



**ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, MS. DIPUO PETERS,  
MP, ON THE OCCASION OF THE HANDING OVER CEREMONY  
TORCH OF PEACE, AT SOSHANGUVE EAST SECONDARY SCHOOL  
IN SHOSHANGUVE –GAUTENG**

17 January 2017

Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga;  
MEC for Community Safety, Ms Sizakele Nkosi Malobane;  
MEC for Education in the Gauteng Province, Mr Panyaza Lusufi;  
The Executive Mayor of Tshwane, Councillor Solly Msimang;  
DDG for Roads in the Department of Transport, Mr Chris Hlabisa;  
Officials from the three spheres of government;  
Chief Executives and other representatives of State Owned Companies  
and agencies;  
Youth for Road Safety;  
All our industry partners and stakeholders;  
Ladies and gentlemen of the media;  
Distinguished guests;

Programme Director, Allow me to begin by heartily commending Minister  
Motshekga and her Department and the class of 2016 for achieving a  
72.5% national pass rate and the province of the Free State for breaking  
of the barrier with a pass rate of 93%.

The invariably the critical role that the education sector is playing is not only ensuring that access to one of the most fundamental human rights is attainable, but also that it is improving the quality of life of all South Africans.

Annually, the Department of Transport passes on the torch in support of the beginning of the “Safer Schools” campaign as the 2017 school year commences.

Ladies and gentlemen, you would all be aware that as recently as Tuesday, 10 January 2017, the Department of Transport officially announced the Festive Season Road Crash and Fatalities statistics which unfortunately indicated a 5% increase from the 2016 figures. The total number of road crash fatalities recorded between 01 December 2016 and 09 January 2017 stands at 1714. Human factor has been the leading cause of crashes at 79.1%.

I have no doubt that road safety education that starts at an early age should be one of the core focus areas in assisting us to turn the tide. But, at the same time we must think about this from fresh perspectives. Formal education and training will remain important but we must also broaden our minds and find ways to include road safety messages into the wider curriculum, into mathematics and science, geography and civic education.

At the same time we have to realise that the world view and experiences of our young people are changing all the time. We now live in the era of social media, of free Wi-Fi and of video-on-demand. If our road safety messages are not sufficiently fresh and creative they will get lost in the

clutter of competing ideas. The behavioural study conducted by SANRAL gives us a comprehensive picture of where to start today in terms of behavioural change. It tells us what the next generation thinks and how they respond to road safety messages.

To further broaden the participation of the youth on road safety, we held the National Youth Summit on Road Safety from the 25<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016, under the theme: ***#Beingsafeiscool***. The purpose of the National Youth Road Safety Summit was to have youth in South Africa organised and participating meaningfully and decisively in road safety programmes of the Department with the aim of reducing road carnage among young people and the citizenry at large.

This National Summit is a culmination of provincial youth summits held in the provinces, which deliberated on issues of road safety affecting the youth.

Strategic partnership with the likes of Engen Petroleum and Trace Urban TV Channel on ***#Ridewise*** campaign has gone a long way in planting seeds and inspiring other stakeholders to follow suite.

As part of the endeavour to educate learners about road safety, the RTMC started with the National Road Safety Debates and Participatory Educational Techniques programme. I therefore call upon the schools in all the provinces to join it this exciting initiative.

Programme Director, through our commitment to the “safe systems” approach as endorsed in the United Nations’ Decade for Action on Road

Safety, the Department and its entities have taken the lead to create safer road environments and make an impact on human behaviour.

As espoused in the safer system approach, the provision of safe infrastructure such as the walkways is an important component in providing an enabling environment which will ensure the enhancement of road safety. We call upon our municipalities ensure that part of their Integrated Development Plans (IDP) and budgets includes planning and allocation of financial resources for such necessary infrastructure which can be used by both cyclists and pedestrians alike.

The Department of Transport's commitment to the safety and mobility of our children finds no better expression than in the implementation of programmes such as the Shova Kalula National Bicycle programme which has culminated in the distribution of over one million bicycles nationwide for children who previously had to walk long distances to get to get schools.

The Road Accident Fund campaign, ***My Road Your Road***, seeks to show that by considering the needs of other road users and through good behaviour, we can save lives, thus producing tangible results.

The RAF promotes visibility of pedestrians by handing out reflective jackets to learners who walk long distances to school or who are exposed to traffic when leaving for and returning from schools.

The campaign also focuses on vulnerable road users who utilise bicycles to and from work and schools. Helmets and reflective jackets are handed to cyclists at strategic points where there are high traffic volumes.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Child Restraint Law which was promulgated by the Department last year, is also a manifestation of the government's desire to preserve our young and precious lives.

RTMC is currently implementing numerous road safety school projects. To mention just two, for the purposes of brevity, the RTMC's drivers licence project gives unemployed youth opportunities to obtain drivers licenses through training on simulators and on the roads and they also facilitate the Scholar Patrol project which offers scholar patrol training to schools.

The Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA) is planning to implement the provision of driving simulators programme during the 2017/18 period in order to ensure that learner drivers are given the opportunity to develop and enhance their skills to become good and safe drivers.

Part of the long term initiative to establish and enhance road safety relates to the skilling of our drivers, particularly those who will be acquiring licenses for the first time. Our intended purpose is to work with the Department of Basic Education to include the Driving lessons at high school as part of the curriculum.

We also have the partnership with the Department of Basic Education to ensure the inclusion of road safety in the curriculum and the training of teachers.

The Department is in the process of finalising the Graduated Driving License framework. This essentially entails different aspects of road safety awareness which are intended to adequately skill new drivers.

We are also in discussion with the Department of health to deploy blood analysts, district surgeon, registered nurse or a medical officer during our law enforcement operation in order to take a specimen of an arrested driver's blood onsite for immediate scientific analysis. The analysis will enable an expert to ascertain the presence and estimated quantity of alcohol in the person's blood at the time of the examination.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have introduced for public comment new regulations to make our roads safer. These proposed regulations are in addition to the regulations that came in effect in May 2015 compelling passengers in motor vehicles to wear seatbelts and drivers to ensure that children under the age of three years are placed on car seats or child restraints whenever they are transported on public roads.

In the new regulations, I have proposed the practical re-testing of drivers who make an application for the renewal of driving license cards. The idea is not to make applicants to rewrite test but it is for the applicant to practically demonstrate his driving ability on a vehicle code for which he or she is seeking to re-new the license. This is done in order to eliminate fraudsters and ensure that an applicant knows the rules of the roads and is fit to drive the class of vehicle for which they are seeking a license.

The regulations also seek to restrict the use of bakkies, vans and trucks, for the transportation of human beings. The regulation limits to five the number of people who may be transported at the back of a goods vehicle provided they are employees travelling to work.

The regulations are explicit that no school children may be transported at the back of a bakkies, van or truck and these vehicles may not be used as taxis unless permission has been granted in terms of the National Land and Transport Act.

The regulations also seek to reduce speed limits to 40 kilometers an hour in respect of public roads within residential areas. A speed limit of 80 kilometers an hour shall apply on public roads, other than freeways, situated outside of urban areas.

A speed limit of 120 kilometers an hour shall apply on all freeways provided a limit of 100 kilometers is observed if the freeway passes through a residential area.

We also clamped down on several traffic officials for corrupt behaviour, ranging from soliciting bribes to selling road worthiness certificates and licences. Such conduct will not be tolerated and will be met with severe punishment. Also if you are a driver and offer to pay a bribe or incite any corrupt behaviour, make no mistake about it, you will be arrested.

We continue our engagements and finalise with the Department of Justice to introduce minimum sentences for negligent and reckless driving. We are seeking to reclassify drunken driving from a Schedule 3, which is less severe to a more severe Schedule 5 offence to ensure those who negligently cause crashes on the roads do not get bail easily and spend time behind bars.

Last but not least, the transportation of learners to their respective schools has always been a key challenge confronting government in South Africa.

The development of this learner transport policy aims to address the challenges of accessibility and safety of learners.

This policy recognizes the need to bring a uniform approach to the transportation of learners and the fulfilment of the constitutional mandate of the department to provide a safe and efficient transport system. National learner transport policy will further assist to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020.

Ladies and gentlemen, achieving the goals that we have set as the Department for the greater safety of all South Africans is a long term programme. It will require greater co-operation between the Department and all citizens.

We have committed ourselves and we shall achieve it by enforcing the law rigorously every day, ensuring that we act without fear or favour and maintaining constant high levels of visibility on all hazardous routes.

I therefore call upon yourselves to join us to protect the Constitutional “Right to Life” as espoused in our constitution.

I THANK YOU