



**ADDRESS BY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, MS BARBARA CREECY, AT
THE LAUNCH OF OCTOBER TRANSPORT MONTH 2026
1 October 2026**

Deputy Minister of Transport, Honourable Mkhuleko Hlengwa
MEC for Roads and Transport in Gauteng, Ms Kedibone Diale-Tlabela
Acting Director-General of the Department of Transport, Mr Mathabatha
Mokonyama
Board Chairs and CEOs of all Transport Entities
Members of the Media
Ladies and gentlemen

It is a pleasure today to launch the 2026 October Transport Month programme. This year marks 21 years since the first October Transport Month, in 2005.

The year 2026 also commemorates 30 years since the enactment of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. An effective and efficient transport, mobility and logistics system lies at the heart of ensuring all citizens can access their social and economic rights.

Accordingly this month, we must shine a spotlight once again to evaluate progress we are making in building an integrated safe and affordable transport system that acts as a catalyst, not a constraint, on a society and economy that works for everyone.

This year has been a difficult one for households, bus and taxi operators; and the broader freight and logistics industry. Our geopolitical environment is not of our choosing. Its impact on supply chains, trade routes and the fuel price is there for all to see.

From our side we are doing everything in our power to make public transport more affordable.

Over the past two years, we have recovered 35 of 40 priority passenger-rail lines including most recently part of the Midway to Lenz route. PRASA passenger trips rose from 10 million in 2020/21, after the pandemic to an audited figure of 101 million at the end of the 2025/26 financial year.

On average a Prasa passenger pays between R12 and R15 for a return trip at peak hours depending on the distance travelled.

This year we will continue to refurbish track, signalling and stations to ensure we deliver more frequent, punctual services and with higher passenger volumes. On the 15 October we will invite you to experience signalling rehabilitation on the Mabopane line and later in the month to launch the new Station Complex at KuGompo City.

The integration of passenger and road transport systems is central to improving affordability and safety for commuters. Bus and minibus taxis remain central to our transport system.

We are in the process of reforming of our public transport grant system into a unified support model available on selected routes to bus and taxi operators alike. Our reform is guided by foundational principles including integration, sustainability, fairness, safety and commuter affordability. Consultation continues with all affected parties to develop a workable model.

The Department continues to co-operate with the taxi-industry to reform and formalise the sector by:

- Repurposing the taxi recapitalisation grant and de-risking the industry so operators can buy cheaper vehicles with lower repayments; and
- Formalising and right-sizing the industry through pilot Transport Operating Companies, one in each province, to test new management and investment models.

Rail and port reform are at the centre of government's agenda for the transport sector. Last week Cabinet supported the separation of the Transnet Ports Authority (TNPA) as a stand-alone company owned by the state.

The principles on which the separation will be effected include fair compensation for Transnet, on an independently assessed valuation of TNPA, long term financial sustainability and equitable allocation of liabilities to both the Transnet Group and the TNPA; protection of all workers, jobs and

customers; preservation of strategic state ownership and control of national ports infrastructure and improvement in investment capability and infrastructure development of both TNPA and Transnet.

This significant development will bring TNPA in line with the National Ports Act as well as international best practice. As an independent company TNPA will be able to use its revenue to invest in port infrastructure and equipment, thereby accelerating the journey which has already seen 3 of South Africa's ports tagged as most improved in a recent World Bank study.

The 2022 White Paper on National Rail Policy and the 2023 National Freight Logistics Roadmap are now delivering results.

In March, the Department approved eleven private Train Operating Companies (TOCs) to use the state-owned national rail network, bringing private expertise and capital into operations. Operations are due to begin in April 2027.

In July, the Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager published a second Network Statement creating the necessary certainty to ensure the TOCs can secure rolling stock, staff and capital.

Approved for public comment earlier this year, the Draft National Rail Master Plan outlines our future vision for an interoperable regulated and well maintained state-owned railway network that will form the backbone of an integrated transport system for the movement of people and goods.

Transnet's 2025/26 results show rail volumes of about 167.9 million tonnes against a target of 180.6 million tonnes—progress towards our goal of 250 million tonnes a year on the Transnet network by the end of the political term.

Increasing rail tonnage requires both significant state and private sector investment in rail infrastructure.

Through the Budget Facility for Infrastructure, R16.8 billion in public investment has already been approved and is in execution across the coal and iron ore lines and port infrastructure. Applications for a further R23.6 billion are being developed. On Monday 12 October we will invite you to the Northern Cape to view current rail upgrades to the iron ore line during the annual “shut”.

Private-sector investment in the rail and port infrastructure is being facilitated through projects currently in the market for the Ngqura Manganese Export Corridor, Richards Bay Dry Bulk Terminal, and later this year the container corridor between Gauteng and Durban.

On Friday we invite you to Pier 2 in Durban hear plans by ICTS to improve efficiency at the Durban Gateway terminal.

Earlier this month I received good news from the International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO): with a final safety rating of 94.99 percent, South Africa has retained its position as the highest-ranking country in Africa and the seventh-leading globally for the effectiveness of its civil aviation safety system. This outcome from the United Nations' specialised agency for international

aviation safety and security affirms once again the strength and maturity of the country's aviation safety oversight system.

Despite capacity constraints and a flight-procedure backlog, Air Traffic and Navigation Services submitted 220 procedure designs to the South African Civil Aviation Authority in the past financial year, against a target of 90.

ATNS is safeguarding its skills pipeline by retaining experienced controllers and flight-procedure designers, while expanding bursaries and training for the next generation of aviation professionals.

I am pleased to confirm that following last week's cabinet both ATNS and ACSA now have permanently appointed Chief Executive Officers. This is an important step in further strengthening and stabilising these critical aviation entities.

Investment in public infrastructure projects is a significant catalyst for job creation and economic development. This year our National Roads Agency SANRAL, will through a number of large-scale projects, continue to improve safety and shorten travel distances while creating over 35,000 job opportunities and supporting more than 2,000 small enterprises.

SANRAL projects connect communities. Major projects include:

- The upgrading of the 160 km Moloto Road corridor linking Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo;

- Upgrades to the N2 at Piet Retief in Mpumalanga, improving links with northern KwaZulu-Natal and Richards Bay which we invite you to inspect on Wednesday next week;
- Resurfacing, drainage improvements and road widening on the R52 from Koster to the N4 near Rustenburg in North West;
- A new north-bound carriageway and upgrades to section 16 of the N1 from Zandkraal to Scotland in the Free State, increasing capacity and reducing delays;
- Ongoing improvements to the N2 in the Eastern Cape which we will invite you to inspect later in October;
- Improving flood resilience on the R37 and R40 between Mpumalanga and Limpopo through stabilised embankments, reinforced drainage and flood-resistant resurfacing. SANRAL has committed more than R260 million to repair and climate-proof roads damaged in this year's Mpumalanga floods, we hope to show you some of these developments next week.

In response to recent court cases, SANRAL will end pre-selected panels for routine road-maintenance tenders and return to open, route-by-route tendering to widen participation and competition.

Open tendering will be supported by procurement reforms, revised supply-chain procedures, updated committee terms of reference, and mandatory templates and checklists.

SANRAL has strengthened governance by adding independent specialists to its Audit and Risk, Loss Control, and Road Infrastructure and Projects committees.

Across the world, the rapid development of digital technology and artificial intelligence are changing transport ecosystems and regulatory processes. To catch up with the times The Department of Transport and its entities have taken a decision to establish a Transport Digital Authority with the aim of developing an integrated digital transport platform for all online permitting services through one citizen interface.

Immediate priorities include the following applications: online registration of e-hailing vehicle owners and drivers from November this year; digitisation of Flight Operator Permits by December; and accelerating a new online licensing system to clear renewal backlogs for taxi operators and support provincial regulatory authorities.

In closing, our vision is an integrated, sustainable, resilient and inclusive transport system that strengthens the economy, and serves all South Africans with dignity and efficiency.

The road ahead requires consistent leadership, sound policy and sustained investment. I hope through the panel discussion that follows we will convince you that our transport system will work and South Africa will thrive.

Thank you.

Note to Editors

I am proud to announce that Cabinet has approved the appointment of permanent CEOs for Airports Company South Africa, Air Traffic and Navigation Services and Road Accident Fund. The appointments of Mr Sphamandla Mthethwa, Makgokolla Maholola and Mr Wassem Carrim to their respective entities will strengthen governance and ensure that they deliver on their mandate of providing professional services to our people.