



GAUTENG PROVINCE
ROADS AND TRANSPORT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SPEECH

GAUTENG LAUNCH OF THE OCTOBER TRANSPORT MONTH CAMPAIGN, 01 OCTOBER 2018, KLIPTOWN

We take the opportunity to officially launch 13th October Transport Month (OTM) Campaign in Gauteng. Transport is as important to our people as is housing, health, education and the fight against crime and corruption.

Transport is central to us as individuals and families because it is a factor that impacts on our decisions on how to make a life and how to make a living.

Transport gives us economic and social access and connects us to people and places. Increasingly, transport professionals and practitioners globally talk about Mobility as a Service (MaaS), and it has become a central theme within the transport value chain. The focus in MaaS is on customer experience and satisfaction.

Do transport systems meet customer expectations and actual needs? Are ordinary people satisfied with their daily travel experiences? Is technology and innovation in the transport sector being creatively developed and utilized to enhance people's transport experiences?

These questions pose real challenges to transport planners and operators in a developing country or province such as ours.

We have to contend with the legacy of past inequalities, inadequate public transport infrastructure, limited financial resources and a deeply fragmented system of public transport with not much in the way of integration and co-ordination of transport operations.

During this month we aim to demonstrate some of the steps we are taking to respond to some of these transport challenges and progressively move towards mobility as a service.

Held under the theme "Transforming and Modernising Public Transport in Gauteng", the October Transport Month campaign seeks to create awareness on the importance of transport as a driver and an enabler for economic growth.

Also, it supports the provincial government's "Transformation, Modernization and Re-Industrialization" programme. Our vision for economic development is heavily dependent on our investment in quality road and transport infrastructure, maintaining existing infrastructure as well as building new infrastructure.

ROAD MAINTENANCE AND CONSTRUCTION

Today, we will inspect the R558 in the south of Johannesburg to assess the road maintenance and road safety programme, and to distribute bicycles to learners from Finetown, Ennerdale and surrounding communities. Later this month, the department will officially open two road construction projects, namely;

- D1944 valued at R150 million, which a tertiary provincial road in north-east Gauteng; and
- The P249/1 (Phase 2) which links Midrand to the North-West Province, which has been upgraded from gravel to a paved road.
- Later, we also will launch Phase 3 of the R82 project that will see the construction of a dual carriageway between Walkerville and de Deur in Sedibeng.

During this year, the Department's routine road maintenance teams have bladed over 468 km of gravel roads, re-gravelled 60 km of gravel roads and repaired approximately 68 000 potholes. This also involved repairs to the road furniture and drainage structures, and replacing damaged guardrails and road signs.

Last week I inspected the R55 to assess progress being made in repairing the sinkhole near Laudium. I am satisfied with the progress on the project in that the 8-metre deep and 30-metre wide sinkhole has been filled and the project will be completed by the end of the year.

RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

With regards to rail infrastructure, our priority is to improve the performance of the Metrorail system in Gauteng. The most significant development in this regard will be the official opening on 25 October of the Gibela Rail Manufacturing Plant in Nigel. This will see the rebuilding of our rail manufacturing and production capability.

We now have the capability to build complete train sets to revitalise the Metrorail system in our province. The Gibela factory has the technical capability to build entire train sets locally, provide maintenance through its supplier park and develop our human resources through its employee training facility.

Massive investment by government in new, modern rolling stock for PRASA is set to introduce dramatic changes for citizens, particularly the working class.

The PRASA train manufacturing factory is envisioned to drive fundamental changes in the way passenger rail will serve millions of commuters in the province and country.

The 72-hectare plant will enable new passenger trains to be manufactured and maintained locally in South Africa. Our aim is to ensure at least 1 in 7 passenger trips in Gauteng is made by rail if we are to succeed in turning the tide against increasing private car usage with congestion and environmental damage associated with it.

This investment will have a massive impact on the Gauteng economy. It will play a major role in the modernisation of public transport and will result in significant socio-economic benefits to the province and its people.

During the course of this month, Gautrain will launch three additional new Midibus routes to Malboro Gautrain Station. The three additional routes are from Kelvin, Buccleuch and Greenstone Mall. This initiative by the Gautrain Management Agency is aimed at facilitating the integration of the taxi industry into the Gautrain System.

This participation of the taxi industry in the Gautrain System facilitates job creation and the establishment of formal and sustainable businesses within the taxi industry. This Midi-buses model has been implemented in other areas along the Gautrain System such as Centurion.

The model enables the taxi industry to provide scheduled, safe and reliable public transport services that serves as an extension to the Gautrain service. The Midi-bus operations have proven successful in improving accessibility to public transport and the integration of the Gautrain System with other public transport services.

In the last financial year, the Midibus operations transported more than 16 000 commuters on a monthly basis, which increased the train ridership.

DLTC ONLINE BOOKINGS

During the month we intend officially opening a modern Driver License Testing Centre in Kagiso in the West Rand. The centre will be launched as a full online and cashless operating DLTC. The opening of the Kagiso DLTC is anticipated to bring access to services in underserved communities.

As the Department, we are fully cognizant that we are operating in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

We are already seeing the power of technology reshaping public transport services, marketing and consumption. The global technological changes we are currently witnessing are sparking a revolution in the transport sector.

We will therefore continue to use innovation, research and development to promote a smart province to improve efficiency and access to services. As such, the Department, in partnership with the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), launched the driving license online booking service on 30 August 2018 in Tshwane.

This has greatly reduced waiting times at the DLTCs. It also allows clients to choose the date, time and place of their tests.

As from today a number of DLTCs in our province will cease to accept or process walk-in bookings from members of the community. This forms part of a provincial pilot project to assess the ability of our DLTCs to handle online bookings only. These DLTCs include Akasia, Bronkhorstspuit, Centurion, Edenvale, Maponya Mall, Randburg, Roodepoort, Watloo and Xavier.

It is expected that all DLTCs in the province will work on the basis of online bookings only as from 1 November 2018. All DLTCs would have been enabled to provide online booking services to clients. The Department and municipalities have put plans in place to avail kiosks and computers within DLTCs to aid clients with online bookings.

These services can also be accessed through mobile phones, computers and through driving schools. The roll-out further demonstrates government's commitment to modernize the way in which services are delivered to residents.

Online services currently available include applications for learner license, driving license, professional driving permit (PrDP) and renewal of driving license.

In this month we will intensify our campaign against fraud and corruption within the transport licensing environment. In partnership with law enforcement agencies a concerted effort will be made to combat fraud and corruption at DLTCs.

GAUTENG TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

In its quest to integrate transport services, planning and alignment in the Gauteng City Region, the Department and the Gauteng Legislature have published the Gauteng Transport Authority Bill (2018) for public comment.

This Bill seeks to provide for the establishment, organisation, regulation, functions and control of a Gauteng Transport Authority.

During this month public hearings will be scheduled by the Gauteng Legislature to solicit feedback on the Gauteng Transport Authority Bill from key transport stakeholders and citizens.

Once in existence, its main functions will be to perform strategic and integrated planning relating to public transport and transport infrastructure.

The proposed authority will be tasked with the responsibility for planning, co-ordination, optimisation, rationalisation and facilitation of public transport functions, authorities, systems and resources within the province.

OPERATING LICENSES CONVERSION AND COLLECTION

There has been a long-standing call by the taxi industry in particular to fast-track the processing of minibus taxi operating licenses.

The Department is converting previously issued radius-based permits into route-based operating licenses. The conversion process is a legislative requirement regulated by Section 47(2) of the National Land Transport Act No. 5 of 2009 (NLTA).

This matter was also emphasised in the report by the Ad-hoc Committee of Inquiry into Taxi Permits and Operating Licences (2016), which highlighted the following areas of concern:

- Taxi violence between associations or owners fighting for commuter routes;
- Illegal taxi operations;
- Illegal acquisition of permits and licenses;
- Unregistered associations; as well as
- Unaudited taxi routes.

Through this conversion process, the Department is empowered to reliably verify and audit various routes by associations.

This is to ensure that operators and associations conduct operations on allocated and registered routes in accordance with conditions stipulated on operating licenses.

The chief objective being to improve regulation of operations and contribute to curbing conflicts and violence within the sector. In this regard, the Provincial Regulatory Entity has processed more than 3000 operating licenses that have been approved but remain unclaimed by operators.

The Department will reach out to transport operators so that these operating licenses can be collected. All public transport operators have until Wednesday, 31 October 2018, to claim their operating licenses, failing which the unclaimed licenses will be cancelled by the Provincial Regulatory Entity as required by law.

The Department is currently in possession of 2165 minibus taxi licenses and an additional 880 operating licenses issued to buses, metered taxis, charter services, learner transport and tuk-tuks.

Finally, the Department, in partnership with the Gauteng Geographic Names Council, will begin the public consultations to rename key strategic road in our province.

The names on our road and transport infrastructure may have a technical function but government has a conscious role to play in promoting an inclusive identity with such infrastructure. In so doing it should raise citizens' awareness of the heroes and heroines that played significant roles in the country's struggle against apartheid and its people's freedom.

Gauteng is known for its economic strength and its historical role in the struggle against injustice and for political freedom and democracy. Its road network and public transport infrastructure need to reflect this rich political history and lend itself to promoting an identity that reflects the political heroes and heroines that contributed to the struggle for freedom and democracy in South Africa.

The naming of the provincial road network does not seek to remove the past but to promote an identity which is inclusive of all the citizens of the country.

The following roads have been identified for naming and/or renaming: PWV15, R55, R82, N14, R28, R59, R553, N12 and William Nicol Drive. We have noted that the City of Johannesburg had resolved last Thursday that William Nicol Drive be renamed Winnie Madikizela-Mandela Drive and the Emfuleni Council has recommended that the R82 be named in honour of Duma Nokwe.

These recommendations will be processed by the Gauteng and National Geographic Names Councils for final decision-making.

Lastly, it needs to be noted that various municipalities also have developed exciting programmes to celebrate October Transport Month. These will be communicated directly to the public by the Councils.

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