



**TRANSPORT MINISTRY  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**MEDIA STATEMENT BY TRANSPORT MINISTER BARBARA CREECY (MP)  
PROVIDING AN UPDATE ON THE 2024 FESTIVE SEASON ROAD SAFETY  
CAMPAIGN – 19 DECEMBER 2024, TOUWS RIVER, CAPE TOWN**

Ladies and gentlemen, let us start by extending a word of sincere gratitude to all of you for honouring our invitation to come to Touws River to support our continuing festive season road safety campaign.

This briefing takes place a few days after we experienced a major fatal crash on N9 between Graaf Reinet and Middelburg in the Eastern Cape where 15 people died.

May we observe a moment of silence and show our respect to those who have died in this and other road crashes. We also wish the injured a speedy recovery.

At the beginning of the festive season, we launched our festive season road safety plan. We have now been implementing the plan for two weeks and have experienced the first peak travel period and a long weekend from 13 to 16 December.

This period has provided an opportunity to test our plan in preparation for a much challenging period which is expected to start in the period leading to Christmas and the New Year.

We expect a peak in traffic volumes starting from tomorrow (December 20 to December 24). Another peak will be experienced on January 2 to 3 when holiday makers return home.

Our plan also aims to create a safe road traffic environment for all road users; create heightened visible Law Enforcement Operations and to stabilise hazardous locations throughout the country.

Our evaluation has shown that our plan is holding firm, despite challenges experienced with the inconsistent implementation of the 24/7 shift system by provinces, pedestrian behaviour as well as the conduct of truck and public transport drivers.

The country has not experienced fatal crashes on eight of the 20 priority road segments. The majority of fatal crashes have instead occurred on secondary routes.

A total of 575 227 vehicles were stopped in 561 roadblocks staged nationwide.

The number of arrests has increased from 2 386 recorded in 2023 to 3063, again confirming our view that there has been an improvement in the enforcement of the rules of the road.

However, we remain concerned about the high number of people who continue to drive under the influence of alcohol and pedestrians who use roads recklessly.

A total of 941 drivers were arrested for drunk driving while 230 were arrested for driving at excessive speeds. A total of 98 pedestrians were arrested for crossing the roads where it is not safe to do so.

It is regrettable to report that in spite of all the efforts we have made to heighten law enforcement through the effective co-ordination of law enforcement operations by the Road Traffic Management Corporation; we still have seen a significant increase in fatal road traffic crashes so far in the festive season.

A total of 439 fatal crashes have been recorded which is a 3.1 % increase when compared to 426 fatal crashes recorded in the same period last year.

These crashes have resulted in 512 people dying on the roads so far compared to 499 last year. This is a statistically significant 2.6% increase in fatalities and it threatens our expectations to have fewer fatalities over this season.

The majority of those who died were pedestrians (45.6%), followed by passengers (26.8%), drivers (26.7%) and cyclists (0.74%).

Major crashes, where five fatalities were recorded from one incident, had a significant impact on the number of road deaths in this period. Four major crashes were recorded in the period under review with 30 fatalities.

It is worth noting that Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal, Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Limpopo accounted for 70% of all fatalities in this period.

Gauteng has the highest number of fatalities at 19%, KwaZulu-Natal at 15%, the Western Cape at 14% and the Eastern Cape and Limpopo both at 11%. The Free State and Mpumalanga have seen a contribution of 10% and 9% respectively, while the North West contributed 7% and the Northern Cape at the lowest with a contribution of 4% to the total number of fatalities.

Let us express our deepest condolences to all the families, friends and communities that are experiencing the pain and misery of loss at this time and hope that we all find support and strength to care for those injured among us.

Following an evaluation meeting with all MECs on Tuesday evening, we have agreed that it is necessary to change our approach for the remainder of the festive season.

In the coming days, we will intensify our efforts to drastically reduce pedestrian and passenger fatalities by shifting our focus from the main arterial routes to increased policing inside suburbs, townships and villages. Law enforcement operations focusing on drunken driving and the wearing of seatbelts will also be increased.

We will also move the focus from roadblocks to visible patrols on all routes including alternative or secondary routes.

To ensure consistency of law enforcement, we have decided that provincial traffic departments should adopt the approach used by the RTMC to exercise oversight and coordinate with municipalities.

This is to ensure that the traffic policing resources are adequately deployed to address all high-risk areas. It means that provincial control rooms comprising of senior provincial and municipal traffic officers should be set up to monitor the implementation of the plan and for joint decision-making.

Considering the challenges that some provinces are experiencing with the implementation of the 24/7 shift system, we have instructed provincial authorities to implement a flexi-shift system to improve traffic officer visibility at all hours of the day.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to commend our law enforcement officers and emergency personnel who have sacrificed their family time, working longer hours to engage on this national duty to save lives on our roads.

I would also like to express a word of gratitude to the thousands of those who have shown respect for traffic laws and taken responsibility to reduce deaths on our roads.

I also thank faith-based organisations, community-based organisations, the public transport industry, the freight industry and the media for their contribution.

I would like to remind everyone that road safety is everyone's responsibility. We should continue to remain on high alert until everyone has returned from holidays and for every single day that we spend on the road.

I thank you and wish you an accident-free Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Remember to make memories, not mistakes this festive season. Vibe Safe, Arrive Safe.

I thank you.

From a provincial perspective on crashes and fatalities, the following breakdown has been collated:

Gauteng had 96 fatalities from 90 crashes

KwaZulu-Natal 77 fatalities from 71 crashes

Western Cape 74 fatalities from 61 crashes

Eastern Cape 54 fatalities from 47 crashes

Free State 52 fatalities from 33 crashes

Mpumalanga 44 fatalities from 41 crashes

North West 36 fatalities from 31 crashes  
Limpopo 58 fatalities from 47 crashes  
Northern Cape 21 fatalities from 18 crashes