



WHEN THE SUN RISES
WE WORK HARD TO DELIVER

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

PROVISION OF SAFE AND RELIABLE SCHOLAR TRANSPORT IN RURAL AREAS



public works,
roads & transport
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PRESENTATION OUTLINE

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1. PURPOSE

To provide an overview on the provision of safe and reliable scholar transport in the Province with special focus to Nkomazi, Bushbuckridge and Thaba Chewu Local Municipalities.



2. BACKGROUND

- In **August 2009**, The Executive Council of the Province moved the function of provision of scholar transport from DoE to DPWRT.
- The two Departments i.e. DoE and DPWRT signed a scholar transport Service Level Agreement (SLA) outlining the roles and responsibilities of each Department.
- In **July 2011**, tenders were finalised and new service providers were appointed.
- DPWRT developed a Provincial Scholar Transport Policy and appointed a monitoring firm to monitor scholar transport operations.
- The **current** scholar transport contracts were awarded in **2019** and will expire in **2024 (increased from 3 to 5 years)**.

2. BACKGROUND...

The Scholar Transport Policy states among others, that:

- Scholar transport is intended for Mpumalanga learners who travel more than **five (05) kilometers** to the nearest public school.
- Every attempt should be made **to cater for learners with special needs.**
- Curriculum choice and school preference should not be used as a criteria for the provision of scholar transport unless approved by the Head of the Department of Education.
- A **minimum of 10 learners** are required for the provision of scholar transport service on a particular route.
- Scholar transport is augmented by the **Shova’Kalula Bicycle Programme.**



3. SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

- The Department is transporting **64 500 learners to 364** schools throughout the Province
- A **hybrid model** is used to deliver scholar transport services across the Province.
- A Purchase-Operate-Transfer (**POT**) model was developed for **Gert Sibande and Bohlabela districts**.
- A total of **206** vehicles were purchased (182 for Gert Sibande and 24 for Bohlabela). These vehicles are fully paid and managed on a month to basis by Habana Trading.
- A **Multi-Operator-Model** is used in **Ehlanzeni and Nkangala District**.
- A Monitoring firm was appointed to monitor scholar transport operations in Bohlabela and Ehlanzeni.
- Internal officials are monitoring scholar transport operations in Gert Sibande and Nkangala after the termination of services due to breach of contract.



4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

An **Integrated Monitoring Plan** was approved by PMC and other Departments are now involved in the monitoring of scholar transport in Province (PWRT, Cogta, DoE and DCSSL) to enhance integration between local and provincial spheres of Government.

DEPT	ROLE	FREQUENCY
DPWRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allocate monitors to routes ▪ Identify hazardous routes ▪ Implement the provincial scholar transport policy ▪ Enrich the learner experience on the buses ▪ Conduct vehicles inspections for condition and roadworthiness (bi-monthly) ▪ Ensure vehicles have visible learner transport insignia at the back 	Daily
DoE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify dedicated teacher to monitor scholar transport (at school level) ▪ Involve SGBs to assist with monitoring at hazardous pick-up and drop-off points ▪ Assists to implement the provincial scholar transport policy 	Daily
DCSSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct road safety awareness ▪ Scholar patrols at pick-up, drop-off and road crossings 	Daily
COGTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involve community development workers to assist with monitoring of scholar transport 	Daily

5. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

DISTRICT	OPERATORS	ROUTES	SCHOOLS	LEARNERS	MONITOR
EHLANZENI	19	109	52	6 491	SMF
GERT SIBANDE	55	436	211	45 677	Internal
NKANGALA	61	212	101	12 332	Internal
TOTAL	135	757	364	64 500	



5. STATISTICAL INFORMATION: NKOMAZI LM

NO.	NAME OF THE OPERATOR	NO.OF VEHICLES CONTRACTED
1	Epikaizoshade PTY LTD	3 Vehicles
2	MJNS General Trading	6 Vehicles
3	Phumi's Travel and Tourism	3 Vehicles
4	Step by Step Transport	9 Vehicles
5	Sovini Business Enterprise	1 Vehicles
6	Vumani Consultants	3 Vehicles
7	TNC MJ Building Construction	1 Vehicles
8	Sizwe Transport	2 Standard Buses
9	SS Shongwe Transport	6 Standard Buses
	TOTAL VEHICLES	34



5. STATISTICAL INFORMATION: NKOMAZI LM...

Schools in Nkomazi benefitting from Scholar Transport Services:

- Bukhosibethu Special School
- Shongwe Boarding School
- Thanda Primary
- Suikerland Secondary School
- Komati Combined School
- Lubombo Secondary School
- Tindzeleni Primary School
- Mahlatsi Secondary School
- Zandile Primary School
- Loti Primary School
- Indlela Primary School.



5. STATISTICAL INFORMATION: BUSHBUCKRIDGE

NO.	NAME OF THE OPERATOR	NO.OF VEHICLES CONTRACTED
1	Habana Trading	13 Vehicles
2	Shaun Holdings	2 Standard Buses
	TOTAL VEHICLES	15

Schools in Bushbuckridge benefitting from Scholar Transport Services:

- Marcia Mokoena High School
- Makhosana High School
- ML Nkuna High School
- Chayaza Secondary School
- Dayimani High School
- Tsakane Special School
- Manyangane Secondary School



5. STATISTICAL INFORMATION: THABA CHWEU

NO.	NAME OF THE OPERATOR	NO.OF VEHICLES CONTRACTED
1	Habana Trading	11 Vehicles
	TOTAL VEHICLES	11

Schools in Thaba Chweu benefitting from Scholar Transport Services:

- Mashishing High School
- Skhila Secondary School
- Thaba Chweu Boarding School



6. SCHOLAR TRANSPORT BUDGET (APR-DEC21)

DISTRICT	BUDGET '000	EXPENDITURE '000	%
EHLANZENI	R75 000	R58 280	78%
GERT SIBANDE	R266 275	R239 686	89%
NKANGALA	R120 000	R98 406	81%
TOTAL	R461 275	R396 372	86%



7. MECHANISMS TO ADDRESS OVERLOADING

- This phenomenon is more prevalent on **private** scholar transport vehicles.
- Vehicles used to transport learners must meet the safety requirements of the National Road Traffic Act 93 of 1996 applicable to passenger transport - **one bum per seat** in vehicles transporting children.
- Public transport vehicles including those that are providing scholar transport are governed by the **National Road Traffic Act 93 of 1996 and the National Land Transport Act 5 of 2009**. The Acts prescribe the minimum requirements for all public transport vehicles.
- **Parents** can also play a role in bringing about stricter monitoring to stop overloading children. “Read your contract, enquire if drivers get additional training, check for monitoring of vehicles and if they are roadworthy.”



7. MECHANISMS TO ADDRESS OVERLOADING...

There must be stricter consequences for drivers who overload and this is what Government is doing to ensure it:

- In terms of the law, all public transport must be **tested every 6 months**. Scholar transport service is provided with a full consideration for safety of the learners.
- All vehicles that are suspected to be **unroadworthy are tested**, if they fail the test, they are discontinued or impounded.
- **Independent** supervision and monitoring is done to deter non-compliance to the scholar transport policy – overloading not accepted.
- Furthermore, **law enforcement officials** conduct regular enforcement of scholar transport vehicles.
- An **integrated monitoring strategy** is being implemented. It involves the DOE, DCSSL and COGTA joining hands in monitoring scholar transport.



8. DISCREPANCIES ON THE NUMBER OF LEARNERS

- The two Departments (DoE and DPWRT) signed a scholar transport service level agreement. Section 4.1.9 of the SLA states “*the Department of Education shall submit learner transport plans to the Department of Public Works, Roads & Transport by the **31 October of each year***”.
- The Department of Education is responsible for the confirmation of annual statistics (learners transported) by the **31st of March each year**.
- These are intended to minimize or avoid discrepancies in learner numbers.
- Despite the above, there are adjustment to these figures during the year due to **new human settlements, closure of old schools and opening of new schools**.
- In most cases, this increases the demand for scholar transport services hence there is always **budget pressure** on this item.

9. LATE TRANSPORTATION OF LEARNERS

Government is committed to ensure attendance - student to be physically available in the classroom or learning place in specified time:

- Any late arrival of learners in school whether, through private or public scholar transport service is **disruptive to teaching and learning**.
- The provision of scholar transport seeks to **reduce travel time** by learners to schools.
- Adherence to prescribed timelines by **operators, monitors, parents, learners and schools** is therefore critical to ensure access to quality education.
- The service level agreement between the Department and service providers makes late-coming a **punishable offence**.
- Late coming is not acceptable and should not be a norm.



10. FISCAL WASTAGE AND CORRUPT PRACTICES

- In 2013, the two Departments (Education and Public Works, Roads & Transport) consulted stakeholders (school governing bodies, circuits, and school principals) about the Scholar Transport Policy.
- Clause 5.2.1.1 of the Scholar Transport Policy states “scholar transport service is intended for Mpumalanga school learners who travel five (05) kilometers or more to the nearest public school”.
- This school of choice phenomenon is prevalent in Mkhondo due to the ever-increasing population.
- The Department is currently transporting learners out of the township (at the request of DoE) because township schools are full.
- Scholar transport service was previously notorious for the inflation and duplication of claims by service providers.
- The **verification of payments** is an important aspect of the monitoring process.
- The independent monitoring firm helps to avoid collusion between the service providers and the schools.



11. CHALLENGES

- **Non-compliance** with general laws in terms of transport i.e. roadworthiness of vehicles, operating licenses.
- **Increased number** of learners;
- **School of choice** phenomenon;
- **Capacity** to monitor scholar transport operations.



12. MITIGATING STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE SERVICES

- ✓ DPWRT, DCSSL and municipalities to enforce compliance with traffic and general laws with learner transportation.
- ✓ Creation of a **database** for scholar transport service providers.
- ✓ **Electronic** scholar transport monitoring system.
- ✓ Increase **capacity** to monitor and improve scholar transport operations.
- ✓ **Fleet management** in collaboration with School Governing Bodies (SGBs).
- ✓ Investigation of different **rates for different terrains** based on the location of schools.
- ✓ Coherent mechanisms for multi-stakeholder coordination (e.g. construction of new schools by DOE, new settlements by COGTA, etc.)

12. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that NCOP notes the presentation and advice accordingly.



THANK YOU



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