



GAUTENG PROVINCE

ROADS AND TRANSPORT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

29 May 2013

To: All Media

Att: News Editors / Transport Reporters

Visit by MEC to the sinkhole in the median of the N14 Ben Schoeman Highway

The Department, in collaboration with SANRAL, initiated the repair work and rehabilitation project on the sinkhole that had developed along the N14 Ben Schoeman in July 2012. The development of the sinkhole necessitated immediate response leading to the cordoning-off of the affected area to ensure the safety of motorists and the public.

The sinkhole developed as a result of a leak in a water pipe crossing the N14 Ben Schoeman freeway south of Jean Avenue, Centurion, in the median between the northbound and southbound carriageways. After preliminary geological tests were conducted on the site, it was decided to close off two of the southbound lanes and one northbound lane as a precautionary measure, as the sinkhole was located closer to the inner edges of the road and the subsidence of the road surface on the middle lane on the southbound carriageway. The results also indicated that extensive repair work was required to rehabilitate the sinkhole area, fill the underground cavities under the road (the lanes that have been closed off) and reconstruct the section of the freeway affected by the sinkhole.

To ensure minimal inconvenience to motorists, the Department introduced interim measures that included the construction of additional lanes on the outer shoulders of the slow lanes make sure that two lanes in both directions were open for traffic; the construction of a temporary additional lane to bypass the sinkhole on the southbound carriageway; as well as the constructing an additional on the northbound carriageway that included the widening of Jean Avenue off-ramp to alleviate congestion.

After the determination of the remedial work required, the Department awarded a tender amounting to R115 million to have the sinkhole and road attended to. Against all odds, the Department and all involved pulled together and demonstrate the Department's capacity to handle and deal with emergency situations.

The Department wishes to thank the contractors involved in the project as well as the motorists for their patience and understanding during construction.

ENDS!

For more information, please contact the Department of Roads and Transport Head of Communications, Ms Octavia Mamabolo on 011 355 7300 / 082 316 8666 or Octavia.Mamabolo@gauteng.gov.za