the departmental staff, the GAAL Board and management and all our stakeholders for the support they continue to give us in our effort to deliver most needed services to our people.

Don't ignore the road signs. Road safety is everyone's responsibility. Make sure you buckle up once you enter the motor vehicle. Don't drink brain chemistry altering substances and use cell phone for texting whilst driving.

“Hlogo e meetse e lotwa ke mong”

Se ikgakantshe maswao a tsela,

boiphemelo mebileng ke maikarabelo a gago.

INKOMU

KE A LEBOGA

RI A LIVHUHA

BAIE DANKIE

I THANK YOU