
How pedestrians are dicing with death

Zodidi Dano zodidi.dano@inl.co.za

Drive.

DESPITE recording a 3% decrease in the provincial road death toll from December to January, over the same period last year, there has been an increase in the number of pedestrians killed.

Statistics released by Transport and Public Works (DTPW) MEC Donald Grant and traffic chief Kenny Africa showed there had been a decrease of at least eight road fatalities, bringing the number of fatalities to 248.

Of those, 111 were pedestrians, 74 were passengers and 39 were drivers.

The DTPW said that of the 248 fatalities recorded over the festive season, most were recorded in Cape Town.

"We acknowledge this achievement, while fully aware of the work that must still be done to make our roads safer.

"The number of people killed remains unacceptably high. We remain committed to changing that and continuing to save more lives."

Traffic officials said the festive season had been one of the busiest, with the number of vehicles on the roads on the rise nationally and provincially.

In January, 1 930 597 vehicles were registered in the Western Cape.

The DTPW said statistics showed that more than 600 pedestrians were killed on provincial roads every year.

This is 50 per month or about 12 per week. Most of these pedestrians were killed on weekend nights and were under the influence of alcohol. All too often the driver who hit them was under the influence of alcohol too, said the department.

The City of Cape Town's traffic department held its own pedestrian awareness initiative on Jakes Gerwel Drive yesterday.

Mayco member for safety and security and social services JP Smith said the drive was to discourage pedestrians from crossing the eight lanes on Jakes Gerwel

"Pedestrians dice with death as they weave and run between five busy north-bound lanes, which makes this a high accident and high fatality location for pedestrians. What makes it even more problematic is that it is happening within 50m of a much safer pedestrian crossing at the traffic light," he pointed out. –