

MEDIA STATEMENT

Tuesday, 25 April 2023.

Media Statement by the Limpopo Department of Transport and Community Safety, on the incident of the abnormal truck that got stuck at the Smelters Bridge, along the R37

Upon receiving the news of an abnormal truck, that got stuck underneath an overhead bridge at the Smelters Processing Plant, the MEC for the Department of Transport and Community in the Limpopo Province, Florence Radzilani, instructed Officials in the Department to conduct a full investigation into the matter. The incident happened on Friday, 21 April 2023, in the evening.

In the words of the MEC, 'it was imperative for the Department to conduct an intensive investigation into the matter, in light of the December Boksburg incident, which had multiple fatalities'.

The investigation by the Department discovered the following anomalies;

- That, a valid permit has been granted by the Department to the Company, but it was used contrary to its provisions.
- The approved route was the N11 from Marble Hall via R 519 through Kuschke, R 101 towards the City of Polokwane and then R 521 towards Vivo. The permit did not give the operator permission to use the R 37 road.
- The operator travelled at night, and according to the law, abnormal trucks are only permitted to travel during sunlight.
- The truck was travelling without an escort vehicle, which would have been able to detect the height of the bridge. Escort vehicles are normally fitted with height sticks, which are able to detect heights at overhead bridges.
- The dimensions of the truck were also found to be inconsistent with the permissible conditions as per application.

The load on the truck was not hazardous, but it was heavy machinery that was being ferried to the mines in the Musina area.

A tow-truck was used to remove the truck from the scene, and escorted it to the Polokwane weigh-bridge.

Its permit expired on Friday, 21 April 2023, and the Company has been instructed to apply for a new permit, in order to continue with its journey.

Upon securing a new permit, the truck will have to get an escort vehicle for the remainder of the journey.

The truck has been charged for all these violations, and is currently being held at the Polokwane Weighbridge.

End.

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Issued by the Department of Transport and Community Safety