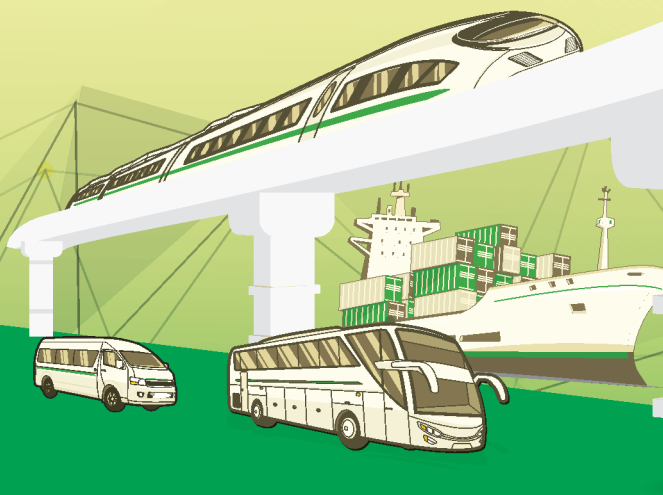




Province of the  
**EASTERN CAPE**  
TRANSPORT

# *Policy* **SPEECH**

**2025 / 26**



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HONOURABLE DEPUTY SPEAKER, MR VUYO JALI  
HONOURABLE PREMIER, MR OSCAR MABUYANE  
MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THIS HOUSE  
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT, MR ANDILE FANI  
SENIOR MANAGEMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT  
TRANSPORT STAKEHOLDERS, INVITED GUESTS  
MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA**

## **INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT**

**Honourable Speaker,** The Eastern Cape Department of Transport and the Executive Committee, led by Premier Lubabalo Oscar Mabuyane, are committed to creating a safe, reliable, and efficient transport system that supports economic growth, job creation, and social development. Despite facing numerous obstacles, the province has made significant progress in enhancing safety features and accessibility of the road network in the Eastern Cape. The department of Transport has transformed the province into a construction site, with substantial investment in infrastructure and safety landscapes. The ANC-led government is committed to completing the remaining tasks and ensuring that the province is recognized for its potential in transforming the perception of the Eastern Cape province.



## TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

**Honourable speaker,** The South African Human Rights Commission has deemed that, the Eastern Cape's Road infrastructure is in a substandard condition, a violation of human rights. The province has only 10% of roads paved, compared to the national average of 25%. This is due to historical accumulation, with the province being the lowest number of surfaced roads in the nation. The provincial government and South African Road Agency (SANRAL) are committed to reversing this situation and working towards the construction of the Eastern Cape. They have made significant investments in road infrastructure, focusing on rural roads and upgrading gravel roads to surfaced or asphalt roads. The province's new settlements, shrinking fiscal purse, and climate change-induced floods have been major challenges.

Beyond the challenges, the department in a joint effort with South African Defense Force (SANDF), Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI), and EC Office of the Premier (OTP) has progressed in Welisizwe Bridges Programme and the construction of **nineteen** (19) bridges in flooded regions, with **twelve** (12) completed. These bridges create job opportunities for 760 individuals, bridging the gap between underserved and rural areas. A further **R244m** has been invested in this crucial initiative, paving the way for the construction of an additional seventeen Welisizwe Bridges in the 2025/26 Financial Year.

**Honourable Speaker,** A high-level summary of SANRAL's province-wide programs. The department will collaborate with Municipalities in accordance with the Intergovernmental Relations



Framework Act and National Land Transport Act. Consistent in-house and outsourced maintenance will be prioritized to increase road lifespan and provide a rideable provincial network. Despite challenges, Middelburg Integrated Traffic Control Centre Phase 1A (Electrical) was completed. Construction is going well. Phase 1B of the department's facility-encircling highway reconfiguration is underway.

Kwi-Phondo liphela umsebenzi wokuphucula iindlela zethu uyabonakala. We are glad to report the following progress on multi-year projects commissioned by the South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL), an institution of our national Department of Transport:

- Belstone Interchange and Upgrade of MR0688 and MR0690 linking Bhisho and the N2: This project has been completed.
- N2 Wild Coast Road Programme: This is a **R20bn** investment which, encompasses the Msikaba and Mthentu Bridges. When completed; this will shorten the travel time between East London and Durban by almost half.
- Upgrade of National Route R63 Section 16 , 21.7km to N2 past Qumrha 43.64km): The construction of the Qumrha road is currently underway with SANRAL overseeing the upgrade of the route, specifically the section between Bhisho and Qumrha. The project entails significant road improvement and is progressing smoothly. The project contributes to economic growth in this region.



- Improvement of National Road R63 ( 15 to 16km, Bhisho to N6 Bridge, 5.8km): Construction commenced in May 2023 and is anticipated for completion in August 2026.
- Upgrading of National Route N2 between Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown) and Fish River Pass: The estimated completion date is August 2025.

In this regard, collaboration with Municipalities through Service Level Agreements (SLA) and partnerships will continue to be a feature towards the realisation of the District Delivery Model (One Plan). The following are Municipalities the department worked with until the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> term and will continue working with more in the 7<sup>th</sup> term:

- On the upgrading of Fikile Gwadana Drive 6.75 km at Enoch Mgijima local municipality is completed. Furthermore, designs on the Ilinge Road are underway. At Makana local municipality, the upgrading of Van Behrens Ring Road, - 1.01kms is also completed and rehabilitation of M street and Albert Street amounting to **R28m** is in progress. The department budgeted an amount of **R9.5m** for the completion of this project in the 2025/2026 financial year.
- The upgrading of MR 00694 (Nyarha Village to Haga Haga and Kei Mouth to Kei River Mouth roads) at Great Kei Local Municipality are currently in detailed design stage. The Department budgeted an amount of R21m in the 2025/2026 financial year with the anticipated start of the construction phase in the next financial year.
- With regard to the upgrading of Shawbury Road T167 at Mhlontlo Local Municipality, the project is in the design



stage and the budgeted amount of **R4m** for the 2025/2026 financial year

- On the upgrade of Mlungisi Internal Street, Stutterheim Internal Street, and Rants Sawmills at Amahlathi Local Municipality amounting to **R5m**, service level agreement between the department and the municipality has been finalised and the project will start soon.

The department has made available an amount of **R308,643m** towards the maintenance of gravel roads across the province. A sum of **R22m** has been set aside for Nelson Mandela Municipality towards the inner-city road improvements, while the Buffalo City Metro is allocated **R45m** for the upgrade of Quenera Road in East London.

In another partnership, the department, SANRAL, and a private company, PG Bison are finalising a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) for repairs to the Ugie Langeni Road. The department will invest an amount of **R17m** towards that partnership. This is a testament to what we can do with the private sector when decide to work together.

**Honourable Members**, citizens of the Eastern Cape, a 552 km of rural roads are inline to be regravelled and 23 877 km of gravel roads to be bladed and 69 966m<sup>2</sup> towards black top patching in the 2025/26 financial year.

To augment in-house capacity, the department has budgeted R454,8m for outsourced regravelling and R198m for outsourced blading across the six districts of the province.



To guarantee uninterrupted maintenance operations, the department aims to maintain an average fleet uptime of 75%. The department has set aside an amount of **R20m** to procure bakkies for social facilitation, validation and verification, utilised by technicians both civil and mechanical artisans to enable monitoring of roads works and plant repairs.

**Honourable Members**, during the 2024/25 financial year, the department made significant strides in improving transportation infrastructure, particularly upgrading gravel roads to surfaced standards through in-house construction. In this regard, substantial progress was achieved on several key routes, namely:.

- a. R72 to Hamburg road reaching 98% completion.
- b. Tsilitwa to Qumbu at 80%
- c. Coffee Bay to Zithulele at 70%
- d. Cofimvaba to Askeaton at 70%; and
- e. Canzibe Hospital Road at 86%

### **Project Progress Updates:**

- Willowvale to Dwesa via Msengeni Project (DR08044,) Phase 3 of this 15km project is at tender evaluation stage, we are expecting to introduce the contractor sooner rather than later.
- Upgrading of DR08034 to Clarkbury Road N2 near Dutywa to R61 near Engcobo – The 20km Phase 1 of the project, tender has been awarded, and contractor is not on site however maintenance works in the road is being done. The road has also been handed over to SANRAL





- Construction of Mthatha Airport Fire Station: contractor has been appointed however there are technical issues that the department is addressing with DPWI.

The reseals and rehabilitation projects for N2 to Ntabankulu, (17,2km) and N6 to Molteno (36,3km) commenced in the third quarter of the 2024/25 financial year and progress ranging from 5% to 30%, with the Humansdorp to Hankey project (26.5km) progressing extremely well.

Towards accelerating infrastructure delivery, the department partnered with Gap Infrastructure Corporation (GIC), an implementing agent that will oversee project execution and, crucially, support funding acquisition.

The ongoing review and institutionalisation of the Transport Master Plan stated earlier, coupled with active stakeholder engagement, further reinforces the department's proactive approach to planning and implementing sustainable transport solutions for the future. As part of ensuring preservation of our roads infrastructure, the department commissioned and completed a Road Asset Management Systems (RAMS). Data from RAMS gives an indication of the condition of each road (gravel or surfaced) and is used to identify projects and necessary interventions.

This strategic allocation of resources demonstrates the department's commitment to maintaining and improving the road network, ensuring accessibility and connectivity for all communities in the Eastern Cape. The focus on both infrastructure upgrades and consistent maintenance underscores the department's dedication to





providing safe and reliable transportation infrastructure that supports economic growth and enhances the quality of life for residents.

## TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

### INTEGRATED PUBLIC TRANSPORT

**Honourable Members**, the department is preoccupied with the day-to-day transportation of the masses of our people – primarily looking at land-based transport - taking people from their homes to services and amenities and back to their homes, safely. This requires us as the department to keep cordial relation among the various players in the public transport space, be it taxi and bus operators and everything found in between, those who are in the government supported Scholar Transport programme or those in the fast paced and highly competitive taxi rank operation space.

The department continued to subsidise bus operations to ensure an affordable and reliable transportation system in the province. To fulfil the public transport mandate being the core business of the department, a subsidy amounting to **R725 m** was provided through Africa Best 350 (AB350), Algoa Bus Company and Mayibuye Transport Corporation (MTC) benefitting nearly 10 million (9 641 027) million passengers across the province, mainly in rural areas.

The department is in the process of engaging Provincial Treasury for Frontload to procure 20 more buses for Mayibuye Transport Corporation (MTC) to curb hidden costs and price escalations when



buying bulk buses. The benefit of that is to improve the operation which will generate more revenue so that the entity can be self-sustainable.

With the Automotive Industry Development Centre Eastern Cape (AIDC-EC), Mayibuye gains access to cutting-edge automotive technologies and skills development, enhancing operational efficiency and supporting local manufacturing. This partnership aligns with the corporation's commitment to fostering industrial growth and creating employment opportunities. The partnership has also enabled MTC to benchmark against other bus companies such as Algoa and Golden Arrow.

The entity has started the development of its green energy strategy, including initial assessments and pilot projects involving the acquisition of at least two electric buses to test on our roads.

Mayibuye Transport Corporation (MTC) has started a transformative journey to modernise its operations, enhance service delivery and contribute to the broader socio-economic goals of the nation. Over the next five years, MTC aims to align its strategic objectives with the provincial transport agenda, focusing on innovation, sustainability, and customer-centric services. The entity working with the department will develop policy broad guidelines to assist Mayibuye Transport corporation (MTC) to be self-sustainable

The entity will launch targeted training to equip employees with skills needed for modernisation and digital transformation. Pertaining to the organisational structure review, the entity has started the process of reviewing and optimising the organisational structure to support new initiatives.



To strengthen governance and risk management, the entity will conduct corporate support sessions to enhance risk compliance and governance practices.

## PROVISIONING OF SCHOLAR TRANSPORT SERVICES

**Honourable Members**, in spite of its shortcomings as well as its well-publicized and occasionally well-politicized challenges, the Scholar Transport's role and impact on the Eastern Cape's ever-increasing matric pass rate, which peaked at 84.9 percent in 2024, are immeasurable. The province has been ordered by the court to provide scholar transport to all qualifying learners in the province. Ease We regard this ruling as highly progressive and eagerly accept it without any reservations. This is due to the fact that the ruling requires us to fulfill a commitment we have consistently made to ourselves: to transport every student who is eligible for scholar transport in the province.

In the fiscal year 2025/2026, we are committed to improving the Scholar Transport system. The department has developed the Learner Transport Management System to improve the efficacy of scholar transportation. The Department of Education and the department have also developed a close working relationship through the Provincial Joint Steering Committee. Pleasantly, efforts have been made to ensure that all eligible learners in the province are accommodated for the forthcoming fiscal year. This is the primary reason we regard the court judgment as progressive.



## ENHANCEMENT OF ROAD SAFETY

**Honourable Speaker,** road safety issues are also among the indicators that our province and department are evaluated on, particularly during prime periods like the Easter Weekend and the Festive Season. Additionally, the 2024 festive season was not our most successful, as the province has recorded 231 fatalities from 224 fatal in the Arrive Alive Campaign for the 2024/25 Festive Season.

I am disheartened to inform you that the Eastern Cape has experienced an increase in road fatalities as a consequence of a regression in behavior on our public roads. This picture requires strengthened implementation of the National Road Safety Strategy in the seventh term of administration, beginning in the 2025/26 financial period and beyond. Amongst the others:

- The department will foster partnerships with other key stakeholders within government as sister departments like Health (DoH), Economic Development (DEDEA), Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR), whilst engaging the relevant state entities like Tourism, Liquor Board and the Road Accident Fund to participate to improve on road safety in the province.
- The department is also considering Private Partnerships with OEM's or Motor and Insurance Industries, manufacturers like South African Breweries and Coca Cola to lobby for their participation in the improvement of Road Safety in our Province. This includes mobilization of resources towards road safety.



- The department will be mobilizing communities and society at large in all sectors for a multi-stakeholder movement working together to address this problem

In addition to the 127 Trainee Traffic Officers who were recruited, trained, and graduated in December 2024 and are currently enrolled in an Internship Program, the department plans to recruit approximately 200 additional trainees between 2025/26 and 2026/27 in partnership with the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC). TETA will also be involved in this initiative as a partner. Ultimately, these endeavors serve as a precursor to the province's implementation of the 24/7 shift system.

## RAIL INITIATIVES

The Department of Transport established a formal structure to engage all rail stakeholders in the province.

**Honourable Members**, in relation to the branch line between Amabele and Mthatha concessionaire, it has been awarded to Sbhekuza Rail for period of 20 years. The process towards finalisation of the agreement has resulted in delays in inception of train operations in this branch line however the processes have been finalised in December 2024.

Transnet effectively confirmed the access rate that will be applicable to Sbhekuza Rail when traversing Transnet's railway infrastructure. The access rate will render the concession commercially viable and enhances the fundraising processes that are currently underway.



The department will engage Sbhekuza and TRANSNET on operations going forward and provide support in the process. The department will also extend the initiative to revive Rail Infrastructure in the province. The department had signed a Memorandum of Intent with the Jilin Province in the People's Republic of China for the implementation of a High-Speed Train between East London and Gqeberha, and a proposed line between East London to Bhisho, and Bhisho to Mthatha.

## AVIATION

Mthatha Airport, a functional Category 5 airport, and Bhisho Airport, a Category 2 airport with no commercial activity, are the two airports owned by the Eastern Cape government. The department is currently investigating the possibility of establishing a partnership that could invest in the Bhisho Airport.

Currently, the Department of Public Works is in the process of conveying the land on which Bhisho Airport is located to the Department of Transport. The expected outcomes in terms of infrastructure upgrade at the airport were not achieved by the feasibility study commissioned by the Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC). Consequently, the department has appointed a transactional advisor to assist in the commissioning of a detailed feasibility study with accurate estimated costs for the airport's upgrade. The department is investigating public partnerships that are interested in investing in the Bhisho Airport to facilitate economic activities.

The department intends to invest in the upgrade of Mthatha Airport from a Category 5 to a Category 6 airport to entice a greater number



of airlines and accommodate larger aircraft. To achieve the Category 6 level, the department will construct a fire station in the 2025/2026 financial year through the implementing agent, the Department of Public Works.

Subsequently, the fuel farm will be operationalized, and the recruitment of firefighters will be implemented. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) has been executed between PetroSA and the department. Nevertheless, PetroSA's evaluation indicated that the airport's existing equipment necessitates repair and modernization. Additionally, the airport must acquire two vehicles that will serve as bouses.

## MARITIME

The department is in the process of developing a Maritime Strategy which will be incorporated into the readily drafted Inland Waters Transport Strategy considering the recent developments/initiatives such as the Oceans Economy - Operation Phakisa, as an enabler to address the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

The department has entered a partnership with its agency, the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) which is responsible for maritime safety, security and marine environment protection. Through its Rural Maritime Economy Development, it will leverage maritime opportunities within rural and marginalised coastal communities through an Expanded Public Works Programme partnership for Artisan Development. This is an exciting opportunity for the Maritime sector as we strive to eradicate the chains of poverty, unemployment and inequality.





ECDOT and the Department of Education have an MOU to provide Maritime Awareness in chosen province schools. Most inland communities have little knowledge of the maritime industry, and studies have shown that. This program aims to raise awareness. Maritime education is highly specialized and requires particular learning materials, hence schools with a maritime curriculum must be funded.

As part of ensuring a focused approach in the maritime space, the Department will host a Roundtable Discussion with key industry players including government. This should culminate into a structured program of action covering the next 5 years. In the Roundtable we'll explore opportunities, which can be pursued to broaden our endeavours in job creation and fighting persistent poverty. Further, together with relevant entities we'll revisit recommendations from various studies on what can be done (if any) with various small harbours along our seaboard, such as Port St Johns, Hamburg and many more.

## TRANSPORT REGULATION

**Madam Speaker**, mandiqhayise nditsho ukuba siyaqhuba ngokuphucula unikezelo lweenkonzo kuluntu lwethu ukuze bafumane izidingo zabo. Thus, I am pleased to announced that in our midst as my guests are Mr. and Mrs. Kobus and Sandra Rossouw all the way from Cathcart who recently went there for a driving license renewal and were so impressed with the quality of service they got and the welcoming state of the Komani licensing centre that Mr Rossow could not withhold his appreciate and decided to write to the Department in that regard.



**Madam Speaker**, I can also share with this House that just in the first half of the current financial year, the five centres had already raised **R15m** in revenue for the Province. Kungoko ke kufuneka siqinisekile ukuphuhlisa isimo salamasetyana okunikezela ezinkonzo, by adequately resource and enable them to operate so as to continue reaping the benefits of their quality service

The department is engaging the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), a public entity under the Department of Higher Education, to assist us with a research study to reposition our licensing centers for purposes of improving these services even further while ensuring easy accessibility by our people. This is further necessitated by the struggling South African Post Office (SAPO) that's currently entrusted to provide this service on behalf of the department, let alone the never-ending complaints received from the service provided by municipalities. The current and existing departmental licensing centers will be enhanced to offer more of the various licensing services and become a "One-Stop" shop facility.

**Madam Speaker**, I am pleased to announce that one of the flagship projects the department intends to pursue with the CSIR is to provide expert advice on the review of the Provincial Number Plate aligning with the national view of a "One Plate in One South Africa". We have seen Provincial motorists registering their vehicles outside of the province to obtain the newly introduced number plates by such Provinces. This is despite the hijacked supply process which is now producing frivolous and poor-quality number plates through fly-by-nights.



The department has further been approached by the national power utility, Eskom, for law enforcement support during the transportation of heavy-duty transformers from COEGA to in and outside of the province. As we all know, this is a very serious project that seeks to eliminate loadshedding in the country. However, it has serious implications as it will significantly reduce our law enforcement workforce by a huge number. Under the circumstances, the department may have to consider recruiting and train about 100 “Traffic Wardens” through the EPWP approach who may be charged with the escort duties for the transformers. In the process, about 300 more jobs in the space of Transport Regulation may be created.

**Madam Speaker**, the department will embark on a process to develop a regulatory framework to deal with encroachment with public road asset, formalization and regulation of the Driving Schools Industry in the province including the Towing Trucking Services Industry.



## BUILDING A WORKING SOCIETY THROUGH EPWP

The department has managed to create **35 506** opportunities and the reason for the difference is due to resignation of beneficiaries and in particular young people due to permanent employment and other opportunities. This is evidence of the purpose of the programme which is to capacitate the beneficiaries for them to be able to compete in the labour market.

Sakhisizwe and Ntabankulu LM Projects have managed to create 31 work opportunities and 11 of those are for Military Veterans. Raymond Mhlaba LM has kicked off the ground and together the projects will continue to create the 135 work opportunities as committed. It is worth mentioning that these projects do not only create work opportunities but also contribute to development of infrastructure at the local level.

The recruitment and training of 50 unemployed youths for the apprenticeship project officially resumed and the Office of the Premier (OTP) is actively engaging with the department to finalise the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the OTP, MerSETA, and the responsible government departments. The implementation of the intervention is set to kick start in this financial year (2025/26)

The department will through EPWP, continue to support the development and empowerment of communities. For 2025/26, we will create 34 000 work opportunities through 20 EPWP projects across six districts.



In an endeavour to capacitate the beneficiaries, the department has budgeted **R61 401m** for capacity building initiatives through the development of 20 SMMEs, 400 NYS, 100 Artisan Learners and training of 4000 EPWP participants. As part of a labour-intensive intervention programme that seeks to advance community development and beneficiary empowerment through infrastructure development, the department will be implementing the following projects:

- Paving of 1.2 km at Masizakhe, Dr Beyers Naude LM
- Paving of 1.2 km Paving in Hillcrest, Raymond Mhlaba LM
- Constructing a 3.4 km concrete slab in Mtumbane, Port St Johns LM.

## GOVERNANCE, RISK AND COMPLIANCE

We continue to work hard to improve our accountability ecosystem in various ways. Thus far, the department is strengthening its capabilities by developing mechanisms of integrating risk with strategy and performance. This will enable us to increase our efficacy in the delivery of services whilst optimising our efforts.

On the other hand, the department has begun the implementation of the Combined Assurance Framework by setting up the Combined Assurance Forum and Plan. This will assist us in reducing assurance fatigue and duplication of efforts amongst the management of the department. We commit that all recommendations from finalised investigations because of financial misconduct, fraud and corruption cases, will be implemented fully while ensuring consistency, transparency and upholding of the rule of law.



As the department, we record our achievement in obtaining an Unqualified Audit Opinion after years after years of striving to enhance our systems and internal control environment, which were significantly affected our performance in the area of Scholar Transport. We commit to maintain the current outcomes as we navigate through our challenges.

## MODERNISED PROCESSES THROUGH DIGITISATION

One of the department's key achievements in the 2024/25 financial year was the deployment of our invoice tracking solution, 'Khawulez'ubhatale.' This system was designed to address the longstanding issue of delays in processing invoices, which had been a significant bottleneck in our operations. I am pleased to report that the system has already been fully implemented at the Department's Head Office and we have initiated comprehensive change management and training programmes across all districts.

Through the Khawulez'ubhatale system, we have already begun to see remarkable improvements in the processing of invoices. The system provides transparency and real-time tracking of invoices, ensuring that service providers receive timely payments for the services rendered. As a result, we have not only improved our internal efficiency but also strengthened relationships with our external partners by ensuring a more reliable and predictable payment process.

The system is scheduled for full deployment in all districts within the first quarter of this financial year, and we are confident that its implementation will contribute to reducing administrative delays,



improving audit compliance, and enhancing overall accountability within the department. This initiative will ensure service providers are paid within the prescribed period of 30 days and contribute to the growth and sustainability of their businesses.

Building on the successes of the previous year, the department is forging ahead with its efforts to digitalize critical areas where we have been experiencing challenges. One of our key focus areas for the 2025/26 financial year is the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), which touches over 34,000 participants across all districts in the province.

We recognise that monitoring the vastness of the programme and the services it provides has been a challenge. To address this, we are developing a EPWP mobile application, 'Siyasebenza,' which will play a crucial role in streamlining the monitoring and management of EPWP services. The Siyasebenza app will not only enable us to manage the EPWP more effectively, but it will also provide an interface for participants and administrators to communicate, report issues, and track progress. By leveraging mobile technology, we aim to bring about greater transparency, accountability and efficiency in the management of this critical programme. This innovation will significantly reduce administrative overheads and provide accurate, timely data that will inform decision-making at all levels of the department.

As we move forward into the 2025/26 financial year, we remain committed to exploring and adopting innovative solutions that will further enhance our operations. The automation journey we have embarked on is far from over, and we are continuously seeking ways





to improve our service delivery through digital transformation. In addition to the initiatives mentioned, we are also investigating opportunities to integrate more advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence.

## SKILLS FOR THE ECONOMY

The department funded 142 students to study toward a Traffic Diploma Certificate under its bursary programme during the 2024/25 financial year. Out of the 142 students, 127 completed their Traffic Diploma and now are placed on a 24-month Internship Programme commenced on 02 January 2025 until 31 December 2026. The Traffic Interns have been spread across the six (6) provincial districts.

Of the 25 bursary holders who were awarded by the department during the 2024 academic year, only 19 applicants accepted the bursary. Six (6) applicants declined the bursary for various reasons e.g. some had already accepted bursaries from other organisations. The 19 bursary holders are continuing with their studies on the following transport related studies: -

1. Civil Engineering (3)
2. Mechanical Engineering (3)
3. Architectural Engineering (1)
4. Transport Economics (2)
5. Aviation Studies (10)

The 35 existing staff members who were awarded bursaries in the 2024/25 academic year are continuing with their studies and some of them are in their final year of study as follows:



1. Traffic Safety and Municipal Policing (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.

Furthermore, the department is in partnership with the Office of the Premier to host its ex-bursary holders who completed their qualifications in Mechanical and Civil Engineering studies on a 24-month Internship programme.

Nine (9) internal employees and two (2) external learners received competency certificates in Diesel Mechanic through the Centre for Technical Development. In 2025/26, the Centre for Technical Development will enroll 21 external number of learners focusing on Diesel mechanic, welding and plumbing and 10 from the internal employees.

## DEPARTMENTAL TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENDA

The department will continue to put transformation agenda at the centre of its business. A comprehensive Transformation strategy to augment the current effort and strengthen its posture towards transformation will be developed during 2025/26 financial year. The department will continue to give support to all vulnerable groups i.e Youth development, women empowerment, men, people with disability, military veterans, children and elderly.

In our efforts to boost the economy in the Eastern Cape, the department has set targets to spend at least 50% of the procurement



budget on SMME's based in the Eastern Cape. This will be done through direct contracting, with preference points aimed at EC based companies. Subcontracting of 30% for projects above **R30m** and procurement of materials from businesses based where the project is to be performed. The targeted sectors are travel and accommodation, construction, textiles, construction and public transport.

In the current financial year GFMS in collaboration with Automotive Industry Development Centre Eastern Cape (AIDC-EC) SOC will be allocating work to merchants to improve the localisation of spending within the Eastern Cape is achieved and drive SMME development.

**Honourable speaker**, let me indulge the house on the work we are doing to create a conducive environment for transport in the province. In this quarter, the Eastern Cape Department of Transport hosted a two-day Inaugural Research Symposium that was held in Gqeberha, on the theme: Creating Sustainable Solutions for the Eastern Cape Transport Future. The intention was to convene a platform for internal and external stakeholders such as academics, researchers, and professionals to come together to present and discuss their work, share ideas and engaging in discussions towards the finalization of the 2025/26 Policy Speech and finalization of the Five-Year Strategy.

**IN CONCLUSION:** As I had stated earlier in my remarks what we are presenting here will require political will and administrative commitment. On our side, we are committed to working tirelessly to ensure the successful implementation of this policy, and we look forward to collaborating with all stakeholders to achieve our vision.



Together, let us build a transportation system that supports economic growth, promotes social equity and enhances the quality of life for all our citizens.

I thank you.

#### Summary of budget allocation per Programme

Programme	Medium term Estimates		
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Administration	616,127	664,730	695,141
Transport Infrastructure	2,500,176	1,878,602	1,964,352
Transport Operation	1,737,908	1,901,049	1,874,663
Transport Regulation	501,727	437,364	457,046
Community Based Programme	633,637	650,337	679,608
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,989,575</b>	<b>5,532,082</b>	<b>5,670,810</b>

