

Road Safety in Spotlight

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The minister of the Department of Transport, Dipuo Peters, warned unethical traffic officers and those involved in the issuing of fraudulent driving licences and roadworthiness certificates that they will be brought to book. Photo: Boipelo Mere

A newly-established National Traffic Law Review Committee, consisting of nine members, is expected to develop recommendations towards improving road safety awareness within the country in 18 months' time.

The national independent entity was formed on Friday, 17 February, during a national stakeholder committee meeting chaired by the minister of the Department of Transport, Dipuo Peters, at the Protea Hotel in Kimberley.

This meeting was reported to be the first formal road safety meeting after consideration of the state of road safety report for the festive season that highlighted a 5% increase in road fatalities during 2016-'17 nationally.

Attended by representatives of the South African Local Government Association (Salga) and Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), stakeholder committee discussions on road safety and transport-related matters in the country, as well as progress made towards the attainment of safer roads countrywide, were held.

The country sticks to its objective of reducing road fatalities by 50% as stated by the UN Decade of action for road safety 2011-'20 signatory.

The committee is expected to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the traffic law enforcement fraternity and to identify areas for review, and developing a consultative strategy draft document on traffic law enforcement.

They also have to develop a blueprint for the future design of the traffic law enforcement by providing guidelines for streamlining a training framework and appropriate qualifications needed.

The current traffic policy environment that is in support of government will thus also be reviewed within the regional and international context.

Unethical traffic officers and corruption in issuing fraudulent driving licences and roadworthiness certificates were put in the spotlight.

Pinpointed as one of the most serious causes of road fatalities, promises of vigorous measures to punish the identified offenders were made.

At least 28 549 fraudulent licence holders had been identified and were promised to be named and shamed through the media by the minister in due course.

"There is no need to warn the perpetrators, as they deserve to be named and shamed in the

public domain.

“They need to be identified wherever they go, that they are the cause for so many fatalities,” emphasised Peters.

“They are fraudulent drivers, therefore their licences need to be taken away.”