



TRANSPORT MINISTRY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, MR MKHULEKO
HLENGWA (MP) AT A CONFERENCE HOSTED BY THE INSTITUTE OF TRAFFIC,
LICENSING AND METRO POLICE OFFICERS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (ITLMPO-SA) ON 23
OCTOBER 2025**

Programme Director,

Members of the Mayoral Committee of the City of Cape Town,

Interim Chief Executive Officer of the RTMC, Ms Refilwe Mongale and other Executives
of the RTMC,

Representatives of the Road Traffic Infringement Agency,

Our distinguished traffic officials and other officials of government present,

Our Host and President of the Institute of Traffic, Licensing and Metro Police Officers, Mr
Ki Boikanyo and the Executive Committee you lead,

Panellists and speakers

Delegates

Esteemed guests.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me thank the organisers of this conference for the honour and privilege to address this auspicious conference of the Institute of Traffic, Licensing, and Metro Police Officers of Southern Africa (ITLMPO-SA).

We have learned of the longstanding history and good work of the organization, especially your organization's commitment to the safety of our roads and your pledge to the development of traffic officers and traffic management broadly.

This month is our Transport Month and we are already engaged in various activities attached to our campaign of highlighting the progress we are making across the sector in our attempts to build our transport system's competitiveness across the various sub-sectors

In localising the priorities of the seventh administration, the Department of Transport has adopted six priority targets over the medium term amongst which is to reduce road fatalities by 45% by 2029.

Yet, ladies and gentlemen, this target cannot be seen isolation from other targets such as road maintenance and refurbishments, improving the road environment by, amongst others, getting rid of the pot holes that litter our provincial and municipal roads and increase risks to safety.

We continue to visit particular provincial departments and municipalities to find lasting solutions and related resources to address our road maintenance challenges across the country, with some roads already proclaimed by SANRAL, our roads engineering entity.

According to 2024/25 Annual Report, SANRAL has incorporated 3 099 km of roads transferred by the provinces, which will lead to a greater portfolio of roads receiving expert and regular attention and continuous improvements.

We are mostly aware that some substantive challenge we have with road safety is the proliferation of heavy vehicles on our roads, most of which carry cargo that should ordinarily be transported off the road through rail.

Our targets regarding the transportation of freight is to ensure that by 2029, 250-million tonnes a year of freight were carried on the Transnet network, which will contribute to realising our aim to move rail friendly cargo off our roads and back to rail.

We are also applying greater effort to the provision of public transport as a way of reducing private passenger vehicles from our roads. The Passenger Rail Agency (PRASA) has been able to return 35 out of 41 critical corridors back to service and have slowly risen passenger volumes towards our target of 600 million passenger trips per year.

In its 2024/25 financial year report, PRASA noted that it successfully completed 77 million passenger trips, nearly doubling from the 39 million in 2023/24. The total represents an overachievement of about 17 million trips against the agency's target.

In addition, we intend to grow the number of integrated public transport networks, improving our Bus Rapid Transit system with nine out of ten cities currently participating. Our efforts are also aimed at ensuring the spread of that footprint across rural areas.

To continue in our efforts to remove unsafe vehicles from our roads including unsafe mini-bus taxi vehicles the Revised Taxi Recapitalisation Programme (RTRP) remains a funded priority programme encouraging operators to scrap their old vehicles.

I must mention that very importantly these actions will rely on our ability to build sustainable partnerships across the sector in order to accelerate improvements that must respond to the urgent needs of the whole sector and the people of South Africa.

This conference could therefore not be sitting at a better time, as it invokes the very need for the partnerships required to bring about sustainable progress to the sector, in this case progress towards reducing road fatalities by 45% by 2029.

This partnership is certainly more critical today when South Africa is grappling with several pressing road safety challenges that have intensified in recent months and I wish

to highlight some of the critical issues concerning road safety. here's a breakdown of the most critical issues:

Key Road Safety Challenges in South Africa

High Fatality Rates

Just a few days ago we were jolted back to the reality of the horrors of South African road fatalities when a bus veered off the road, leaving 43, now 44 people dead.

During the 2024/2025 festive season, South Africa recorded 1,502 deaths from 1,234 crashes—a 5.3% increase from the previous year.

In 2023, over 11,800 lives were lost in more than 10,000 fatal crashes.

May all those souls rest in peace and we hope that the families and communities affected are finding comfort and support.

Although we saw an encouraging decline during the Easter period this year, as a country, we still have a long way to go in ensuring that we reduce fatalities by 50% by 2030.

The festive season ahead of us is already beckoning us to come up with an effective approach that must involve the greatest number of participants with even better results.

Aging Driver Population

A recent debate has emerged over whether stricter regulations should apply to older drivers. We can agree that this requires a debate, because the road crash information shows that a huge number of people who die on our roads are young people.

While South African law mandates license renewals every five years with an eye test, given that concerns persist about age-related impairments like reduced night vision and slower reflexes.

Public Transport Breakdown

Violent clashes between minibus taxi operators and e-hailing drivers, vandalism of passenger rail infrastructure, and declining bus services have created a commuter crisis.

These issues increase reliance on private vehicles, adding congestion and risk to roads.

Economic Burden

The costs of road crashes go beyond the pain of injuries and deaths that affect families, but also include economic costs, because road crashes cost the economy greatly with estimations of R205 billion in 2023, which was about 2.7% of GDP

Deadly Head-On Collisions

Head-on collisions remain one of the most lethal types of accidents, often caused by human error, poor road conditions, and vehicle failures.

South Africa's road safety landscape is complex, but digital innovation and community-driven awareness campaigns during Transport Month and ahead of holiday periods are offering some hope for improvement

Corruption Among Traffic Officers

Ladies and gentlemen,

We continue to fight the widespread corruption in the road management sector, because nefarious actions not only undermine public trust, but also the effectiveness of law enforcement without which we can never win our war against road deaths. Bribery and selective enforcement remain common, especially in urban areas.

It is through regular interaction and exchange of ideas and the deepening of an ethical foundation in our state entities and through such conferences that we will be able to eradicate this scourge of corruption.

Fragmented Policing Structures

Multiple agencies—local, provincial, and national—often have overlapping mandates and this fragmentation leads to poor coordination and inconsistent enforcement across regions.

I am hoping that in addition to improvements in intergovernmental relations and changes in the policy and regulatory frameworks effective national road traffic law enforcement will assist us in overcoming this fragmentation and improving coordination and collaboration across the three spheres of government.

Lack of Technological Integration

There is need for technological integration. Many municipalities still rely on outdated systems for issuing and tracking fines. The absence of real-time data sharing between agencies hampers enforcement and follow-up.

Insufficient Training and Resources

We still face the age-old challenges of training deficiencies and an incapacitating lack of resources. Traffic officers often lack adequate training in modern techniques. The truth of the matter is that budget constraints limit access to equipment like speed cameras, breathalysers, and mobile data terminals.

Members of the Institute,

I stand before you today with an understanding that in your institute, there is a group of individuals whose service to our communities did not end with retirement. I speak of our retired traffic officers—guardians of the road, mentors of the next generation, and champions of public safety.

Though their uniforms may be hung up and their patrol cars parked, their impact continues to ripple through our streets and neighborhoods. These officers carry with them decades of experience, wisdom, and dedication. And we should not lose these valuable skills.

Retired traffic officers play a vital role in shaping the future of traffic law enforcement. They serve as mentors, guiding new recruits with the kind of insight that only years on the road can provide. They support training programs, sharing real-world scenarios that textbooks simply cannot capture.

They are also powerful voices in our communities—educating the public, advocating for safer roads, and reminding us all that traffic laws are not just rules, but lifelines. Whether volunteering at schools, advising on policy, or consulting on infrastructure projects, their contributions remain invaluable.

In times of crisis or major events, many retired officers step forward once again—not for recognition, but out of duty. Their presence brings calm, their judgment brings clarity, and their experience brings results.

I wish you well in your deliberations, and thank you for your continued support in the fraternity.

May we continue to learn from you, lean on you, and celebrate you.

Thank you.