



Road Traffic
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The Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC)
is an Agency of The Department of Transport and a
Member of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

PRESS RELEASE

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Attention: News Reporters / Transport Reporters / Newswires

**PRIVATE VEHICLE TESTING STATION OFFICIALS CONVICTED
AND SENTENCED ON 51 COUNTS OF FRAUD**

The Polokwane Commercial Crimes Court has sentenced seven officials employed by a privately owned vehicle testing company to five years imprisonment or a fine of R20 000 for issuing roadworthy certificates to vehicles that they never tested.

The seven officials namely: Pieter Frederick Francoois Schutte (68), Marisca Erasmus (34), Lebogang Rapetsoa,(30), Democracy Vhutolo Khangale (36) Thapelo Kgositsile Medupi (42), Makwena Silas Mashala (34) and Mphokane Nicol Medupi (41) were found guilty on 51 charges of fraud for transactions conducted at Palala private testing station in Lephalale in 2019.

The seven were arrested in 2019 following investigations by the National Traffic Anti-Corruption Unit (NTACU), a division of the Road Traffic Management Corporation and the serious corruption team of the Hawks. In April 2019, members of the National Traffic Anti-Corruption Unit received a complaint from the South African Revenue Service that vehicles they had impounded at their facility in Mpumalanga were issued with roadworthy certificates by Palala testing station without the vehicles being physically presented for testing.

An investigation was immediately launched. When the investigation team visited the station, they found the officials processing roadworthy certificates for vehicles that

were not present at the station. They were immediately arrested and charged with fraud alternatively contravening the National Road Traffic Act.

The accused were pronounced guilty on 31 July 2024. They appeared in court again on Wednesday this week and were sentenced to five-year imprisonment or R20 000 fine.

The RTMC welcomes that sentence as it sends a message that there are consequences for crime irrespective of whether it is committed at a privately owned company. The seven will not be able to work at any testing station in South Africa again. However, the RTMC would have preferred a custodial sentence because unroadworthy vehicles are a menace on the country's road causing avoidable crashes and fatalities.

In another case in Mpumalanga, a traffic officer was sentenced to four years direct imprisonment for accepting a R200 bribe from undercover anti-corruption agents. This followed a sting-operation organised by members of NTACU and the Mpumalanga division of Hawks in 2019 to catch traffic officers who were coercing motorists to pay bribes on the N4 near Middelburg.

Zanele Christian Vilakazi (39) and Andrew Bongani Simphiwe Nkosi (48) were arrested during the operation and charged with corruption. After a lengthy trial, the court found them guilty and handed down a four -year custodial sentence. Unfortunately, Mr Nkosi died before the conclusion of the trial. Ms Vilakazi started serving her sentence this month.

Members of the public who suspect traffic related fraud and corruption at advised to report at ntacu@rtmc.co.za or send a Whatsapp message on 083 293 7989.

ENDS

ISSUED BY: THE ROAD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (RTMC)

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