



**OPENING REMARKS BY THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT MS  
DIPUO PETERS AT THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE  
AARTO MOBILE OFFICES, KLIPTOWN, SOWETO, 23 MARCH 2017**

Programme Director

Gauteng MEC of Roads and Transport, Dr Ismail Vadi

Councillors of the City of Johannesburg present

Chairpersons of the Boards of Transport Entities

The Registrar of the Road Traffic Infringement Agency, Mr Japh Chuwe

CEOs of Transport Entities

Representative of the Rail Safety Regulator, Mr Solly Kekana

Executive & Senior Management of the Department of Small Business  
Development and transport

Chairperson of SANWIT, Ms Mary Phadi and her Executive

Chairperson of the Transport Broad Based Black Economic  
Empowerment (Charter Council), Mr Randal Howard

SANTACO Representative, Mr Bafana Magagula

Other Taxi & Bus Industry Role Players

Faith Based Organisations

Ladies and Gentlemen

The government of the Republic of South Africa dedicated this year 2017, to the celebration of the centenary of the birth of one of our struggle stalwarts, Oliver Reginald Tambo. Across the length and breadth of our country, government leaders working with communities are embarking on activities to bring development and service delivery to our people in honour of this illustrious laureate and Isithwalande Cde OR Tambo.

One of the founding fathers of our democratic South Africa, former President Nelson Mandela bid farewell to Cde OR Tambo with these words, I quote **“Oliver lived not because he could breathe. He lived not because blood flowed through his veins. Oliver lived not because he did all the things that all of us as ordinary men and women do. Oliver lived because he had surrendered his very being to the people”** close quote.

It is in this spirit that the transport family will dedicate each of its programmes towards the upliftment of our people, particularly those whose rights Cde OR Tambo fought to be realised. Our people yearned for better infrastructure, particularly road and public transport infrastructure, which is the backbone of economic development towards total emancipation of any community.

Today, we have gathered here in Kliptown, a point of historical significance in the road towards freeing all the South African people, both black and white, from the bondage of the policies of the apartheid government. It is in this humble community of Kliptown, where in 1955 the Freedom Charter was adopted as a road-map towards a free South Africa.

It is not by opportunism that the transport family chose the Walter Sisulu Square in Kliptown to launch the AARTO Mobile Offices of the Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA). The reason to launch the programme in Kliptown seeks to make a call that the fulfilment of the dream towards self-development and self-determination lies in our hands.

The road towards the development of a responsible people invites us all to play our role in the national quest to have a safe and secure road user community. That can only be realised through supporting measures that seek to concretely bring about development in the way we partner with agents of the state.

It is exciting that the launch of the Mobile Offices is developed in partnership with the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD). We commend the RTIA for such a partnership that evidences the strategic nature and wisdom of working together as various arms of government, aimed at fast-tracking service delivery to our people.

The Road Traffic Infringement Agency has conceptualised the Enterprise Development programme, which seeks to bring service delivery to people at the most localised level and through mobile Units such as these the following services will be rendered:

- Public queries on AARTO infringement notices,
- Assisting in administering AARTO representation and uploading to the RTIA for adjudication.
- AARTO payment facilitation, and
- AARTO and road safety awareness campaigns

Through the AARTO Mobile Offices, motorists will not only track their traffic fines status, but will also manage their fines on a continuous basis.

South Africa has been singled out as one of the countries with the highest number of road crashes and fatalities in the world. The level of driver training offered and the qualities of driver skills are not sufficient to ensure that a licenced driver understands the responsibilities, consequences and impact of non-compliance with road traffic laws.

As at 28th February 2017, the following statistics were applicable:

- 12 million 27 thousand eight hundred and sixty vehicles were registered on the eNaTIS database,
- 12 million two hundred and one thousand five hundred and fourteen driving licences were issued
- For the 2015/16 financial year 6 million seven hundred and twenty thousand one hundred and one ninety three infringements were captured as committed in the Tshwane and Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipalities where AARTO was implemented as a pilot project.

This automatically translates to an average 18 thousand four hundred and eleven traffic violations committed daily in just these two cities. Compared to the previous year 2014/15, this was an increase of 11.52%. This means that instead of drivers improving their behaviour, they actually continue to break the law even more.

Research has shown that in the order of about 95% of road traffic crashes happen as a direct result of one or more traffic violations. In order to change this situation, the implementation of AARTO will be one of the most important mechanisms available for achieving the strategic objectives of increasing road safety in the country.

We know that the number of road traffic crashes and fatalities are directly proportional to the level of lawlessness and driver misdemeanour on the roads. To this extent, strong, highly visible and efficient law enforcement operations, coupled with continuous road safety education are no doubt the most effective way to curb these occurrences on our roads.

Our Department has started a Parliamentary process led by the Portfolio Committee on Transport (PCoT) to extensively consult on the AARTO Amendment Bill. The RTIA, the custodian of the AARTO Act, calls upon all relevant stakeholders to participate in making submissions to the PCoT.

Once the Amendment Bill is passed by Parliament, and signed into law by the President, it will mean some of the following:-

- tracking habitual road traffic law infringers,
- Points Demerit System will be fully implemented,
- Road Traffic Authorities will suspend the driving licences of perpetual violators,
- Operating licences of fleet owners will also be suspended should their vehicles exceed a certain number of traffic infringements,
- Compliance with AARTO legislation will create a law abiding road user behaviour, which will translate into safer use of our roads and, and therefore reduction in road fatalities.

We are also excited that the RTIA has a strategic partnership with the taxi industry. Together with SANTACO, the RTIA aims to ensure pro-active engagements and joint partnership on educational programmes,

infringement management and road safety. This relationship is evidence and a true commitment of government that the challenges faced by our country can be effectively addressed if we all work together. Yes indeed, together, we can do more to move South Africa forward.

Together, we can prevent unnecessary death and injury on our roads. The RTIA's "Know your traffic fine status campaign", will result in a beautiful marriage with SANTACO's "Operation Hlokomela", to enhance responsible driving and commuting on our roads.

As government charged with the safety of its citizens, we are deeply concerned about the ever-increasing number of people who loses their lives on our roads, regardless of the reported contributing factors, be it the increase in the number of road users and vehicles on our roads, or bad road user behaviour.

As part of our commitment to the United Nations Decade of Action, we have adopted a 365 days road safety programme reliving the philosophy that road safety is not a once off event but a process that will lead us to halve the thirteen thousand nine hundred and sixty seven 2010 fatalities to six thousand nine hundred and eighty four by 2020.

With the RTIA Mobile Offices now getting ready to reach all corners of our country, no motorists should find themselves with traffic fines that are not attended or paid up. The AARTO Mobile Office provides us with different platforms to check our traffic fine status. AARTO services are brought to your doorstep in the form of these Mobile Offices, there is an RTIA office phone number you can call, RTIA share-cost call centre number (0861 122 7861), RTIA fax number, RTIA website, RTIA email address, RTIA twitter handle, and the RTIA Facebook page. All the platforms are either delivered to you physically or just on the click of a button.

The launch of the AARTO Mobile Offices programme here in Kliptown seeks to leave a lasting legacy to the way the services are rendered to the people of this community. Today's programme has also been put in place in partnership with the existing Driver Licence Testing Centre (DLTC) here at the Walter Sisulu Square.

The management and staff of the centre and the Kliptown community are really honoured to be among the first recipients of this important service, and it is our hope that levels of compliance will increase as more motorists come in to enquire about the status of their traffic fines and to ensure that they are attended to until finalisation.

The AARTO Mobile Offices will then travel to different road user communities around the country and municipalities, including other DLTCs, taxi ranks, shopping malls, and filling stations. The programme is part of RTIA's concerted public awareness programme to increase AARTO visibility thereby calling upon South Africans to comply with the law applicable on our road network.

It is my honour to officially launch the AARTO Mobile Offices and encourage the people of our country to take advantage of this exciting service delivery platform.

Let us change our behaviour on our roads for the better.

Let there be compliance with traffic laws for safer roads.

Let the wheels of the AARTO Mobile Offices turn.

Thank you