

**Remarks by the MEC of Community Safety Roads and Transport at the Provincial Launch of the 2024 Easter Road Safety Campaign Media Briefing on the N8 Weigh Bridge between Bloemfontein and Botshabelo**

**26 March 2024**

**Honourable Premier of the Free State Province: Mr. Mxolisi Dukwana**

**The Executive Mayor of Mangaung Metro Municipality: Cllr Gregory Nthatisi**

**The Acting Commissioner of the SAPS:**

**The Commissioner of the Home Affairs:**

**HOD of Community Safety, Roads and Transport: Dr. Masego Tshabalala**

**All Law Enforcement Officials**

**Media Houses present**

Today marks two days before families and friends embark on journeys, they have been eagerly anticipating to reuniting and celebrating religious pilgrimages and holidays across provincial and national borders to be together. The Free State province, being at the border of six provinces and Lesotho, our roads will witness increased traffic volumes as people journey to various destinations. However, with this excitement comes responsibility, as our province faces heightened risks of road crashes and fatalities during peak times.

Reflecting on the 2023 Festive Season Road Safety Statistics report, we recognize that human error remains the primary cause of accidents on our roads. These incidents often occur on weekends between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. Despite these challenges, we're proud of the progress made through the collaborative efforts of road users and the government. The department has successfully reduced road crashes by 27%, positioning the Free State Province as the safest in the country. Thank you for your continued commitment.

The Department of Community Safety, Roads, and Transport, in support of the recently launched National Road Safety Campaign by Minister Sindisiwe Chinkunga under the theme "Fika-usaphila," reiterates her sentiments that the loss of human life

on the roads is avoidable and can be prevented by exercising caution and respect for one another.

We cannot ignore the contribution the improved state of roads in the province has made towards the reduction of road crashes and fatalities since October 2023. The department has thus far handed over about 12 road projects for upgrading, which also contribute to about 3990 job opportunities.

I would also like to take this time to appreciate the role that the South African Breweries (SAB) is playing in contributing towards reducing road crashes and fatalities by donating two (2) Alcohol Evidence Centre (AEC) trucks, which will assist in detecting the level of alcohol in driver's blood systems and fast-tracking the execution of drunken driving cases at courts. Thank you, South African Breweries, for the valued contribution you are making towards the goal of the Decade of Road Safety 2030 of reducing road fatalities by 50%. Free State is well on the way!

As we prepare for Easter travel, I urge all motorists to prioritize safety and observe the rules of the road:

- Always wear your seat belts.
- Ensure the vehicle you're traveling in is roadworthy.
- Rest adequately before embarking on long trips to prevent fatigue.
- Take breaks every 200 km to refresh yourself.
- Do not drive under the influence of alcohol.
- Avoid speeding, recklessness, and overtaking on barrier lines.
- Watch out for pedestrians crossing the street.

Road safety begins with each one of us!

Happy Easter from the Free State Department of Transport!