

**Address by MEC VR Shongwe, to a Provincial AARTO Road Show
Thursday, 09 July 2015, Banquet Hall, Steve Tshwete Municipality,
Middleburg.**

The MEC for the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport,
Honorable Dumsile Nhlengethwa,

Executive Mayor of Gert Sibande District Municipality, Cllr, Meshack
Nhlabathi

Member of Mayoral Committee for Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, Cllr
Philile Nkosi

The Road Traffic Infringement Agency R Registrar, Mr Japh Chuwe

Deputy Director General for Roads in National Department of Transport,
Mr Christopher Hlabisa

Head of Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison, Mr
William Mthombothi

Head of Department for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Mr
Kgopana Mohlasedi

Senior Officials of the National Department of Transport, Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport and Community Safety Security and Liaison.

Executive Management of the Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA),

Members of all Faith Based Organizations,

AARTO Road Safety Ambassadors,

Ladies and Gentleman, I greet you all.

Program Director, let me first take this opportunity to convey our deepest condolences to the families of the traffic officials we have lost in the last three weeks or so.

Yesterday we were at Kwamhlanga bidding a painful farewell to another colleague, a foot soldier who was going to help us implement AARTO.

Our prayers are with their families and friends, we are praying that God gives them strength to accept their loss and move on with life. Their loss is our loss and we invite the power of God Almighty to see us through.

Programme Director, the road traffic environment in the country has over the years been faced with difficult challenges regarding the increment of fatalities that are mainly caused by human error.

The loss of lives experienced on the country's roads has impacted negatively on the country's social fabric. In road traffic management, it is us humans who make the most difference between hazard and safety.

Human behavioral change becomes the key to changing trends relating to road crashes. We need to change our behavior if we are to win the fight against unnecessary loss of lives on our roads.

As a country, we have made a firm commitment to achieving the goals of the United Nations Decade for Road Safety, by reducing the number of victims by 50% by the end of the year 2020.

In pursuing these goals, we need to come up with critical interventions that will ensure that achievement. The Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA) has embarked upon a programme of changing attitudes and behavior of our road users through the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences (AARTO).

The Road Traffic Infringement Agency is one of the most significant roads State Owned Entities established by the Department of Transport.

It is tasked with the responsibility of enforcing road traffic laws and inculcating a new habit of compliance; thus putting us in a position to realize safer roads.

It is admirable to note that AARTO is intended at educating the public about their roles and responsibilities. The challenge is to implement catalyst and new strategies that will make the country's roads safer, in which all road users can enjoy its use and benefits.

The AARTO Act depicts the Road Traffic Infringement Agency as an independent adjudicator designed to balance the rights of the alleged infringer and vice versa applications of the road traffic laws by the Issuing Authorities.

The impact bestowed upon the Road Traffic Infringement Agency includes community educational and awareness programmes that will translate into a new habit of voluntary compliance amongst the road user community.

In this regard, the Road Traffic Infringement Agency is mandated to ensure the implementation of an objective, transparent and fair administrative adjudication process.

The Agency's mission is to encourage compliance with road traffic laws in South Africa through:

- targeted road user and community education and communication programmes;
- promotion of procedurally fair, lawful and reasonable administrative adjudication;
- levying of penalties;
- imposing demerit points;
- effective administration and management of the suspension and cancellation of driving licenses and operator cards; and
- Rewarding compliant road users.

Ladies and gentleman,

It is important to inform you that the Road Traffic Infringement Agency has embarked on an active stakeholder participation process and has invited many stakeholders in this mammoth task of educating and empowering our road users.

The Agency is galvanizing the citizenry to establish a social movement, where a commission of a traffic violation would be unacceptable. We need a broad front.

This informs the invitation of strategic partnerships with a broad forum of stakeholders, ranging from government agencies, private enterprises, social organizations and the interfaith movement.

We are proud of the efforts that the Road Traffic Infringement Agency has undertaken in making sure that AARTO is implemented nationally, as a national policy geared towards the reduction of road crashes and fatalities on our roads and also creating a road users that complies to road traffic laws voluntarily.

This came after a realization that the youth have a critical role to play in making our country a better place to live in by providing them with opportunities to make a meaningful contribution through the AARTO Road Safety Ambassador programme.

We have created the Road Safety Ambassador Program because we realize that youth are part of all societal structures and are among the vulnerable road user group, therefore, it was befitting that they become stakeholders and participants.

This effort also gives credence to the Moral Regeneration Movement, this calls on us to teach the youth to enjoy being young while at the same time learning to be responsible citizens.

This places on us the responsibility to take care, teach and instill high sense of responsibility to our youth and also sensitize them about our values as a society. We also need to learn from their life experiences as the new breed of globalised citizens of the world.

Programme Director, as a roads agency under the Department of Transport one of the mandates of the Road Traffic Infringement Agency is road safety.

It is therefore safe to say that the Agency is continuously engaging with the interfaith movement, comprising of all the various faiths represented in the country.

This is to ensure the participation of the religious and faith leaders in preaching the gospel of road safety every week in our country.

As a Province Program Director, we have already put this into action. We have composed a song by called '**QAPHELA**' and it is sung by leading young artists in the country.

This Province is a dependable ally of the Road Traffic Infringement Agency and will be in the forefront in implementing programs that respond to its call.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Agency has further developed and is actively galvanizing the general public in education, through the Petition for a National Prayer Day for Road Safety, which is envisaged to be declared and observed every year on the first Sunday in the month of October starting this year.

As we speak, the Agency has appointed over eighty (80) young graduates as AARTO Road Safety Ambassadors in the Gauteng Province to influence their peers, educate the community on AARTO and road safety whilst also focusing on collecting signatures (one thousand per petition book) towards achieving the set target.

The Department of Transport through the Agency aims at appointing more young unemployed people, about fifty in each province as AARTO Road Safety Ambassadors to educate communities on road safety and acquiring the more than One Million Signatures for the declaration of National Prayer Day for Road Safety.

As a government we have a responsibility to uplift the youth and provide job opportunities and through entities such as the Road Traffic Infringement Agency, and it's heartwarming to note that those opportunities are slowly being realized.

In conclusion Programme Director we need to recognize that our country provides world class road infrastructure, it is our responsibility to enjoy it together as a shared space because road safety is a common responsibility.

With the introduction of AARTO every road user will be held accountable for their actions and will change the landscape of traffic management in our country forever.

If you commit a traffic infringement there will be no longer a place to hide, we shall find you and hold you to account. In Mpumalanga, we say, "Sekwanele Bopha".

I thank you.