



**TRANSPORT MINISTRY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Statement

**Visit to Pelonomi Hospital by the Minister of Transport, Ms. Barbara
Creecy, (MP) on 10 March 2025**

Today the Minister of Transport, Ms. Barbara Creecy visited the trauma unit at Pelonomi Hospital to deliver a message of sympathy and encouragement to the two patients who are still in hospital here.

These two patients are the last of twenty-two passengers who were taken to the hospitals in Mangaung following the fatal crash which occurred on Wednesday the 5th of March 2025 on the N6, approximately 15km south of Reddersburg here in the Free State Province.

“I want to take this opportunity to once again express condolences to the families and loved ones of the ten people who so tragically their lives in this collision.” said Minister Creecy.

According to the facts at our disposal from PRASA and the RTMC, the crash involved a Mercedes Benz City To City owned by Auto Pax, a subsidiary of Prasa, carrying 33 passengers and a Volvo Truck-Tractor.

Based on the medical reports from the medical staff, we remain hopeful that the two patients who still remain in hospital will soon be out of danger and on the road to recovery”

“I can share with you that PRASA, has over the past week offered support to the injured, their families as well as the families of the deceased. This support includes transportation of injured passengers and their family members; support to the families of the deceased including site visits to the accident scene if requested; the registration of the deaths and repatriation of the mortal remains and trauma counseling for all affected passengers and for the bereaved family members.

It is also important to announce that the autopsies have already been concluded and the viewing of the deceased will take place tomorrow. Sadly, there are four passengers that were not identified. As a result, the Department of Home Affairs has been requested to provide technical support using their fingerprint system to identify the four passengers

At this stage, the exact cause of the crash remains under investigation by the SAPS Accident Reconstruction Unit as well as the RTMC.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Premier Letsoha-Mathae and Premier Mabuyane and their executive teams for all the support they have given to the passengers and their families after this accident occurred.

Let me also say that as we deal with this tragedy here in the Free State, we are also dealing with another tragedy in KwaZulu-Natal where a bus rolled down an embankment yesterday and 10 people lost their lives. Once again myself and the Deputy Minister wish to express our condolences to the families who lost their loved ones in that accident.

ALLEGATIONS OF IMPROPIETY AT PRASA.

Last week a whistleblower report alleging fraud and corruption at Prasa was widely reported on by the media. At that time the Prasa Board, in the spirit of public accountability, indicated their intention to appoint an independent investigation into all aspects of the allegations.

The law firm Webber Wentzel has been appointed to conduct the investigation. The terms of reference include among others to investigate:

allegations against individual executive and Board members;

- alleged procurement irregularities;
- allegations of fraudulent payments;
- review compliance with bond security requirements;
- allegations of non-payment of 16 companies;
- allegations of awarding of unlawful contracts.

The investigation will also assess compliance with the legal and regulatory frameworks in relation to the awarding of the contracts.

Given the seriousness of the allegations the Board has requested the service provider to produce a preliminary report within 30 days or sooner.

“Yesterday following a conversation with the Chair of the Prasa Board, I agreed that given the allegations against the Board, I will receive the

preliminary report and on the basis of the findings advise the Board on what action should be taken.” said Minister Creecy.

“It is important that this investigation takes place speedily so that if necessary, we take remedial action, and put this episode behind us. The recovery of a fully operational passenger rail system is an important objective of this seventh administration.

“It is essential that the Board, management and workers at Prasa continue to focus on the recovery of priority lines, rehabilitation of train stations and renewal of signaling so we can increase train slots, and thereby ensure passengers get to school and work cheaply, safely and on time.” said the Minister.

“Over the past two and a half years important work has been done by Prasa to restore train services on 31 out of 40 lines and rehabilitate hundreds of stations vandalized during the covid pandemic. We must continue this work so that Prasa’s passengers can get the rail system they deserve” the Minister added.

Following discussions yesterday between the Chairperson of the Prasa Board and the Minister of Transport it has been agreed that in future all large procurement processes at the entity will be subject to **real-time audits** by the Auditor-General.

Real time audits are a mechanism the Auditor-General can implement during or immediately after a procurement process to prevent and detect weaknesses in controls and report on findings in a short space of time.

It is the intention that going forward, Prasa will adopt this system to enable the accounting officer to take corrective measures to protect resources to

prevent fraud or wastage and ensure programmes are rolled out as designed and benefits the intended beneficiaries such as our passengers, on time.

I thank you!