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Acting provincial minister of mobility Dr Ivan Meyer presented the festive season traffic report at Gene Louw Traffic College in Brackenfell on Monday morning. PHOTO: DESIREE RORKE

Massive decline in province's festive season road fatalities

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With 131 deaths, the overall road fatalities in the Western Cape over the past festive season has shown a sharp decrease of 46,72% compared to the 207 deaths during the previous season.

The festive season traffic report was presented by acting provincial minister of mobility Dr Ivan Meyer at Gene Louw Traffic College in Brackenfell on Monday morning.

The report covers the period 1 December 2022 to 11 January 2023 and highlights the achievements of Western Cape traffic law over the festive season.

Furthermore, the report indicated an overall 23,88% decline in road crashes compared to the previous year, and a 14,87 decline in pedestrian deaths.

A total of 63 pedestrian deaths were recorded, 44 on municipal roads and 19 on provincial roads.

According to Meyer 63 of the 2022-'23 festive season deaths took place in 52 crashes on provincial roads and 68 people were killed in 66 crashes on municipal roads.

"On municipal roads fatalities decreased by 32,68%; and road crashes by 32%, whereas on provincial roads fatalities decreased by 36,72% and the number of crashes declined by 17,47%," he said.

MAKING ROADS SAFER

"This is a massive achievement. I am proud that we as Department of Transport and Public Works, traffic law enforcement, Safely Home, Road Safety Management, and Land Transport Safety Management have been able to make our roads safer this past festive season, working closely with our partners in the South African Police Service, other traffic law enforcement entities, emergency medical services, the provincial regulatory entity, the Road Accident Fund, Child Safe, and the South African National Roads Agency (Sanral)."

He added that their efforts were boosted when 85 traffic law enforcement officers graduated from the Gene Louw Traffic College as traffic officers on 9 December

They were deployed four days later on Western Cape roads.

Meyer said a total of 243 982 vehicles were stopped and checked during this time and 2 283 integrated law enforcement operations took place.

A total of 239 vehicles were impounded and 1 117 were discontinued in this period.

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- Dr Ivan Meyer

The total number of arrests during the festive season was 680, of which 446 were for driving under the influence, 98 were for fraudulent documentation, 23 were for speeding, and 52 were for reckless and negligent driving.

Fourteen people were arrested for bribery, and four for possession of drugs.

"While every arrest is bitter sweet, bitter in the sense that someone did something knowing that they were doing something wrong but continued nonetheless, and sweet because it is one more wrong-doer off our roads, I am especially proud of the number of arrests for bribery," said Meyer.

"This speaks to the ethics of provincial traffic and sends a clear message that in the Western Cape we have a culture of doing the right thing," he added.

Moreover the department's Safely Home programme engaged in road safety awareness using social media, radio and billboards that offered social media, radio and billboards.

Also, road safety management officers engaged with 3 047 road users distributing over 8 000 road safety awareness pamphlets and over 1 000 promotional items in the process.

"They did awareness-raising about the dangers of driving and walking under the influence, using cellphones while driving and walking, fatigued driving, overloading, seatbelt compliance, jaywalking, distracted driving, and distracted walking," he said.

HABITUAL TRAFFIC TRANSGRESSORS

Meyer said a total of 3 407 habitual traffic transgressor stops were performed in the time.

"Habitual traffic transgressors are motorists who have been identified by the Average Speed Over Distance camera system as repeated speedsters, or who have been issued with over five written notices to appear in court, or who are using a vehicle whose licence has not been renewed in 18 months.

"When such a motorist is approaching, an alert is sent to officers further along the road to stop the motorist and engage with that person on recorded offences and to warn the person of the consequences of further transgressions," he explained.

"Keep supporting us as we continue to live out our passion to make our roads safer," Meyer concluded.