



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
TRANSPORT

Policy **SPEECH**

2024 / 25

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INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

It is with great honour and privilege that I stand before you today to present to you the 2024/2025 Policy Speech to the Budget Vote -10. The first such engagement under this newly mandated 7th Administration.

Without any further ado, **Honourable members** allow me to table the people's document Budget Vote -10 Policy Speech for the Eastern Cape Department of Transport. We are tabling this budget speech under the theme: **consolidating support for impact!** This theme takes into cognizance the journey we have traversed with the people of the Eastern Cape over the past 30 years of democracy. Through this period, the department has been instrumental in driving economic development programs by implementing multiple projects that have significantly addressed the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. The reality is that as we enter the 7th administration, there is no corner of the province that has not been touched by the work of this department.

Honourable Speaker, as the Department of Transport in the province, we reaffirm our commitment of creating a better life for all and we pledge not to leave anyone behind. We will continue rolling out massive infrastructure



delivery. We continue to embrace our responsibility to change the lives of our people for the better. We have invested heavily on transport infrastructure through road upgrades, reseals and rehabilitation, and this investment on infrastructure will extend to the upgrading and renovations of traffic stations, government garages as well as the management of Aviation facilities.

At the back of our minds, we are inspired by the wise words of one the greatest philosophers and political theorists, Karl Marx who while contributing to the Critique of Political Economy once said...

"It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."

Madam speaker, this Budget Policy statement seeks to take forward some of the commitments and interventions announced by His Excellency, President, Cyril Ramaphosa during his inauguration speech. Equally, we are giving progress on the work of the ANC led government. Giving an account to what we have done to change the lives of the people and restore the dignity of those who were previously oppressed and marginalized from the mainstream economy of the country. We can't afford to take our eyes off the ball. We have a responsibility of creating a democratic, non-sexist, and non-racial society as enshrined in the constitution of Republic of South Africa act 108 of 1996.

Bantu bakuthi, kuleminyaka imashumi mathathu yorhulumente wentando yesininzi, we have enabled the construction and upgrading of roads. We have, and we continue to work hard to build bridges, safely connecting our people to essential services and amenities. We continue with our efforts to improve the public transport system. We have developed our provincial



emerging contractors and created thousands of jobs for the people of the province.

We cannot deny the fact that there are challenges we are faced with and we are working flat out to overcome them. But despite those, some meaningful successes have also been registered, stories of trail and triumph that the people of the Eastern Cape dare not lose sight of.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2023/24 FINANCIAL YEAR

Honourable members, as we celebrate 30 years of democracy, we have taken note of the public's concerns regarding the state of governance in our department. ***The public concerns remind us of the Cape Verdean agricultural engineer, theoretician, and anti-colonial activist, Amilcar Cabral, who once warned us not to mask difficulties, mistakes and failures. Cabral cautioned us not to claim easy victories. He was clear that people are not fighting for ideas. They are fighting win material benefits and to live better in peace. Therefore, we have a responsibility not to tell lies and claim easy victories but to give an account of our achievements.***

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Our department has made significant progress in fulfilling the National Strategic Objective of converting gravel roads into surfaced ones. We are proud to announce that as of the beginning of the strategic period spanning from 2020 to 2025, we have successfully upgraded 100.96 kilometres cumulatively of gravel roads to a surfaced standard over this period with 2 381 jobs opportunities created utilising local labourers per project. This achievement is a testament to our commitment to improving our country's infrastructure and making it more accessible and safer for all.



Several projects have been accomplished during this 5-year strategic period providing access to social and health amenities, and access to tourist attractions among others, with the aim of stimulating economic development. These roads include the following.

Project Name	Kilometres	Jobs Created	Budget Utilised
Hluleka Hospital Road Phase 1	16km	156 local labourers	R215m completion cost
SLA Tsolwana Nature Reserve Phase 4	12km	183 local labourers	R71m completion costs
Willowvale to Dwesa Nature Reserve Phase 2	15km	339 local labourers	R343m Completion Costs –
Centane to Qholorha Phase 2B	10km	94 local labourers	R152m- Completion Costs
Enoch Mgijima Nature Reserve Phase 5	5km	98 local labourers	R53m- Completion Costs
Madwaleni Hospital Road	9,5km	90 local labourers	R122m including crushing of material
R72 to Hamburg	9,7km	225 local labourers	R144,5m including crushing of material
Coffee Bay to Zithulele	4km	336 local labourers	R180m including 2xmajor concrete bridges
Canzibe Hospital Road-	9,4km	365 local labourers	R155m including crushing of all material
Cofimvaba to Askeaton	6,9km	395 local labourers	R160m including crushing material)
Qumbu to Tsilitwa Clinic	3.46km	100 local labourers	R78 m- Completion Costs



At the start of the term, we set a goal for each provincial road to receive maintenance through reshaping (blading) or re-gravelling. We are proud to report that we have exceeded our term target, with a total of 35,728.21 kilometres being maintained, surpassing the performance expected for the strategic period. Specifically, we have achieved 4,484.45 kilometres of re-graveling towards maintenance of provincial gravel roads across various districts, where **R548m** has been invested towards maintaining access for the rural communities for the province. This includes roads used to provide access to farming communities, giving market access for the economic benefit of our communities. The department has also spent an amount of **R44m** towards implementation of concrete bridges on rural roads.

Although engagements to attempt to leverage part of revenue towards procurement of yellow fleet have not borne results, the department has managed to secure an amount of **R90m** for the procurement of yellow fleet. During the 2023/24 Financial Year, 36 plant items for Transport Maintenance were procured, where 11 pieces of plant have been delivered as at the end of the financial year, with the additional consignment due for delivery during the 2024/25 financial year. Some of the graders received from 36 plant items were provided to some local municipalities, this was to assist with urgent maintenance of road infrastructure across the province as well as enhancing and strengthening the service delivery model between the province and municipalities.

In ensuring improved public transport, we have allowed residents of this Province to access essential services such as clinics and hospitals, schools, shopping facilities etc. Prerequisite to this has been the transformation and empowerment of the public transport industry.



INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

The department along with the National Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, and the SA National Defence Force as the implementing agent, has been involved in the construction of Welisizwe Bridges. These bridges are being constructed in some of the areas that have been adversely affected by recent floods, bridging the communities, and bringing much needed relief to community members who are often cut off from amenities.

As part of our imperatives to maintain strong intergovernmental relations with other agencies, our collaboration with SANRAL continues as we are implementing the construction of the Belstone and Breidbach interchange on the N2 between Qonce and East London, and the Kidds Beach interchange from the R72. Furthermore, the Belstone and Breidbach interchange project will bring to completion the upgrade of the MR0688 and MR0690 linking Bisho and the N2.

Honourable Speaker, the department cannot be quiet on the integral role played by SANRAL in the road construction industry through projects in the Eastern Cape. Through these projects, roads and bridges are being upgraded, built, or maintained. The infrastructure development projects aid in job creation and skills development. Provincial flagship project with the investment amounting close to **R22 billion** at N2 Wild Coast Road programme is progressing well with four contracts in construction. These include the Msikaba, Mthentu Bridge, Msikaba North to Mthentu South, and the Lingeni to Msikaba South project.

Other projects that the Province receive economic boost include the upgrade of the National Route R63 section 16 from km 21.7 to the N2 past Komga km 43.64, the improvement of National road R63 15 to 16, from



Bisho to N6 bridge (5.8km) intersection started in May 2023 anticipated to be completed in August 2026 and Upgrading of National Route N2 between Grahamstown and Fish River pass Phase3: section 13, km 92,6 to km103,6 and section 14km 0,0 to 5,05 and the estimated completion date is 25 August 2025.

To realise the partnerships with local government, the Department will continue to collaborate with municipalities through maintenance projects using Service Level Agreements with the following municipalities in 2024/2025 financial year:

Municipality	Project Name	Allocated Budget
Enoch Mgijima Local Municipality	Upgrading of Fikile Gwadana Drive	R15m
Makana Local Municipality	Upgrading of Van Behrens (Ring Road)	R10 m
Great Kei Local Municipality	Upgrading of MR 00694 from the R349 at Nyarha Village to Haga Haga	R7,5m
	Upgrade of R349 from Kei Mouth Main Street to Kei River Mouth	
Mhlontlo Local Municipality	Upgrading of Shawbury Road T167	R6m
Amahlathi Local Municipality	The department is still in the process of finalising the SLA for the upgrading of Mlungisi internal street ,Stutterheim internal street and Rants Saw mills	R5m
Joe Gqabi District Municipality	Maintenance of gravel roads around Joe Gqabi District with primary focus at Walter Sisulu Municipality	R26m
Nelson Mandela Metro	Focused on inner roads in the Nelson Mandela Metro	R18m



CREATING ACCESS THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE

Over the past year, the department, underwent a review of the Provincial Transport Masterplan. This involved gaining support from TRANSNET, PRASA, SANRAL, SAMSA, and other transport organisations while considering their investments in the Provincial portfolio. Our Intergovernmental Relations were utilised to gather feedback and refine the plan. Currently, the department has started the process of institutionalising the plan with transport stakeholders through Integrated Transport Planning Coordination Council (ITPCC). The Eastern Cape Transport Master Plan (EC NATMAP 2050), adopted in 2010, outlined a long-term investment strategy. A total of **R44 billion** was set aside by various transport entities (including Eastern Cape Department of Transport) for the implementation of the envisaged projects. Here's a breakdown of the estimated investments over the Master plan period:

- Short-term (2010-2014): **±R16.1 billion** was allocated for initial projects.
- Medium-term (2015-2030): An additional **±R18.8 billion** is expected to be invested.
- Long-term (2030-2050): The remaining **±R9 billion** will be spent on ongoing initiatives.

Honourable Members, although our department conducts a thorough risk analysis to vet our contractors, we have encountered significant challenges in delivering our expected work, particularly in capital projects. As a result, several projects, including ,Hluleka Nature reserve (Phase 2), T125 (Phase 4) N2 to Siphetu Hospital road Upgrading of DR08606 Sterkspruit to Mlamli Hospital road, Flaggstaff to Magusheni, and Butterworth to Centane, have experienced significant delays, However, the Department has been resolute to ensuring that though these projects that have been delayed, replacement contractors to continue with the works have been appointed



for Hluleka Phase 2 and Siphethu Hospital Road Phase 4 and we plan to continue with work in the current financial year towards completion of the projects.

Honourable speaker, I can safely say, the Department remains committed to responding to the challenges of infrastructure and preserving the road network. In the 2024/25 financial year, we will continue with reseals and rehabilitation with focus given to the implementation following projects:

- Humansdorp to Hankey, rehabilitation of 26.5km in the Sarah Baartman District.
- N2 to Ntabankulu, a total of 17,2km to be attended in the Alfred Nzo District.
- N6 to Molteno, a total of 36,3km is our target in the Chris Hani District.

As per our promises in the last financial year, the department planned the completion of the rehabilitation of the Butterworth to Centane project in the Amathole District. However, the 1st contractor that was appointed to carry out the project was terminated due to poor performance. A replacement contractor was then appointed, it is now expected complete the job by the end of July 2024.

Furthermore, the Department will continue with the upgrading from gravel to surfaced roads with an estimated total investment of **R216 m** for the following multi-year projects:

1. R72 to Hamburg
2. Coffee Bay to Zithulele Hospital
3. Cofimvaba to Askeaton
4. Canzibe Hospital Road
5. Qumbu – Tsilitwa Paving



6. T125 N2 to Siphetu Hospital,
7. Hlulekha Nature Reserve Phase 2
8. Mlamli Hospital

As we enter the 7th administration, we are committing ourselves to the following additional projects with investment estimated to **R244m**: -

1. Willowvale to Dwesa via Msengeni Project (DR08044 Phase 3 - 15km long
2. Upgrading of DR08034 to Clarkebury - 20km long. This matter is, however, sub judice
3. Upgrading: Stutterheim to Tsomo Phase: -1, 25km long
4. Construction of the Mthatha Airport Fire Station

It's worth noting that the surfaced network is gradually deteriorating, with complete deterioration predicted within the next decade. To ensure the safety of road users, the province is taking necessary measures to address this issue. Our department is also affected by the general provincial challenge of decreasing funds and increasing costs for necessary upgrades. We plan to lead conversations around this issue in the new administration term, prioritising credible solutions to inform funding for the infrastructure program.

TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

Honourable Members, we have subsidized bus operations to ensure an affordable and reliable transportation system offering subsidies on 2 396 routes in 2023/24 where **R742m** in subsidy was provided through Africa Best 350 (AB350), Algoa Bus Company and Mayibuye Transport Corporation. The department had also adopted a Recapitalization Strategy of Mayibuye Transport Corporation (MTC) where the department had reprioritized **R5m** from its equitable share to refund 2 new busses for MTC



and in this 7th Administration the department had also reprioritized R7.3m to refund another 2 more busses. The department had also intervened in the Taxi Violence that had taken place in the province resulting in many Taxi killings by firstly the Premier had established Taxi Mediation Task Team which lead by external expert, and the department had also engaged Taxi Industry leaders through Eastern Cape SANTACO, Eastern Cape Small Bus Operator's Council, Mother bodies like Uncedo Service Taxi Association and Border Alliance Taxi Association to bring about lasting peace in the province which resulted in the signing of Provincial Peace Accord by all leaders at East London ICC on the 17th of April 2024.

Honourable Members: The department has been aggressive in its drive to bring the un-subsidized public transport operator into the mainstream of the economy after numerous requests about the subsidization of Taxi Industry and Small Bus Operators were received since the provincial and national Lekgotlas were held.

A Colloquium Document has been developed which will work as a guiding strategy to achieve the inclusion of those on the fringes of the land based public transport space into the mainstream of the economy, particularly involving non-subsidized operators such as the taxi industry and small bus operators. It highlights the need to address market distortions and improve the competitiveness of the sector while promoting the rule of law, commuter safety, and service excellence.S

PROVISIONING OF SCHOLAR TRANSPORT SERVICES

Honourable members, to create operational efficiencies, the Department has managed to ensure that the core processes of the Scholar Transport function are decentralized. At the start of the academic year, it became clear that the demand for scholar transportation far exceeds the



government's current ability to meet this need. It is worth noting that there are more learners who are getting the all-important Scholar Transport service than those who require the service but are not getting it. This despite the glaring challenge of limited financial resources that resulted to delays in the payment of operators for services rendered in the months of January, February, and March 2024.

However, interventions from the provincial government have provided additional funding, which is expected to alleviate some of the programme's challenges and give it the much-needed boost it requires. We are committed to the provision of the scholar transport service as its contribution in the ever-improving matric results in the province cannot be downplayed.

One of our immediate priorities has been to try and improve how it is managed for improved outcomes. We have developed the Learner Transport Management System "Sigelezel'utshintsho", which will modernise the end-to-end scholar transport function. The rollout of the system which commenced during the 2024 followed a process of training scholar transport operators on this new system.

The department, in collaboration with Department of Education is making all efforts to educate those in the coalface of Scholar Transport as well as communities in understanding the Scholar Transport Programme.

PROVISION OF INTEGRATED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Somlomo, ndiyafuna ukuyigxininisa into ethi sisezakuba xhasa oosomashishini kwezothutho zoluntu.



Through the participation of the National processes towards developing a new subsidy policy, we will influence the narrative in the funding model for all industry players. The department will continue supporting both SANTACO and Eastern Cape Small Bus Operator's Council (ECSBOC) for smooth operations within the public transport space in the province. We also recognize that municipalities need to be capacitated to deal with public transport plans and operator license and permits operations.

The department is in the process of reviving and resourcing the current Transport forums to be fully functional from local, district and provincial level where transport related issues will be discussed and escalated to TransMec for further discussions. TransMec derive its mandate from National Land Transport Act, Provincial White Paper on Transport and Provincial Land Transport Framework chaired by the Member of the Executive Authority. The structure will sit on quarterly basis to empower the MEC by package transport related issue for discussion during MinMEC sittings.

The province will also continue to revitalize our provincial Airports as the Service Level Agreement had been concluded with PetroSA to provide Jet Fuel at Mthatha for the first time which will also benefit local businesspeople who wants to refuel their private jets including department of Health Ambulance Jets.

Honourable Speaker, with regards to Mayibuye Transport Corporation, one of the province's SOE is enjoined to support all efforts by our principals to improving the levels and quality of services that MTC offers.

MTC has transported close to 1-million passengers every year. However, more must be done. MTC's fleet has aged considerably and requires replenishing to increase its reach into the provincial hinterland. Similarly, its infrastructure at depots has also seen the need for massive improvements



and refurbishments. MTC furthermore has the distinction of not causing any fatal accidents for the last 7 years.

Furthermore **Honourable members**, an amount of R8m has been utilised towards facelifting, upgrades of facilities and amenities during 2023/24 financial year. The upgrades included the depot buildings and roof painting, 6 x bus branding with new corporate brand, ablution and sanitary upgrades in all depots, annual purified water stations at all depots provisioning, electric generators at Zwelitsha and Reeston Depots, Biometric System for time and attendance, Cameras for surveillance, Reeston Depot Paving and office Space and Access renovations.

UPGRADES EARMARKED FOR 2024/25 FY

To further improve its service delivery output, Mayibuye Transport Corporation (MTC) will be implementing a comprehensive modernization plan, including:

1. Finalizing a robust legal framework
2. Investing over R20.5 million in depot improvements (2024/2025)
3. Allocating R10 million for workforce development
4. Fleet revitalization with new buses and refurbishments

MTC is seeking partnerships to leverage expertise, reduce costs, and accelerate initiatives like Automated Fare Collection and Fare Evasion Systems.

Communication and Information Technology (ICT) are central to this transformation, streamlining operations and improving customer service. A key focus is on integrating various systems across the organisation, including fleet management, ticketing, and real-time tracking, to create a



cohesive and efficient operational ecosystem. By embracing technology, fostering partnerships, and prioritizing communication, MTC aims to create a more efficient, modern, and financially sustainable transportation system.

REVITALIZATION OF RAIL SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

In the 7th Administration, the department and several municipalities will be prioritising strategies and funding proposals for a shift from road to rail as per the Rail White Paper. We as the Department of Transport will continue to play the coordinating role on the revitalization of the Amabele Branch line to Mthatha, as well as the Blaney Branch line to Cookhouse. The Department, through the coordination and facilitation of the Provincial Rail Committee has been kept updated on the negotiations between Sbhekuza and Transnet on haulage rates for use of Transnet rail infrastructure towards the Amabele Branch line to Mthatha.

TRANSPORT REGULATION

As part of our 2023/24 commitments, moderators and assessors have been trained towards the establishment of the Traffic College to drive institutional development and professionalization of the fraternity, and the Department intends to train additional resources. The Department has also trained Traffic Field Officers, which is intended as a build up towards launching the DOT virtual College. Furthermore, Departmental Traffic Officials were trained as facilitators to assist in the cadette in-take currently undergoing training in the Nelson Mandela Traffic College.

The Department has made several attempts to establish a 24/7 traffic policing visibility working shift system, including implementing Resolution 14 of 2009. Traffic officers were appointed in terms Public Service Act, that clearly stipulates their working conditions which should start from Monday to Friday and weekends would require payment of overtime. The



consultation process with labour unions towards the implementation of the directive took longer than anticipated with no positive outcome however through the court process, the department had to start implementing 24/7 shift system by appointing Traffic officers as 24/7 shift workers.

142 trainee traffic officers who are undergoing training at the Nelson Mandela Traffic Training College will be utilised to enhance capacity towards 24/7 shift system, however they are not adequate to conduct a fully-fledged 24/7 shifts. The department is currently looking at practical modalities for effecting the shift systems amidst the constrained fiscus within which it operates.

The collaboration between the Department and SANRAL on the refurbishment of the Kinkelbos weighbridge has delayed due to the non-implementation of the 24/7 shifts by the department, Currently, the weighbridge is operating from 06h00 to 22h00.

In the fight against corruption, the Department has arrested a few authorised officers for various inappropriate activities that are in contravention of the national road traffic legislation. These officers are from different Authorities throughout the Province and the necessary prosecution and disciplinary processes are underway both within the criminal justice system as well as their employers.

Following our commitments from 2023/24 financial year, the provision of Average Speed Over Distance (ASOD) is included under the EC Freeway Management Systems (EC-FMS) project being implemented by SANRAL which is still underway. The detailed design was approved, and although there are delays with the start of physical build works, the project will progress in the current financial year.



In its quest to make its mark in the global and national objective of fatal road crashes by 50% by 2030, the province has managed to record a 21,7% and 4,7% reduction in road crashes for the 2023/24 festive and easter periods respectively which placed it high in the national performance ever. It was during the same period that 24 trained Traffic Officers funded by the Department graduated from the PE Traffic College as part of adding to the existing force. Furthermore, as part of building its own capacity for the provincial Traffic College, a total of 18 Field Training Officers were trained and a total of 7 Instructors placed in the PE College for practical instruction experience from the Department.

In the 2024/25 financial year, the Department has set aside an amount of R1m to support the rollout of ASOD; a R500, 000.00 towards improved communication technology systems; The department has put aside an amount of R500,000.00 towards the establishment of the Driving Schools Registrar as part of regulating the space towards fighting corruption in the DLTCs, a further R2,2m for intensified compliance inspections in fighting against fraud and corruption in licensing authorities; as well as R200,000.00 towards awareness on the licensing legislation. All these are strides in the fight to reduce road fatalities on provincial roads considering all aspects involved.

SECTOR TRANSFORMATION

The Department is dedicated to fulfilling its mandate of creating a transportation system that is both reliable and secure while placing a special emphasis on serving the people of the Eastern Cape and enabling their long-term growth and prosperity. However, we recognise that significant gaps still pose barriers to entry into the industry, particularly when it comes to achieving transformation goals. One area that deserves special attention is the challenges faced by those looking to enter the



automobile repair sector. We have identified several obstacles that need to be overcome to make it easier for individuals and businesses to operate within this field. We aim to work closely with stakeholders to develop strategies that will help overcome these barriers and promote greater accessibility and inclusivity in the transportation industry.

Processes to close the gap between the department and its stakeholders have already been set in motion. Among those is the Colloquium Document which we have already reflected on. We have also been able to bring together under one roof emerging contractors for an Imbizo. This was aimed at fostering meaningful and mutually beneficial working relations between the government and its service providers, for a more improved service delivery output of the department which will benefit the masses of people of the Eastern Cape.

Honourable Speaker, The President of the country has signed two Bills for the Transport sector into law namely National Land Transport Amendment Bill which seeks to amend the National Land Transport Act 2009, to insert certain definitions and amend others and provide for non- motorised and accessible transport. The amendments bring the Principal Act up to cater with new developments and provide for certain powers of provinces and municipalities to conclude contracts for public transport services and Economic Regulation of Transport Bill which seeks to promote economic growth and welfare of South Africans by promoting an effective and productive transport sector. That includes establishing a Transport Economic Regulator responsible for regulating prices in the transport sector, investigate complaints, monitor, and enforce compliance. The Bill further seeks to establish a single regulatory body to focus on the economic regulation of the transport industry. The Expanded Public Works Programme remains the most impactful programme in the Department towards creating work opportunities provincially. The Department of



Transport will continue to create job opportunities through Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in response to provincial priority 6: “Bold Decision for Job Creation”. With this provincial priority, the department aims at creating 36 422 work opportunities through EPWP projects such as upscaling projects, road maintenance youth brigades and labour-intensive projects.

For 2024/25 the department is to provide training for 400 NYS and 100 Artisans at a cost of **R5m**. Additionally, 135 EPWP participants are to participate in Labour intensive construction of the Sakhisizwe Animal Pound in Elliot, completion of the Ntabankulu Ring Road, and Raymond Mhlaba (Hillcrest) Paving Projects. These projects will contribute towards job creation in the respective local municipalities. Also, the department will empower military veterans by recruiting them into the labour-intensive projects. A total amount **R9m** of has been allocated for these projects. Finally, the Office of the Premier through MerSETA agreed to allocate **R10,8m** for the recruitment and training of 50 unemployed youths for the apprenticeship project, the process of allocation is in progress.

STATEMENT ON GOVERNANCE AND ASSURANCE

We have taken steps to strengthen our risk assurance and accountability ecosystem and committing to implement combined assurance. An independent governance review was performed to assess the effectiveness of the governance processes within the Department.

To increase human capital within the organisation, we have heeded the call from our President and Premier, to remove entry barriers and minimum requirements for entry level employees. Out of 120 interns contracted in the 2022/24 period, the department managed to appoint 31 interns permanently. To this end, in 2023, the department advertised 364 vacant



funded positions in response to good governance, auditing and compliance. 227 posts are filled as they were carried over positions and appointed employees have assumed duties by April 2024. We believe that together, we can build a department that is accountable, transparent, and committed to serving the public.

The department is in the process of filling vacant and funded posts in current financial year. It's a total of 146 funded posts including 150 internships across the various programmes in the department. Special recruitment focus is on core business of the department to enhance capacity.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The department continues to leverage on technology to deliver its services. We understand the technological gains that it presents to ensure operational efficiencies. In the 2024-2025 financial year, the department heeded the call from our SMME's and the business fraternity who complained about non-payment of their invoice's *babe umsebenzi bewenzile*. In the second quarter, we will be launching our invoice tracking system called "Khawule'zubahatale. The system will address some delays and allow us an opportunity to monitor the payment process and improve inefficiencies.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OF THE SECTOR

Honourable Speaker, in our effort of contributing to the development of capacity and enhancing the quality of our services within the sector, the department has awarded 142 bursary holders who are embarking on the achievement of a Basic Traffic Diploma.

We have further awarded 25 external bursaries to be trained on transport related fields as follows: -



1. Civil Engineering (5)
2. Mechanical Engineering (5)
3. Architectural Engineering (5)
4. Transport Economics (5)
5. Aviation Studies (5)

We are furthermore looking into reskilling existing staff members as one of our priorities, it is for that reason that department has budgeted **R1.6m** and have awarding 35 internal bursaries as follows: -

1. Transport Safety (6)
2. Transport Economics (1)
3. Bachelor/Advanced Diploma (14) in related field of Administration.
4. Post Graduate Studies at NQF 8 and 9 (14) in the relevant field of study of the Department.

We are furthermore continuing to drive skills development interventions through our Centre for Technical Development, in the form of artisan development focusing on the diesel mechanical, motor mechanical and welding.

Honourable Speaker, Government Fleet Management Services remains the anchor towards providing fleet service in the province. The entity provides services to 13 Eastern Cape Provincial departments with 3227 vehicles and managed 809 vehicles that belong to departments, including all MEC's vehicles during the period under review.

However, there are financial challenges in some of the departments whereby the entity found it difficult to procure all replacement vehicles for the departments. In trying to ensure there is financial fairness, a rate card with a lower rental amount for vehicles that have high mileage, was developed, and implemented.



Despite the challenges, it is encouraging that GFMS has obtained two clean audits in a row, and it is expected that this level of governance will continue with improvements in operations as well.

CONCLUSION

The document that has just been presented here, is an honest reflection of state of our department, its successes and its shortcomings, the plans we have in place to mitigate those challenges against available budget. It reflects on the successes we have been able to register, the challenges we still need to overcome brings to the fore some clear and practical plans to overcome those challenges.

Honourable members, a special word of gratitude to the dozens of officials who have contributed to the development of this living document. But sadly, some of those individuals have since departed this world of the living. Our hearts are still bleeding for all our departed colleagues and may their souls continue to rest in peace.

A special mention for three of our female traffic officers who died while on duty, Officers, Onica Smith, Nopasika Matolweni-Makaba and Sisanda Hadi.

Officer Onica Smith who was gunned down by thugs who wanted his service pistol in Gqeberha back in 2022, her death was the catalyst for the urgent development of a policy aimed at a compassionate and relief fund to the family of any officer that dies in the line of duty. It is a policy that is at the advanced stages of its development.

In honour of Officer Hadi who was knocked down by a truck while stopping also in Gqeberha, the Basic Traffic Officers' Bursary has been renamed the "Sisanda Hadi Bursary". The department is looking at other means to pay



a lasting homage to all our officers with unblemished service, those who have passed on including the retired. Those include the planned renaming of the Kinkelbos Traffic Station.

Honourable Speaker as I conclude, I must register our utter dismay at the continuous violent and destruction protests, often targeted at government infrastructure, road infrastructure. None was more painful to witness than the repeated damage of by digging a trench across one of the province's major roads, the R394 near Phakade, which connects the N2 with the R61 road.

This deplorable behaviour not only cripples the movement of people, goods and services, it also adds to our already huge infrastructure backlog, upsetting our plans both in money and time.

We are therefore calling on our people, our stakeholders and all our social partners, to be their own liberators, to partners with us in trying to build our province. We are challenging them protect and jealously guard against any vandalism of the infrastructure that is already there while working with us to build more as we move forward.

Madam Speaker, we have also heard the cries of our people about the sometimes-rogue behaviour by some individuals within the taxi industry, those who have been operating as unauthorised traffic officers at time, wearing reflectors like those of our traffic officers, stopping vehicles, intimidating motorist and at times extorting money from them. That is completely unacceptable, it is criminal and for that reason, we have moved with speed to publish a Provincial Gazette based on the National Land Traffic Act of 2009, which not only criminalise such conduct, but also gives powers to the MEC act decisively against such acts. The Gazette was signed in December 2023.



Madam Speaker, Honourable members: As the Eastern Cape Department of Transport, we pledge that we won't take our foot off the paddle in our drive to improve our service delivery output. Sizibophelela ekwakheni kwezo ziseko sele zibibekwe sisiqheba sorhulumento lwesithandathu (the 6th Administration.), sikwazibophelela ekudlaleni indimba yethu njenge sebe ukuphucula impilo zabathu bephondo lethu, sakhe iphondo ebangazingca ngalo.

The 2024/2025 Financial Year provides us with yet another chance to correct the wrongs that we have picked up as we reflect on the actions of the last financial year. But most importantly, it grants us an opportunity to double efforts to multiply the gains dozens of Eastern Cape citizens who have mandated this government to improve their lives and take our province forward.

I thank you!!!

Summary of budget allocation per Programme

Programme	Medium term Estimates		
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Administration	559,740	600,865	610,078
Transport Infrastructure	2,439,635	2,118,195	1,926,411
Transport operations	1,633,897	1,728,182	1,788,361
Transport regulation	399,508	409,760	410,350
Community based programme	704 669	653,082	693,017
Total	5,737,449	5,510,449	5,428,217



