ON TRACK

ALCOHOL AND ROADS
Help us to create #BoozeFreeRoads

DISTRICT SAFETY PLAN
Making roads safer on the West Coast

TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS NEWSLETTER | ISSUE #18 DECEMBER 2018
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VISION:
To lead in the delivery of government infrastructure and related services.

MISSION:
The Department of Transport and Public Works delivers infrastructure and services to promote socio-economic outcomes and safe, empowered and connected communities.

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And so, another year has almost come to an end and we are about to enter the 2018 festive season. For some of us, this is a time of joy where we reconnect with family and friends. For others, this a time to relax and take a well-deserved break from work and travel to an inland holiday town, or a destination next to the sea. Unfortunately, this is also a time where we have to keep our eyes on the road fatality barometer to determine whether, this year, we will have managed to secure a decrease in fatalities.

Every year we sing the same song – requesting motorists to please plan their trips and prepare well so that they do not have to rush, but rather to make travelling time part of the holiday. As we plan our trips, we should factor in rest periods, so that we take a planned rest-break every 200 km or two hours of driving. This is important to deal with the creeping fatigue that affects our perceptive abilities and slows down our reactions.

The importance of a wide-awake, sober driver cannot be over-emphasised. It goes without saying that drivers should refrain from using alcohol when getting behind the wheel, regardless of how far they will be driving.

Alcohol and roads don’t mix. A special force of Random Breath Testing (RBT) traffic officers will be deployed over this time to stop drivers and test them at any time of the day, and at random locations. This effort to curb the scourge of driving under the influence has been strengthened by our Mobile Alcohol Evidentiary Unit. This is a specialised vehicle fitted with equipment that can collect evidence next to the side of the road for use in criminal prosecutions.

During this time, it is also necessary to remind each other not to overtake in the face of oncoming traffic or at any place where we are not 100 per cent sure it is safe. In fact, it is seriously dangerous, and there is no guarantee that we will arrive at our destination any earlier. Giving way and displaying some courtesy as we all share the road will help ensure that we all get there safely.

Many of the most gruesome crashes that we see are due to excessively high travelling speeds. The danger increases exponentially during holiday periods because roads are generally busy. So, keep to the speed limit at all times, and slow down when you notice pedestrians near the road, especially children.

We have all worked hard for a well-deserved break at the end of the year. Let us celebrate responsibly as we also spare a thought for all law enforcement and medical personnel who will be on duty during this time.

I wish you a blessed festive season and a most enjoyable new year.

Kenny Africa
Chief Director:
Traffic Management
Alcohol and road safety

Why has the Department chosen to target alcohol as a road safety issue over the festive season?

In line with the Department’s vision of zero fatalities on Western Cape roads, the Safely Home calendar theme for December and January is “Alcohol and roads don’t mix”. Driving under the influence will always remain a very strong focus for our law enforcement and road safety awareness efforts. Too often the role of alcohol in pedestrian road deaths does not get the same attention.

But why target pedestrians? Is drunk driving not a bigger issue?

Driving under the influence of alcohol is a serious crime, and we will continue to utilise widespread and regular alcohol blitz roadblocks and Random Breath Testing vehicle checkpoints to arrest offenders. However, pedestrians now account for 49% of fatalities in the Western Cape. In other words, almost as many pedestrians are killed as all other categories of fatality combined. While these fatalities are concentrated in the City of Cape Town area, there are numerous hotspots throughout the province where pedestrians are regularly killed on the road.

What is the link between these deaths and alcohol?

Forensic Pathology Services takes blood samples from people killed on the road. What we have found is that road deaths are strongly linked to alcohol, which impairs judgement and leads people to make serious errors. Pedestrian deaths spike on weekends, especially Saturday nights. Among pedestrian fatalities where we have a blood alcohol content (BAC) test result after death, 61% were found to be BAC-positive. More than 66% of the BAC-positive results showed over 0.20 grams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood, meaning that the individual was severely intoxicated when he or she was killed. Bear in mind the legal limit for driving is 0.05 g/100 ml of blood.

What role can road users play?

The simple fact is that alcohol and roads don’t mix. Whether you are driving, walking, or riding a motorbike or bicycle, even small amounts of alcohol can impair your ability to make decisions, operate a vehicle, or walk safely near traffic. If you have friends or family who still drive under the influence, speak to them before they get into trouble with the law. Be a model of responsible behaviour for other road users to follow.

Through its Safely Home road safety calendar, the Department is appealing to road users to help create booze-free roads during December and January. We answer some frequently-asked questions from people who are interested in learning more about the #BoozeFreeRoads campaign.
ALCOHOL AND ROADS DON’T MIX

PEDESTRIANS

More than 600 are killed on Western Cape roads every year. They represent 49% of the total road fatalities.

61% of fatalities are under the influence of alcohol. Most fatalities occur on weekend nights.

Help us to create #BoozeFreeRoads

If you have friends or family who still drive or walk under the influence, speak to them before they get into trouble with the law.

Learn more about how alcohol is damaging our society at safelyhome.westerncape.gov.za

#BoozeFreeRoads contribute to making our roads safer BETTER TOGETHER.

@WCGovSafelyHome | #BoozeFreeRoads | 021 812 4581
New West Coast (South) District Safety Plan to address road safety harms

An integrated enforcement, education and engineering road safety plan for the southern part of the West Coast District was launched on 26 October 2018 in Morreesburg. The event was attended by the Minister of Transport and Public Works, Donald Grant, and the mayors of the West Coast, Swartland, Saldanha and Berg River municipalities.

The West Coast (South) District Safety Plan (DSP) was drafted by the Department of Transport and Public Works in response to a detailed evaluation of the strategic and operational environment. The new plan integrated lessons learned from the Overberg District DSP pilot project that has steadily improved road safety since it was first implemented in that region two years ago.

Minister Grant says the West Coast (South) area was selected for the next phase of the DSP due to the high levels of fatalities recorded here. This is probably as a result of the growing strategic importance of the R27 Cape Town–Saldanha corridor, as well as the importance of the international N7 corridor. Both carry relatively high traffic volumes.

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“The most prevalent issue in this region is males driving under the influence of alcohol, particularly on Saturday nights, placing all other road users in danger of being seriously injured, or possibly killed,” said Minister Grant.

From 2010–2016, Forensic Pathology recorded 505 road traffic fatalities in the region with steady increases over the period across the three major road user types killed on West Coast roads. These are (in order of 2016 deaths): pedestrians (54), passengers (46), and drivers (39). Approximately 17% of West Coast (South) fatalities were in Berg River, 33% in Saldanha Bay, and the remaining 50% were in Swartland.
The DSP vision for safer Western Cape roads

The vision informing the DSPs in the Western Cape is: “zero fatalities and zero serious injuries on provincial roads”. DSPs aim to do this by bringing together all the elements that can contribute to road safety into a single coherent and integrated plan that responds to the actual needs on the ground. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation is built into the implementation plan so that lessons from experience can inform the development of similar plans for the other districts of the province.

The West Coast (South) DSP includes:
- Interventions such as integrated driving under the influence (DUI) operations;
- Random Breath Testing (RBT), which will be carried out at identified hotspot locations in the West Coast (South) area;
- The introduction of targets for Saturday night fatalities to counteract the scourge of DUI; and
- Joint operations with municipalities and the South African Police Service.

The various stakeholders are confident that the West Coast (South) DSP will be successful by increasing awareness around matters of road safety amongst road users, and saving lives. The next phases of the Western Cape DSP project will be the launch of the West Coast (North) and Winelands (East) DSPs.

High risk areas in West Coast (South):
- the R311 between Riebeeck-West and Riebeeck-Kasteel;
- the N7 between Kleindassenberg and Abbotsdale;
- the R399 near Jacobsbaai;
- Main Street in St Helena Bay;
- R46 in the Saron area;
- between the N7 and R45; and
- the R45 and R27.

’n Geïntegreerde toepassings-, opvoedkundige- en ingenieurswese-padveiligheidsplan vir die suidelike deel van die Weskus Distrik is in Oktober 2018 van stapel gestuur. Die Weskus (Suid) Distriksveiligheidsplan (DVP) is deur die Departement van Vervoer en Openbare Werke opgestel in reaksie op ’n gedetailleerde evaluasie van die strategiese en operasionele omgewing. Hierdie nuwe plan het lesse geïntegreer wat uit die Overberg DVP-loodsprojek geleer is, wat padveiligheid steeds verbeter sedert dit twee jaar gelede geïmplementeer is. Die visie wat die DVP’e in die Wes-Kaap informeer is: “zero sterftes en zero ernstige beserings op provinsiale paaie”. DVP’e poog om dit te doen deur al die elemente wat tot padveiligheid kan hydra bymekaar te bring in ’n enkele samehangende en geïntegreerde plan wat op die werklike behoeftes reageer. Deurlopende monitering en evaluerings word in die implementeringsplan ingewerk sodat lesse wat uit ervaring geleer is die ontwikkeling van soortgelyke planne vir die ander distrikte in die provinsie kan informeer.
In December 2018, Jacques Mostert will have been the Chief of the Somerset West Traffic Centre for a year, marking the 27th year that he has been contributing to road safety in the Western Cape. His current responsibilities include managing and mentoring traffic officers and inspectors, and regularly working with road safety practitioners.
What motivates Somerset West Provincial Traffic Centre Chief Jacques Mostert? “I have a responsibility to all road users in my area and must help ensure a safe road network through effective planning for operational and administrative success,” he said. “I have a huge responsibility towards my staff members and must ensure that they receive the best leadership I can provide.”

Mostert and his team operate from the Vangate Shared Service Centre in Athlone. The Somerset West Provincial Traffic Centre area runs from N2 Jan Smuts Drive to Sir Lowry’s Pass; from Clarence Drive to Kleinmond; and it includes the R300.

He is responsible for managing and overseeing the work of 64 traffic officers and inspectors. Mostert also supervises patrol duties, weighbridge operations in Somerset West, and vehicle inspections. The centre also manages the Evidentiary Breath Alcohol Testing initiative responsible for curbing driving under the influence, and the Vehicle Testing Unit responsible for roadworthiness compliance. Mostert graduated from Gene Louw Traffic College (GLTC) as a traffic officer in 1991 and began his career at the Brackenfell Traffic Centre. “I wanted to become a traffic officer because I always had a passion for law enforcement making a difference”, he said. “Over the years, I have been exposed to various functions within traffic law enforcement. This includes my deployment on the N2 known as the ‘Groenland’ project from Somerset West to Gansbaai in the 1990s”. In 2000, he was seconded as an instructor for two years to facilitate the Examiner of Vehicles course at GLTC. In 2010, he was seconded to head office in Cape Town to coordinate the Western Cape’s weighbridges. A personal milestone was obtaining a Bachelor’s Degree in Police Practice at the age of 42, which paved the way for Mostert to become a traffic chief. “My family, in particular my wife, has always been supportive in my endeavours, and I’m thankful for that.”

“(My staff members) are dedicated to improving road safety, and I am privileged to work alongside them.”

Protest actions (demonstrations) are an important challenge the centre has to face, one that takes up resources that could have been used differently. Other challenges include rock falls on Clarence Drive during winter; road crashes on Sir Lowry’s Pass; smash and grab incidents on the N2 at Borchers Quarry; and robberies from stationary vehicles on the R300.

Since his appointment, Mostert has overseen many operational plans to mitigate risks and to address road safety challenges. “We mainly address these challenges through operating a 24/7 integrated high policing visibility service involving all the law enforcement agencies. We also make use of new technologies such as the Average Speed Over Distance system and handheld devices, as well as the mobile weighbridge testing vehicle. Ongoing consultations with other law enforcement agencies are important too,” he said.

Mostert wants to take Somerset West Provincial Traffic to greater heights, and create a culture in which road users respect each other and obey the rules of the road. “I try to motivate my staff by praising them for their contributions. They are dedicated to improving road safety, and I am privileged to work alongside them. I believe that I’m only as strong as the support I receive from my team.”
The official deployment of 100 Rail Enforcement Unit officers in October 2018 was a “force multiplier to secure our rail network”, according to Minister of Transport and Public Works Donald Grant. These officers will help to keep commuters safe and protect state assets which have seen arson attacks, vandalism and cable theft destroy rail infrastructure worth R500 million since October 2015.

The unit was formed after discussions in February 2018 between the City of Cape Town, Western Cape Government, and Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA). Each stakeholder pledged to contribute R16-million to the unit’s establishment and running for the first year.

Passenger rail is the most efficient and affordable form of public transport, according to the City’s former Mayoral Committee Member for Transport and Urban Development, Councillor Brett Herron. “Public transport must enable commuters to get to work, on time, and to do so without being concerned about their safety. The formation of this unit demonstrates the commitment and collaborative spirit between the different spheres of government to tackle these issues head-on,” he said.

Minister Grant said improving security on the rail network and strengthening Metrorail’s ability to provide a safe and reliable service is an urgent priority that demands the cooperation of all state actors. “The future economic success of this region depends heavily on a stable and sustainable rail network. I believe that the work that we have put into this pilot project to increase Metrorail’s security contingent is a necessary step towards improving passenger rail functionality and effectiveness. It is also a very important example of intergovernmental cooperation in the broad interest of society. Improving security will go a long way in restoring commuter faith in the service,” he added.
Bus advertisement promotes child road safety

Road users can make our roads safer by setting a good example of safe pedestrian behaviour at all times. The example we set could save a life. As part of its pedestrian safety campaign in November, the Department of Transport and Public Works launched a bus advertising campaign to improve pedestrian safety at high-risk places in the Western Cape. Through the campaign, the Department is appealing to motorists to be on the lookout for children, and to slow down.

The advertisement is running on six Golden Arrow buses up until the end of December in Khayelitsha and surrounding areas. Khayelitsha is an area where there are limited parks and safe playing areas for children. The area is densely built and in many of the areas the houses or informal structures are built right up to the road. In many parts of this area, there are no pavements and children often play in the streets, running the risk of being hit by vehicles.

Research shows that children are much more likely to be killed in pedestrian accidents. Because they are shorter than adults, they are more likely to be struck in the head or chest. The good news is that we can make the roads safer for children simply by setting a good example of safe pedestrian behaviour, at all times, wherever we are, whether we are parents or not. Children learn from the examples they see, good and bad. If you demonstrate unsafe pedestrian behaviour like jaywalking or walking on freeways, children will see you and may follow your example. Keep yourself safe and model good pedestrian behaviour for children so that they learn good road habits. If you have children who must use the roads frequently, for example to walk to school, ensure they they know the rules of the road, particularly when crossing the street. With your help, we can effectively reduce the risk of pedestrian injuries and death among children.

If you are a motorist, consider how your actions could save a life. Choose to slow down, especially at night around pedestrian hotspots, so that you have more time to react if a pedestrian unexpectedly crosses the road. Even if the worst happens, slower speeds mean less impact, giving a pedestrian a better chance of surviving a crash. You can help keep pedestrians safe by never speeding, and by making a deliberate point of slowing down whenever you notice people walking, particularly children.
The Department of Transport and Public Works has recruited a total of 45 young people to undergo a 12-month traffic officer’s training course at Gene Louw Traffic College (GLTC) in Brackenfell. Those who successfully complete the course will graduate with a Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC) in Road Traffic law enforcement.

Since September this year, participants have been receiving training accredited by the Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority (SASSETA) and Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC). The course consists of 31 unit standards covering subjects that include the implementation of the National Road Traffic Act (NRTA) and the Criminal Procedure Act, as well as guidelines for road traffic law enforcement. Participants will also undergo firearm competency training, first aid training, training in basic firefighting, and additional driving training where necessary.

The College has a well-deserved reputation for producing dedicated and well-trained traffic officers. To be accepted as trainees, applicants must be employed in a vacant traffic officer post at a local authority or provincial administration.

Through Provincial Traffic Services, the Department provides a 24/7 traffic law enforcement service. Once course participants have successfully completed their traffic officer training, they will be appointed as traffic officers. They will be expected to work shifts, including public holidays and Sundays, and additional hours, if required.

Holiday season deployment
During the upcoming holiday period, students will work alongside experienced officials to sharpen their knowledge and know-how. They will also get the opportunity to apply their new skills – such as controlling traffic and systematic inspection of vehicles, as well as applying the NRTA – in a high-pressure environment. Their courage may be tested in the course of performing these duties. This is a time of year when traffic officers have their hands full because of the large numbers of vehicles on our roads. It is important that effective traffic policing is in place to help ensure that road users can travel safely to their destinations.

Successes
The Department’s traffic service has had a number of major successes in recent years. In addition to regular traffic law enforcement, during roadside operations, traffic officers regularly confiscate illegal goods, drugs, and illicit cigarettes. Increasing the provincial traffic force will further strengthen the presence of officers to fight the illegal transportation of prohibited goods and encourage good driver behaviour on the road.
New smart card for Go George users

The Go George scheduled bus service launched its new smart card on 15 November 2018. The system was developed by the Department of Transport and Public works in collaboration with the George Municipality to automate fare collection, and to more effectively manage system revenue. Smart card benefits include: reducing the amount of cash handled on buses, speeding up boarding, and more effective monitoring of use patterns. The work that happened behind the scenes to make the new system possible included:

- developing the business rules and standards;
- creating awareness in the community about the new system;
- coordinating the installation of smart card equipment on Go George buses;
- developing the necessary software;
- setting up a vendor network where users can purchase and recharge smart cards; and
- training staff on the technical and soft skills that are required for the new system to work well.

A personal commitment to road safety

Traffic law enforcement is one of the most important contributors to road safety in South Africa. A number of students at GLTC are determined to make roads safer for all. It is for this reason that they have applied to train as traffic officers.

Albany Joseph

Joseph, from Calvinia, says he was bitten by the road safety bug after attending a youth camp organised by the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) in 2008. “It was such an insightful experience when I first became aware of the road safety issues affecting our economy. I then became an ambassador for road safety by engaging with schools in my area around this problem. After my appointment as a Traffic Warden at the Hantam Municipality, I was able to engage more frequently with members of the public. It was also through this experience that I considered training at the College. I hope to go back as a trained traffic officer to continue with the road safety agenda,” he said.

Nicole Beukes

From Chatsworth, Beukes has been working as a law enforcement official at the Swartland Municipality responsible for managing by-law compliance. “The last five years has prepared me for my next goal: to become a traffic officer,” she said. “I enjoy working with people to try and encourage them to adopt responsible behaviour on our roads. To become a qualified traffic officer would mean a lot to me. Just being at the College now and being able to experience this training makes me feel grateful,” she added.
Mossel Bay school gets new junior traffic training centre

The Department of Transport and Public Works (DTPW) and Mossel Bay Municipality are confident that the recently launched Junior Traffic Training Centre (JTTC) at the St Blaize Catholic Primary School in the town will help to reduce child pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

The JTTC, an initiative of the National Department of Transport (NDOT), features a simulated road environment with a number of permanent road signs and markings, and a parking area. This provides a valuable opportunity for learners to learn how to use roads safely and responsibly as pedestrians, and as “drivers” of wire cars (see photo).

The launch was jointly convened by NDOT, DTPW, the Western Cape Department of Education, Mossel Bay Municipality, Shazzzies Transport (sponsors of the wire cars), and Sanlam (sponsors of paint for the centre).

According to St Blaize principal André Muller, the facility will be made available to all schools in the area, even pre-primary schools, to learn more about road safety. "We are looking forward to welcoming other schools here, so that they can also benefit from the use of our facility in order to improve the road safety of our children,” he said.

Improving road safety remains a daily challenge. An average of ten children are killed on Western Cape roads every month, and just over 75% of them are pedestrians. Ongoing education efforts in schools are a targeted way of raising road safety awareness amongst children. Making a real difference requires good role modelling and support from traffic officers, parents, teachers, and other adults in a community.
**Promoting road safety on the national stage**

Learners from ten Cape schools proudly advocated for safer roads at the recent National Road Safety Debate and Participatory Educational Techniques (PET) competitions held in Gauteng. The Department of Transport and Public Works is particularly pleased with the participation of learners from Eros Special School, who claimed second place in the debate (disability category), and Simon’s Town High, who came third in the PET urban category. These achievements highlight the Department’s long track record of producing young road safety ambassadors who can exert positive influence for years into the future.

These two annual Road Traffic Management Corporation competitions target Grade 10 and 11 learners who wish to expand their road safety skills and knowledge. In the first round, learners compete at provincial level. The winners go through to represent their provinces in the national competition. In the PET competition, participants conduct research into local road safety issues and present their proposed solutions. Through the debate competition, participants develop the ability and confidence to persuasively argue their points of view. In the provincial round, the Department’s Road Safety Management identified 13 schools from the Metro, Overberg and West Coast regions as participants. The winners were chosen at provincial road safety open days held in May and July 2018. The Department’s road safety management officers were then assigned to prepare the provincial winners for the national event. Raising awareness around the daily dangers children face on our roads, particularly the young and vulnerable, is a high priority.

**COMMITTED TO SAFER VEHICLES AND SAFER JOURNEYS**

This month, traffic law enforcement officers will be conducting vehicle fitness checks between 18:00 and 02:00 at Sonstraal near the Huguenot Tunnel and at the Joostenberg Vlakte weighbridge. These roadside checks mainly target long-distance buses and minibus taxis. This forms part of the Department’s public transport compliance and fatigue management sticker project, which runs at least twice a year (during Easter and the December-January holiday season). Drivers of vehicles that have been tested and found to be in good order will be given a sticker to display on their windscreens to verify their vehicle’s fitness at the time the check was performed. This will facilitate the work of traffic officers doing routine vehicle checks en route. We are hoping these vehicle checks will help ensure that road users and commuters travel safely to their destinations during the busy period in December and January.

**ZERO TOLERANCE FOR CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY INVOLVING TRAFFIC OFFICIALS**

The Department of Transport and Public Works has a zero tolerance approach to bribery and corruption involving traffic officials. It does not hesitate to take action against corrupt traffic officials and to lay charges against road users who try to bribe traffic officials. Corruption is a serious crime. Anyone convicted of an offence, whether the person is a giver or a receiver, could be sentenced to a heavy fine or period of imprisonment. Bribery and corruption involving traffic officers undermines road safety laws, increases the risk of crashes, and increases the likelihood that people could be injured or killed. Help us to make our roads corruption-free and safer for all. To report any form of corruption or bribery involving traffic officials, please contact the Traffic Management Centre on 021 812 4581 or the City of Cape Town’s 24/7 toll-free fraud hotline on 0800 32 31 30.
The Gene Louw Traffic College offers 12-month traffic officer’s training courses for young people who meet the requirements.

The College has a well-deserved reputation for producing dedicated and well-trained traffic officers. Courses usually start in August every year. Trainees must be employed in a vacant traffic officer post at a local authority or provincial administration. They get some practical experience through various deployments.

What:
Accredited traffic officer’s training course

Where:
Gene Louw Traffic College,
Brackenfell, Cape Town

Qualification:
Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC) in Road Traffic Law Enforcement

Key training areas:
• Firearm competency training
• Training in applicable legislation,
  e.g. the National Road Traffic Act and the Criminal Procedure Act
• First aid training
• Fire-fighting training

Requirements:
• Appointment in a vacant traffic officer post in a local authority or provincial administration
• No criminal record
• Senior certificate or equivalent
• Code B driving licence
• Able to perform strenuous physical exercises
• Not older than 35 years
• Able to undergo firearm training

More information
website: www.westerncape.gov.za/gene-louw-traffic-college | tel: 021 983 1500