



GAUTENG PROVINCE
ROADS AND TRANSPORT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Att: News Editors / Transport Reporters

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Divided transport operators embrace unity to support efforts to fight the spread of COVID-19

The Gauteng Education Transport Services (GETS) has agreed to abandon hostilities amongst its members and support initiatives by the provincial government to prevent the spread of COVID-19 through learner transport operations.

The two groups of GETS today, 17 June 2020 attended a meeting convened by Public Transport and Roads Infrastructure Jacob Mamabolo in a bid to foster unity in the organisation.

“We have agreed with the leadership of GETS to put together an interim committee that will be leading the process of uniting the organisation after many years of division. In the period we are in, we truly cannot afford to have an industry as important as learner transport divided and fighting within its ranks. We are facing an invisible enemy and we will not defeat COVID-19 if we are not united,” said Mamabolo.

The meeting which was held in Johannesburg this morning, allowed all parties to voice their concerns and grievances and provided a neutral platform for the two groups to engage openly about problems facing GETS and the learner transport service broadly in Gauteng.

Since its establishment in the 2000's, GETS has been plagued by divisions which have resulted in the organisation not being able to elect leadership since 2009.

This created instability and became a breeding ground for disunity which led to organisation not to function as a formal learner transport governance structure.

This has had a negative impact in the industry and gave rise to the informalisation of the sector.

“We had frank and open discussions with GETS and it became apparent to everyone involved that their disunity was hurting the industry, which affects the safe transportation of learners. Moving forward the Department of Roads and Transport (DRT) will be supporting the interim structure in preparing for an election, while ensuring that the organisation is part

of interventions that we have put into place to protect the lives of pupils and prevent the spread of COVID-19,” added Mamabolo.

Since the relaxations of regulations to alert level 3, the DRT has registered and provided personal protective equipment to more than 7000 (seven thousand) scholar transport vehicles across all five developmental corridors of the province.

These vehicles have been issued with a unique sticker to make it easy for the Gauteng Provincial Government to track and trace them during the COVID-19 period.

Mamabolo has thanked learner transport operators for heading the call to register with the department. He also congratulated the leadership of GETS for their will to sit around the table and resolve their issues.

“The unity achieved has paved the way for us to introduce more rigorous measures to improve our capacity to fight the spread of COVID-19, which we will announce in due course. What we have achieved today is important as it also lays the foundation for building a new learner transport service in Gauteng,” said the MEC.

The MEC has however issued a stern warning to those learner transport operators who want to operate without being registered with the Department, saying that they would be met with the fullest might of the law.

ENDS

Issued by the Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport

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