



**TRANSPORT MINISTRY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

MEDIA STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

Attention : News Editors

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**STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, FIKILE MBALULA ON THE
RELEASE OF STATISTICS FOR THE 2019-2020 FESTIVE SEASON ARRIVE
ALIVE ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGN**

A decade ago, we made an unwavering commitment as a party to the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety, to reduce road fatalities and injuries by 50% by 2020. This goal was further re-affirmed in our National Development Plan, which enjoins us to reduce injury, accidents and violence by half from 2010 levels. Regrettably, very little progress has been made towards the realisation of this goal. While this trend is by no means uniquely South African, the carnage on our roads remains unacceptably high. The number of people who lose life and limb on our roads is alarming and the cost to the economy is in excess of R168 billion. This reality has spurred us into action and has inspired us to re-imagine traffic safety on South Africa's roads.

At the beginning of the festive season, we set ourselves a target of reducing road crashes and fatalities by 10% during the festive. We have made substantial progress towards the realisation of this target during this period, from 1 December 2019 to 15 January 2020 when schools re-opened.

Following the launch of our 365-Days Action Agenda in October 2019, which constitutes a re-imagining of our approach to traffic safety, we raised the bar and executed a very high profile Arrive Alive campaign. This was underpinned by highly visible integrated law enforcement operations, stakeholder participation, effective communications and road safety activations. We even employed guerrilla tactics by conducting operations at places and times when those motorists likely to violate the law least expected us.

The cardinal pillars of our re-imagined traffic safety strategy include sustained intensity of law enforcement activities throughout the year, intensification of our anti-corruption interventions, a centralised chain of command across all spheres of government and traffic law enforcement 24 hours, 7 days a week. We will therefore aggressively undertake traffic law enforcement 24/7 Waya Waya.

Premised on these efforts, the number vehicles that were stopped and checked over the festive period increased from 1.3 million in the previous period to 1.5 million.

Roadblocks conducted nationwide increased from 775 previously to 1 924.

More than 573 147 motorists were issued with traffic fines. The number of traffic fines issued decreased by 191 862 as a result of increased compliance with road regulations by motorists.

The number of discontinued vehicles increased from 4 016 to 6 358 and vehicles that were impounded increased from 2 967 to 3 814.

The most common offences for which traffic fines were issued were: speeding at 58 669 fines, driving without a licence with 26 516 fines, driving without fastening seatbelt accounted for 25 786 fines, driving unlicensed vehicles at 32 481 and fines for driving cars with worn tyres were 13 311.

This was made possible through effective planning and co-ordination as well as sacrifices of our law enforcement officers, who gave up their family time to put their shoulders behind the wheel, making South African roads safer.

It is also appropriate at this stage to send our heartfelt condolences to all the families, friends and relatives of all the people who dies on the roads and wish those who were injured a speedy recovery.

Our analysis demonstrates that we have made progress. We can see a flickering light at the end of the tunnel. The light is indeed a ray of sunshine and not an oncoming train. However, we are still a long way from celebrating and more still needs to be done before we can declare that we have turned the corner. Too many people still die on our roads.

Although our festive campaign was robust and inspiring, it was also impacted upon by heavy rains that we experienced in the second half of December and early January particularly in Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North West, Northern Cape and Free State.

This resulted in a 4.8 percent increase in road and environment as contributory factors to crashes and fatalities.

Human factor as a contributor decreased by 8%, a demonstration of the success of visible law enforcement and improved compliance by motorists.

Vehicle factors increased by 2.5% as a result of collisions involving *malaishas*, who drove heavily loaded and un-roadworthy vehicles to our neighbouring countries.

Another key phenomenon observed, involved crashes occurring on routes that were not previously identified as hazardous. This was as a result of some errant motorists choosing to use these routes to avoid detection by our law enforcement officers.

Our analysis further demonstrates that the main causes of fatal crashes over this period were pedestrians, single vehicle overturning, hit and run and head on collisions. Vehicles mostly involved in fatal crashes were light motorcars at 42%, light delivery vehicles at 20% and minibuses or combis 9%. The fact that minibuses have contributed less than ten percent the fatal crashes confirms the success of Operation

Hlokomela which is an initiative of the taxi industry and again shows that law enforcement operations focused on the public transport are bearing fruit.

The majority of road users who died on the roads were pedestrians (40%), passengers (34%), drivers (25%) and cyclists (1%).

We have adopted a zero tolerance to fraud and corruption drunken driving, speeding, and the results speak for themselves. Eighty five (85) people – including traffic officers, vehicles testing station staff, and ordinary motorists were arrested on charges of bribery, fraud and forgery. Three vehicle testing stations in Limpopo were shut down as a result of the anti-corruption investigations undertaken to eliminate the fraudulent issuing of vehicle roadworthy certificates

Six law enforcers namely three members of the South African Police Service, one member of the South African Defence Force, a member of Correctional Services and security officers were arrested in the Eastern Cape for drunken driving.

A medical doctor was also arrested in Gauteng after involvement in a collision and was found to be under the influence of alcohol. It is unacceptable that law enforcement officials should be found breaking the law and we call on the courts to consider their careers as an aggravating factor and give them the toughest sentences possible.

A total of 9 414 motorists were arrested for various offences including among others drunken driving, speeding, reckless and negligent driving and for outstanding warrants.

The efforts that were put into making the festive season a safer period in which to travel resulted in a massive reduction in the number of major fatal crashes or collisions with five or more fatalities. These crashes were reduced from 27 in the 2018/19 festive season to only 13 in the period under review. This resulted in 76 fatalities from major crashes as opposed to 182 in 2018/19.

In total the number of fatal crashes were reduced by three percent from 1 438 in 2018/19 to 1 390 in 2019/2020. This resulted in a 10 percent reduction in the number of fatalities from in 1 789 fatalities in 2018/19 to 1 617 fatalities in 2019/2020 festive season. The province that recorded the highest reduction in fatalities is the Free State which experienced a 35% decline followed by Mpumalanga with 23% decline and Western Cape with 19% decline. The North West recorded a 16% decline, Northern Cape 13% decline, Eastern Cape 7% decline and KwaZulu Natal 5%. Increases were recorded in Limpopo where fatalities increased by 12% and in Gauteng where they increased by 1%.

As a consequence, 111 people died on the roads in the Free State, 144 in Mpumalanga, 136 in Western Cape, 110 in North West, 49 in Northern Cape, 242 in Eastern Cape, 354 in KwaZulu Natal, 217 in Limpopo and 254 in Gauteng. Officers from the Free State, Mpumalanga and Western Cape deserve awards for a job well done. Their sterling work assisted us to meet our target we had set ourselves this year.

If we are to arrest the carnage on our roads and keep our roads safe, we require a paradigm shift from those charged with this important task. Equally, we require a dramatic shift in the behaviour of road users. In encouraging this paradigm shift and inspiring our law enforcement officers to go beyond the call of duty, I have decided to introduce annual awards, **but thought wise to commence with the festive season excellency awards**, to recognise the sterling work our men and women in uniform do to keep our roads safe.

I would also like to commend officers who went beyond the call of duty and demonstrated commitment to their work. These are the no nonsense kind of traffic officers who understand that safety on the roads is not negotiable. Officer Sithole Hlophe from KwaZulu Natal Road Traffic Inspectorate for her consistent performance on drunk driving operation.

This officer arrested 109 motorists for drunk driving over the festive season. Provincial Inspector DJ Gertse from the Western Cape for making the highest number of arrests for attempted bribery as well as for reckless and negligent driving. Provincial Inspector L Mahlwele from Gauteng for assisting in resolving passengers conflicts in public transport vehicles.

Provincial Inspector KA Mukhovhi made the highest number of drunk driving arrests in the Vhembe district of Limpopo. Assistant Superintendent Lizo Magalela and officer Baloyi CV of the National Traffic Police - who despite being injured in a car crash while chasing a drunk driver - insisted on returning from sick leave earlier than scheduled to make our roads safer. NTP officer Khuthadzo Tshikovhi also insisted on continuing to serve the nation although she was bumped by a vehicle on the N1 in the Free State.

Officer Vuyokazi Ntsantsa discontinued there highest number of vehicle while deployed in KwaZulu Natal by the National Traffic Police. National Traffic Anti-Corruption Unit entire team and in particular investigator Lehasa Moloji also deserves recognition for the excellent work done to combat fraud and corruption within the traffic law enforcement fraternity.

We also salute Deputy Director Jaca, Superintendent Maluleke and Sergeant Mthembu from the Joburg Metro Police for assisting stranded motorists to change flat tyres on the freeways. I also thank JMPD officer Mokhonwana and his crew for assisting a panicking and teary old lady to find her way out of Johannesburg to Pretoria.

We are proud to have such officers in our ranks. These are true heroes who embody the spirit of Batho Pele. They believe in the phrase that says: *“Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.”* We need more officers of this calibre in our traffic fraternity.

The tireless efforts of our officers have yielded positive results, in tracing down a recalcitrant driver, who has no regard for the law, as he flagrantly drove at 300km/h and evaded our law enforcement. We are in hot pursuit of this offender, very soon we will be paying him a visit in Midrand. He has to account for his irresponsible conduct. We thank SANRAL and the NTP for this sterling work.

We are aware that our success is not due to the performance of a few, but lies in the collaborative efforts of all our traffic officers, members of the SAPS, emergency medical personnel, the taxi industry, religious organisations and the non-governmental sector.

I therefore thank everyone for work well done in this festive season. Let me also send a word of gratitude to *aware.org* for their continued support, the media fraternity and to all motorists who behaved themselves on the roads over this period.

I would also like to remind you all that the Arrive Alive campaign continues. Remember that we have committed ourselves to a 365 day 24/7 road safety programme and we must sustain this success every day. Therefore moshito o tswela pele waya waya. We are now inspired to go back and plan for Easter peak travel period with renewed vigour because we now understand what we are capable of if put our collective shoulder to the wheel. Together we can make a difference.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle eloquently described the task that confronts when he said: *“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”*

I thank you.

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