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Route of evil

shared



IT'S OFFICIAL: Agreement to share B97 route was signed

TAXI ASSOCIATIONS TO SPLIT PAARL/BELLVILLE

THE feuding taxi associations have finally agreed to share the contentious B97 route.

Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) and Cape Organisation for the Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) met on Monday and signed the document. Violent attacks saw 24 people killed in July which led Transport and Public Works MEC Daylin Mitchell to close the route between Bellville and Paarl/Mbekweni.

"I welcome the agreement signed yesterday between leaders of Cata, and Codeta aligned route associations on the sharing of the contentious Route B97, following discussions with the government," Mitchell said.

"It has been just more than a year since I closed the B97

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PICTURES: SUPPLIED

minibus-taxi route from Mbekweni [Paarl] to Bellville. During July 2021, I invoked my powers in terms of section 91 of the National Land Transport Act [Act No. 5 of 2009] to close the route following several incidents of violent conflict and the loss of lives."

Decision

He said the decision was taken in consultation with the affected municipalities, cops, and regulatory stakeholders given the fact that the safety of passengers had degenerated to an unacceptable level.

"The current closure period comes to an end on 25 September, 2022.

"In consultation with the affected municipalities,

we invested a considerable amount of time, funding and resources into mediation efforts prior to closing the route," Mitchell explained.

"Taxi operations on the B97 route were also the subject of an arbitration process.

"The arbitration award was released in November 2021 and we made a concerted effort to give effect to the arbitration outcome.

"The arbitrator ruled that both Cata Boland Taxi Association and the Paarl Alliance Taxi Association (affiliated to the Codeta region) have legal rights to trade on route B97."

Mitchell stated that operating licences will be apportioned on an equal basis between the two associations commensurate to the demand for services as shown in the transportation plans for the area.

"The route will in the mean-

time remain closed until the regulatory process has been finalised," he said.

"Details of the closure period will be shared soon.

"It should be noted that the replacement Golden Arrow bus service will continue to operate in parallel to the taxi service post the re-opening of the route until all bus tickets/clip-cards have expired."

Cata and Codeta directed the *Daily Voice* to Santaco spokesperson Makhosandile Tumana, who said they are happy about the agreement.

"It's a great achievement between these two associations because the issue of that route was one of the biggest challenges in the province.

"It's a big achievement, we also appreciate the role of the government, especially Mitchell, may he continue to support us."