

Program Director Speaker of Mogalakwena Municipality Cllr Seina Senoamadi

Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee Honourable Kedibone Lebea

His Worship Executive Mayor of Waterberg District Municipality Cllr Jack Maeko

Mayor of Mogalakwena Municipality Cllr Ngoako Thulane Taueatsoala

Speakers and Chief Whips

Members of the Mayoral committees

Head of Department Mr Stephen Matjena

Provincial Commissioner of SAPS Limpopo Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe

Mr Lesiba Johannes Tolo, our beloved sponsor from Papanyana Holdings

Representative from Metropolitan

Leadership of both SANTACO and NTA

Representative from Eyes of the Nation

Officials from BMA, Defence Force, Our dedicated traffic officers and men and women in blue.

Representative from Anglo American

Kgoshi Kekana and his delegation.

Members of the print and Electronic Media

Programme Director, this is indeed a significant event, and given its magnitude, there is a possibility that I may have omitted acknowledging some stakeholders. I trust that all will appreciate that the protocol has already been established, which I fully support.

Let me begin by congratulating the newly elected leadership of SANTACO. Although I could not attend their conference due to competing legislative

commitments, I wish to reaffirm our commitment to ongoing engagement. We have established structured forums with the leadership of various taxi bodies, and we are all aware of where and how to raise issues.

Programme Director, the theme for this year, *"It Begins With Me,"* is both powerful and timely. It reminds us that road safety starts with individual responsibility. Allow me to take this opportunity to commend all law enforcement officers for the excellent work done during this period last year. The leadership demonstrated by the Honourable Premier, Dr Phophi Ramathuba, who went as far as deploying MECs, mayors, and councillors, was truly exemplary.

Last year's Easter was a historic period—we recorded no major crashes on the N1 and not a single fatality. To the Head of Department, I say: keep up the good work. Your clean audit is not only reflected in reports but also in the practical results we see on our roads.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to all motorists for their cooperation, vigilance, and for heeding the call to drive with caution and to observe the rules of the road. This demonstrates that, working together, we can indeed make our roads safer.

During the national launch, the Minister indicated that accidents were reduced by 11% compared to the same period the previous year. This achievement is largely due to the collaborative efforts of various law enforcement agencies.

In our province, our focus remains on key routes, including the N1, N11, R81, R71, D4040, R36, R523, and R524, among others.

Programme Director, allow me to briefly recap what transpired during the same period last year. Notably, there were no pedestrian fatalities on the R71, a route that is typically prone to such incidents. Overall, the province recorded three fewer pedestrian fatalities compared to 2024.

Crashes were reported along R81 between Polokwane and Giyani, as well as on the R37, R579, and R524. At this stage last year, a total of 55 crashes had been recorded, including 11 fatal crashes resulting in 12 fatalities. This reflects a significant improvement compared to 2024, which recorded 27 fatal crashes and 81 fatalities.

Programme Director, these are not merely arithmetic figures—they represent lives lost. It is deeply painful for families to be awakened in the early hours of the morning by police officers bringing such tragic news.

Despite the progress made, we are not complacent. This year, our operations will intensify under *Operation Malayisha*. The days of overloading vehicles over long distances—from Cape Town to Limpopo—must come to an end. All weighbridges will be on high alert, working closely with our counterparts in neighbouring provinces.

We have already intensified visible patrols on a 24-hour basis, particularly along the N1 from Maubane to Beitbridge. We are also aware of attempts by some motorists to circumvent the law by diverting to secondary roads. I want to assure the public that measures are in place to address such behaviour.

Programme Director, I would also like to offer a word of caution to our passengers. Hitchhiking exposes individuals to serious risks, including crime and exploitation. I strongly encourage everyone to make use of legal and regulated transport options where safety and accountability are assured.

To drivers of buses and taxis: you are aware that a significant number of commuters will rely on public transport during the Easter period. You have a responsibility to ensure that all vehicles are roadworthy, compliant, and operated safely.

To all motorists, I urge you to plan your trips in advance. The road is a shared space, and safety is everyone's responsibility. Pedestrians must also ensure that they remain visible at all times when walking along or crossing roads.

Our message remains clear: *Drive safely and arrive alive this Easter.* Always buckle up and take regular rest breaks—at least every two hours.

Programme Director, today I have the privilege of unveiling 24 law enforcement vehicles—16 allocated to the Department and 12 to Mogalakwena Municipality. I extend my sincere appreciation to the Mayor for this collaboration, which will go a long way in strengthening road safety.

However, certain accident hotspots remain a concern, including Ysterberg Mountain, Ingwe Motel, the R71 en route to Moria, and the Sokgopo mountains along the R81.

We are also pleased to announce that a dedicated team, led by the Head of Department, will report directly to myself and the National Minister to ensure enhanced oversight and accountability.

As we approach Easter and beyond, let the message resonate: *"It Begins With Me."* Road safety is the responsibility of each and every one of us.

Let us commit to making everyday a day without road fatalities.

I thank you.