

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE MINISTER OF
TRANSPORT, HONOURABLE DIPUO PETERS, ON
CHRISTMAS EVE**

**Road Traffic Management Corporation Offices – Pretoria, 23
December 2014**

Chief Executive Officers of State Owned agencies

DDG Transport

Officials from the Department

RTMC Officials

Member of all media houses

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

I am humbled and pleased to welcome members of the media and stakeholders to this press conference.

This day marks almost the end of the festive season, though this is also the day we are expecting most people to travel to various

destinations for various reasons key to those being to celebrate Christmas together with their families, others destined for holidays after a very tiring and eventful year whilst others will be joining for fellowship.

We approach the remaining days of our festive days with mixed feelings as some of our fellow South Africans are mourning the passing of their loved ones due to irresponsible usage of our roads. It is disturbing that some of these senseless carnages could have been avoided. Some of our fellow South Africans are on a very jubilant mood and looking forward to share and celebrate this memorable day with those they hold dear and close to their hearts.

It is with a heavy heart that I should express our sincere condolences on behalf of the Ministry and the Department of Transport to all those who lost their loved ones due to reckless usage of our roads. May their souls rest in peace and to those family members we wish to assure them that sun will shine again.

Our road safety programmes are not only meant for the festive season and are not implemented in isolation, but forms part of an ongoing programme of campaigns that the Department of Transport, and its agencies carried out in conjunction with the transport stakeholders, other law enforcement agencies and the general public throughout the year to ensure that lives are saved.

Road traffic fatalities are amongst the main causes of death in South Africa. This results in serious social and economic costs for the country. These consequences include the loss of family members who are bread winners and leave behind traumatized families. The economic ramifications include the increase in the social development and health budgets spent.

During the announcements of the festive season statistics on January the 9th, I made a clarion call and endured all road users to be ambassadors of road safety and simultaneously extended our hand to all South Africans to fight the scourge of road carnages. This call was informed by our deep appreciation and understanding that together we can save lives and move South Africa forward. We all have a joint responsibility to use our roads

in a responsible way, while decisively deal with lawlessness, reckless attitude and irresponsible behaviour.

Our commitment and determination to robustly roll out our 3-6-5 day road safety programmes significantly focused on road safety education, engineering, enforcement and evaluation. This is our commitment as a country to UN Decade of Action for road safety.

In partnering with our provinces and all stakeholders amongst other the Interfaith, road Freight Association, taxi industry to mention a few, we relentlessly mobilised all our communities and inculcated a culture of road safety awareness.

Notwithstanding these endeavors, we are still confronted with challenges pertaining to attitude of road users and irresponsible usage of our roads. The current state of affairs as from the 1 December 2014 to 23 December 2014 tells us a story. The story is that passengers are mostly affected followed by pedestrians.

The two respectively account for 37% and 35% of total fatalities.

- Passengers 37%
- Pedestrians 35%
- Drivers 25%
- Cyclists 2%
- Unclassified 1%

It is worrying to note that the following types of vehicles contributed significantly to road crashes namely:

- Light Motor vehicles 46%
- Light Delivery Vehicle 21%
- Minibus 9%
- Trucks 7%
- Buses 1%
- Other vehicles 16%

We have registered some decline in relation to the crashes and fatalities compared to the previous year. The 2014 Fatal Crashes are **539** resulting in **677** fatalities whilst last year we had **764** fatal crashes resulting in **917** fatalities.

- 35% reduction in fatalities compared to the same period last year
- 42% reduction in crashes

We are deeply concerned with the number of fatalities on our roads since **one death is one too many** and I wish to make an impassionate plea to all those that will be using our roads and travelling to various destinations to use our roads responsibly.

- Ensure that your vehicle is road worthy
- Take regular breaks
- Adhere to the speed limit'
- Do not cross the road when it not safe to do so
- Do not drink and drive
- Do not drink and walk

May I take the opportunity to wish everybody a **Merry Christmas** and a **Prosperous New Year**. Let us all be ambassadors of Road Safety. Together lets save lives and take South Africa forward.
Thank You