



**TRANSPORT MINISTRY  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF  
TRANSPORT MR FIKILE MBALULA ON THE OCCASION OF  
THE LAUNCH OF OCTOBER TRANSPORT MONTH ON 1  
OCTOBER 2020 AT MPUMALANGA REGIONAL STADIUM,  
HAMMARSDALE**

Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Sihle Zikalala

MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr Bheki  
Ntuli

Executive Mayor of eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, Mr  
Mxolisi Kaunda

Councillors

CEO of the South African National Roads Agency, Mr  
Skhumbuzo Macozoma

SANRAL Eastern Region Manager, Mr Dumisani Nkabinde and  
all SANRAL representatives

Traditional leaders

Our esteemed guests, the community of Mpumalanga and all the  
satellite venues that are able to join virtually. SANIBONANI!

When our government first launched this initiative in 2005, the  
focus of October Transport Month was the call to action for  
members of the public to use public transport in order to address  
the challenges of traffic congestion on our roads.

This month became a platform to highlight the challenges confronting the sector and showcasing the strides we have made in delivering transport infrastructure and services to our people.

Last year, we intentionally dedicated this month to highlighting and raising awareness about road safety and declared a 365-Days Action Agenda. An action-oriented strategy of a re-imagined approach to traffic safety.

Launching the campaign with the President, 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 continue within available means undertake traffic law enforcement 24/7 Waya Waya.

This year, the October Transport Month will focus on service delivery across all modes of transport, paying particular attention to roads infrastructure development.

Under the theme: “*Together shaping the future of transport*”, we aim to raise awareness of the important role of transport in the economy, and to invite participation of civil society and the corporate sector, in providing a safer, more affordable, accessible and reliable transport system for the country across all modes of transport.

The South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL) and Provincial Roads Maintenance Programme are some of the leading job creating oriented government tools; empowering young graduates and investing in communities which are rural and underdeveloped.

South Africa has the tenth longest road network in the world. This includes unproclaim roads of approximately 750 000 kilometres. SANRAL continues to undertake remarkable work in commissioning new road construction, upgrading and rehabilitating old roads and maintaining the existing ones. However, the backlog in our roads infrastructure remains a source of concern.

Despite the resource challenges, we continue to make strides in giving priority to roads that adversely impact on the livelihood of our people.

It is common knowledge that the Moloto Road over the years, has become an embodiment of the carnage on our roads. Some even refer to it as “the road of death”.

We listened to the pleas of local communities and road users and have responded by transferring the totality of the Moloto road across the Provinces of Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo to SANRAL, and allocating more resources for its upgrade.

We have allocated R4.5 billion to this project over the next 5-years.

Already, this project has trained 135 SMMEs together with 185 NGOs from the Tembisile Hani Municipality in order to improve their chances of participating in the project and in the construction industry in general.

Furthermore, a number of jobs have been created and we project that over the lifespan of the project some 12 500 jobs will be created.

We also launched the N2 upgrade between Mtunzini Toll Plaza and Empangeni. Upgraded at close to R1 Billion, the road now provides a dual carriage highway enabling easy movement of traffic.

The multimillion upgrade of the 33KM stretch on the N2 was a necessary intervention by government following years of fatal crashes. The project created 510 full-time jobs at a cost of R76 million. 25 people were trained by accredited training service providers for courses leading to National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 3 and NQF level 4 construction supervisor qualifications.

Recently, we launched the R512-PWV3 Pampoennek road. With its completion, motorists now enjoy a free flow of traffic with a better link between the North West Province from the west of Pretoria and Johannesburg.

Built at a cost of R377 million, the road stretches from the R512 to the west of the Hartebeespoort dam, through Pampoennek, connecting directly to the N4 to Rustenburg.

Through SANRAL, government has invested billions of rands building roads across the length and breadth of this country. From major centres of economic activity to our most rural communities.

This is the work we will embark on showcasing. Accounting for government investments and intervening where challenges have hindered delivery. It is no co-incidence that we are here at Mpumalanga Stadium today. We chose this venue so we can also celebrate the magnificent Hammarsdale Interchange, recently completed under the expert engineering prowess of our roads agency, SANRAL.

This is part of SANRAL's Eastern Region, which consists of KwaZulu-Natal and Free State and includes 2 881 kilometres of the national road network managed by SANRAL.

I would like to share a few details on the Hammarsdale Interchange. Apart from improving travelling into and out of Hammarsdale, this upgrade, which saw an increase from 2 lanes to 5 lanes, has encouraged and facilitated industrial expansion in the area, thereby further expanding economic activity in the region.

This is exactly what the President Ramaphosa was referring to when he spoke about infrastructure development as the flywheel that will unlock economic revival in a post COVID-19 South Africa. We are not waiting for that to happen. It has already begun, right on our doorstep with this interchange.

At a cost of nearly R400m, this upgrade project, which started 4 years ago, produced jobs for nearly 250 local residents. This resulted in a wage bill of R46.8 million - money that was directly injected into this community. Not only that, but R23.7 million of this money was specifically spent on youth labour – a segment of our community that remains a core priority for this government.

Furthermore, R7.9 million was spent on jobs for women – another key transformation objective in this industry. In our quest to create opportunities for black businesses to grow and prosper, contracts to the value of R41,6 million were awarded to 16 local businesses, for the provision of plant and materials to the project.

This is precisely how infrastructure development can breathe life back into our economy. The Hammarsdale interchange project is one of many projects on the N3, being implemented between Durban and Pietermaritzburg, which forms part of Government's Strategic Integrated Project 2 (SIP2).

While the project has not been without its challenges, it has served as a shining example of how SANRAL implements technical improvements to the national road network while also supporting local economic development and community upliftment in the areas adjacent to the project. In other words, building South Africa through better roads.

As I alluded earlier, this upgraded interchange is one of many infrastructure projects that SANRAL manages in this region.

Allow me to briefly talk about another major project that will bring massive developments to KZN – the N2 and N3 upgrades.

The upgrade of the N2 will focus on a 55km stretch, from Lovu River, on the South Coast, to Umdloti, on the North Coast. The N3 upgrade will focus on an 80km section from Durban to Pietermaritzburg. These upgrades will include the widening of the N2 and N3 carriageways, with four or five lanes in each direction, and the reconfiguration of most major interchanges along these route sections.



Investment in road infrastructure upgrades, especially in rural and marginalised communities, provides an opportunity for generating economic growth, alleviating poverty, reducing the scourge of inequality and increasing international competitiveness.

The total estimated construction costs for these upgrades is approximately R10 billion for the N2, and R18.4 billion for the N3 and will take approximately 8 to 10 years to complete.

These projects fit well with what October Transport Month is themed – *Together shaping the future of Transport*. Transport will never be the same again, and the people of South Africa, will contribute to and benefit from improved transport infrastructure.

With these words, I would like to thank all stakeholders who made this project possible. I urge all road users to continue driving with extreme care. The 5 new lanes do not mean that this is a racetrack, but were constructed for the convenience and safety of all road users.

I thank you!