

The Director-General of the Department of Transport Interview Transcript

Date: 25 February 2021

Time: 09H51 to 11H30

Venue: Virtual

Chairperson: Prof. Mathetha Mokonyama

Representative of the Department: DG Mr Alec Moemi

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Dr. Makhado: Good morning, I am David Makhado from the DPME, I am the Project Manager for the Country Report. The concept document regarding the project has been shared with the DG providing background regards to the purpose of the project which is set to document the lessons learned on how the government of South Africa has implemented or intervened during the pandemic.

Chairperson: All right. Thanks Mr Makhado. My name is Mathetha Mokonyama from the CSIR and I have been requested to facilitate the session.

Okay. DG you want to just open in terms of you know, your understanding we have been hour with you which we really appreciate.

Chairperson: All right. DG, we have the team has compiled about 12 questions. We have an hour they believed that they were sent to you so that you're able to reflect. So essentially less than five minutes per question even lesser, you know now given the constraints, time constraint and the idea is that there is some work that has been done to get a sense of what you know from a transport perspective what the country did as a response to covid-19 impact that has been documented. But there are certain gaps that need to be filled. There's some information that we may not you know have access to so part of this is to fill those gaps and also to confirm certain things to get a sense of whether you know, they did they are indeed as stated in secondary sources of information. So what I'll do in the process, I will go through each question. Give you time to respond and where colleagues want to follow up with a quick question, they can do so by showing their hands and will recognise them accordingly. Is that fine DG?

DG: Thump up for confirmation by DG.

Chairperson: All right. The first question there is around the public transport clustered around public transport starting with the minibus taxi industry, a relief support fund the tune of R1.135 Billion to the benefit of the minibus taxi industry was announced. However, the industry claims that the fund has

not been allocated and that they request that the fund be distributed to individual operators as opposed to associations or registered companies as required by the Department's. The question is how is the department going to address this impasse in order to distribute the funds?

DG: It is not about the department trying to get the funds to be paid to the associations as opposed to the demand by the industry to actually paid to the individuals. In fact, the opposite is true. It was initially some SANTACOS viewpoint that the money be paid over to them and they will pay to associations who will distribute the money to members and we refused. Because we wanted greater accountability for the money and we also wanted the money purchase way in which funds will be distributed. Well SANTACO is recognised Apex body for the taxi industry. We also realised that there is a breakaway group away from the International Taxi Alliance and we know the untold horrors of the time we have multiple so-called Taxi Federations, the fights and the wars that have been fought over turf and over control of the industry as a whole and we understood quite early on and state Security Agency advised us that we should not necessarily put the money into the hands of either NTA nor SANTACO and that the operators be paid directly in this regard. So the issues of dispute between us and the taxi industry, at first there is an issue that the money was too little they argued that the R1.135 billion was a pittance compared to the announcement by the president that response package was R500 billion and they felt that as an important sector, they couldn't possibly just be given R1 billion out of R500.

And they demanded more. They also highlighted the impact their industry had faced in respect of the challenges posed by Covid-19 and suggested that they wanted compensation for loss of income. We have clarified that the package and the relief is Excursion in nature and therefore right across all Industries, we do not pay for compensation for loss of Revenue or income in any way. And that we have just get that providing relief to the extent to which the government pass could accommodate and afford. So consequently, they made a lot of hullabaloo, I'm sure you saw in the media and everywhere else, they called for a national strike, they called for stay away. But ultimately, they can back to the table in acknowledgement that there wasn't any more money and our Minister made it very clear that the money will not be increased. They then moved on so then say all right, it's fine the money little as it is paid over to us but paid with no conditions and we disagree with that notion right across all the sectors in which payment has been made, relief payment has been made, it has been made with conditions. The conditions we said set for them, number 1 was that they must register for tax and that they must register for formal businesses. They must also start the process of converting their operating licenses and transferring it from the individual into the actual business. They must also register the employees being taxi drivers, que marshals and so on for UIF for acquired the skills

development levy. And that they must formalise and accept the sectoral determination made by the minister of Labour for a minimum wage in the sector and that they must comply with labour laws. They rejected all of these conditions outrightly. They do not want to pay tax. But they wanted pay us money to actually give them relief. They do not want to register the employees. They want to continue the exploitation we see within the Sector where some drivers are paid as little as R350 per week, if you calculate it in a month it tells you a story. And therefore, we had put our foot down and had insist that as recent as two days ago we were still engaged with the NTA and SANTACO. The Treasury has now given us an ultimatum that if the money is not accepted and utilised by 31st of March come the end of the financial year it will be forfeited to the revenue fund and we have notified both NTA and SANTACO of this impending calamity and we have now decided the Treasury that we must go with it along. We will publish a Gazette about next week declaring all the conditions there in and saying that individual taxi operators must come along and apply for this and to qualify. They have other secondary demands to the conditions we have made. For instance, there are people who are known to be operating illegally within the taxi industry. For instance, it is illegal for a Taxi Association to register person who has no valid operating license to be a member of Taxi Association, but they do it anyway. So, we do a route viability study that would say between Mamelodi and Pretoria, there are so many people and so many working people and therefore to transport them is so much, there are so many buses allocated, the train that moves take so many and so forth and therefore the share for taxis will be typically this number of commuters. Therefore, on that route there should be 120 taxis. They would take the 120, we will issue licenses and all assisting issues the hundred and twentieth operating license. It stops. So, the rest of everybody who are applying provincial registering entity still accepts the applications because some people may die, their licenses may expire, they may not, they may exit their thing and therefore you always have a waiting list on your route so they will accept the application for the route and keep them like that. But now you have a challenge those people who have slip that shows that they have paid an application fee approaches an association and say I'm a prospective operator. I have a proof that I have applied not have been granted, but I have applied for a license and somehow miraculously the association's make them pay a joining fee in other routes it's as high as R60 000 joining fee, which can only tell you what the money goes to the pockets of those who control the association's and Peak operators in the route. So, they are made to pay that and then the association somehow then allows them to operate. So, these operators are illegal. Now, the taxi industry is saying to us if we are to pay we must also pay those people who are operating illegally. They are saying that if we only insist on a valid operating license is not enough government must pacify this situation and also pay those who have proved that they have applied. Of course, we reject such notion out of hand. And the other is that they don't want the meter taxi people to benefit out of the

equation. They want only minibuses to benefit out of the package. We have also rejected that. They also do not want the inhaling drivers who are South African who have valid operating licenses only that they operate on an app like uber, we also reject that because they are South Africans that we also impacted by this and they will have to share in the pie so that's where we are with the dispute but we will go it alone next week. We will announce that those who want to apply individually can. We have been for on that it may lead to violence, that those who apply may be intimidated and so on because the idea is that they do not want the operators to really be formalised and to pay tax and to have formal businesses and for us to regulate the sector better, but yet they want government subsidy. So, we are carrying the debate around the subsidy and dangling this carrot in exchange for formalisation and we will not pay subsidies no consider subsidies in a shambolic industry disorganized as it is.

So, I think that's the long and short of I'm try to cram everything within a short space of time. But that's where we are in the process. And those are the challenges and I think the problem with this sector is that successive governments in administration's in the Democracy have bended backwards a lot for the taxi industry and government has never really had firm political commitment to transform the sector. Now, the Manifesto of the ruling party is quite clear about what needs to be done with the industry and we have taken a cap memo to cabinet to say we're requesting cabinet to support us politically that we put our foot down and that we do not Bend backwards in this regard. So, it may be very well that if we don't find each other for the first time, I think people may read it badly in the media, but we think it will be a good thing. Even if the money surrendered back to the revenue fund, government must stand firm on the things that it should never accept that to. I mean you can see the industry has been law unto itself. You can see lawlessness on the roads, you know, the contribution of tech minibus towards the road fatalities and so We can't tolerate it anymore. And I think that that's where we are. And that's our frame of mind and our we've learned from this matter.

Chairperson: All right, thanks DG. We will watch the developments there and also review the Gazette that is to be published. The second is on the distribution of sanitizers and PPE some of the some provinces report that they have distributed sanitizers and PPE to the minibus taxi industry. However, there does not seem to be a uniform approach on this. How would you have preferred that these, you know sanitizers and PPE be distributed to the taxi industry?

DG: Okay, well first and foremost and that a general rule really, each industry like you go to malls, you go everywhere else and this business must provide its own PPEs to its employees and its customers and so on as required by regulations, but especially plea was made by the taxi industry to saying

they've been hard hit unexpectedly. The loading capacity under level 5 was reduced to 50% and possibly couldn't stomach the loss of income and also the added responsibility of providing PPEs to commuters and they requested for a special dispensation and for government to consider. The matter was debated within net-joints, public transport was identified as the second biggest risk to the spread of the disease or the virus and therefore it was agreed that we should provide assistance. We procure centrally and distributed to 9 provinces and the province's worked with the industry to actually provide the PPEs to the industry we're done consultations with some SANTACO extensively and we've looked at the number of vehicles registered in each province and proportionately distributed PPEs in that regard.

So, but we always knew that it was a short-term intervention and that on a sustainable basis those who own the facility such as taxi ranks and a stimulus and so on which are provinces and municipalities must themselves procure. We had a cities and provincial meetings facilitated by the Treasury which also acknowledged the challenges. The cities that would need is the most were grossly unprepared and underfunded to be able to undertake the task. We agreed with the Treasury that if money was to be found within the system it will have to be found within the savings. One of them is the public transport operators grant which is given to all the nine provinces 15% or up to 15% of the public transport operators grant was set aside by a gazette by the treasury for provinces to utilise to provide PPEs to the taxi industry and for them to procure what we have on behalf of the taxi industrial and to liaise with the taxi industry.

And we also looked at the public transport network grant for municipalities and major metros and again, there we reverse that. There was also re-in fencing of money within the MIG / municipal infrastructure grant that the taxi ranks which are infrastructure as well as bus terminals also be sanitized as such. We did work with our other public transport entities including PRASA and **SAMSA**, **HAVAD** as well as **AXA** for efforts to literally do a lot of work needs provision PPEs and sanitisation in this regard. So, back to the taxi industry what we have seen is that as provinces began procuring and they were still procuring you may know that the issues of the scandal pertaining to procurement of PPEs became a national issue and we started seeing the spending patterns slowing down significantly.

While there is a need still within the taxi industry for these things to be provided for but you see provinces un-spending. We have seen only the Western Cape has spend all its money allocated to it and they have also continued spending some of their own equitable share to continue to provide but

the other 8 provinces, obviously with different percentages of expenditure but the spending is quite slow on PPEs.

Are there any essential lessons that we can draw from here? Well, certainly I think when we were distributing and centralizing all of this, I mean I used to have a lot of headaches during level 5 some person in Nxofimvava taxi driver calls or tweets the Minister and say I am in Nxofimvava I have not received PPEs. And Minister would say, hey why are they not having PPEs in Nxofimvava? And I said, no its impractical, I'm in Pretoria and I'm supposed to distribute to what in excess of 10,000 taxi ranks and you've got to think about it that that work must be done quite closer to where the people are and that's why we offering fast money for municipalities as well as for Provinces who are closer to the action to be able to distribute and Monitor properly in that space. The methodology could be improved of course, and I think now with their hard lessons and looking at what government is doing now around vaccine procurement, there are lessons to be learned there and I think centralisation is not such a bad thing. But then centralised procurement can be done but distribution Network must then accompany such a centralisation to make sure that efficiencies and the logistics around delivery of PPEs is of sound quality, thanks.

Chairperson: I think the next question is a follow-up. You did mention that you've been trying to push such that provinces are able to spend but we noticed there was that Dora amendment to allow for the likes of public transport operations grant to be used for the purpose of procuring PPE, sanitization equipment, but then some provinces struggle to implement this out of fear of being caring irregular expenditure. So how is the department supporting the provinces to overcome this problem?

DG: Well, there couldn't be any regular expenditure with the Amendments that have been made if procurement is done properly and within the framework of the law and you followed the procedures Supply Chain Reaction are followed to the latter. They shouldn't be any irregular expenditure because now with the Amendments made those amendments now allow for you to procure PPEs legally and without the worry of irregular expenditure. If there will be irregular expenditure will not be because you bought PPEs because you didn't in your procurement process you did not follow the procedures. So I think that must be clarified quite well and therefore the two meetings we have had with HODs was to clarify, safeguard everybody to give confirmatory letter to everyone to say, please continue supporting the industry do it but do it within the law I mean Western cape is now a good example that it has spend the money and it has spend it properly within the framework of the law and there are no issues. So, I think that's the long and short of it, so by virtue of us agreeing with the treasury and the

Amendments that have been brought and grant Frameworks having been revised that has paved way for PPEs to be bought for what originally was money intended for subsidization portion of it can be used for procurement of PPEs legally.

Chairperson: Turning a bit to Infrastructure, the lockdown regulations seem to have had a severe impact on the PRASA infrastructure program as it was reported in in Parliament by PRASA. Are there specific lessons learned on how to minimize the impact of regulations on infrastructure rollout. I suppose including, you know, roads and other transport infrastructure.

DG: Well, I doubt that they could have ever been a possibility of Lockdown regulations particularly for level 5 and level 4 having allowed any infrastructure work to continue. So, from that point of view, the impact has always been eminent and it was quite unavoidable. The key thing is that what happened in level 3 for instance. When we started allowing for repairs to critical infrastructure like bridges and we allowed railway engineering work to happen behind the scenes on Level 3, the key thing that has been how well was PRASA get putting itself in a better position to take up the any opportunity as I can say so that by the time the regulations are in excess is the case now in level 1 what then do you do? Are you ready? And would you have had all the components you need, would you have had all the stuff you need and so on for you to undertake the work that you need to and I think we now see that death of project management skills to be able to have taken the opportunity.

So, where we are sitting as the National Department, it was an opportunity lost because it will have get us at immediately when we entered level 1 that we see real work commencing but it has not commenced and I think as you know only now we are still struggling with issues pertaining to adjudication of tenders to contract people to start doing real work in infrastructure that we have envisioned will be done. But if you really think about it in level 3 and level 2 the likelihood is that all of those processes should have been finalized and we had sufficient time really to do that behind the scenes by now we should be seeing cranes and people on site working on construction happening and all the work that needs to be done being done and so there's been a delay in that regard and this we can acre the lack of capacity in the space. And I think it's something that we have learned from this point of view to say that we have to look at capacitating this entities that drive infrastructure and in contrast I think you should look at what PRASA and you contrasted with SANRAL you would see that SANRAL uses the opportunity for that and immediately when level 1 came you started seeing road repairs occurring and even today when I was driving on R21, the road was being repaired. So that tells you that there is a difference between the two entities and how SANRAL utilize the same down time

to prepare itself for when we have to kick-start one more. So, the difference really is nothing other than project management capacity.

Chairperson: Let's deal with public transport. The department produced a draft public transport substitute policy, which will inform how transport is funded? One of the recommendations is essentially around the adoption of a zero-based budgeting policy funding public transport as opposed to using historical patterns and how long is it likely to take to adopt this policy? And of course, we looked at the budget in a statement yesterday. The detailed one. There is also reference to this.

DG: Yeah. No, no, we are in a hurry let me put it that way. We are in a hurry we have never arrived at a point from conceptualization or thinking conceptualization. And until we have the first draft every stage being the Green paper we now have on this matter? So, for the state, it's quite very fast for what we do. And the intragovernmental consultations that needs to go in and thinking internally and the many round tables we have had with the National Treasury on the matter shows that we have moved a relatively fast because the this first draft was done in a space of eight and a half months. So we have been relatively fast considering that our previous policies took us. If I can give you an example the regulation of e-hailing its now as me and you talking seven years in the making and we are only now taking NLTA through Parliament to have it amended just so that we can bring the necessary legal teeth to regulate the E-hailing but it's seven years in the making. And we are learning from this because we are now scanning the whole globe for disruptive Technologies in transport looking at what is happening things such as Dubai auto show that we never used to attend and never saw value them previously and we are participating in them. And we're looking at what's new, and what are the emerging trends. The reason for it is simple because unlike e-hailing which came legally Founders grossly in prepared of the state to regulate this new type of operations on an app and the traditional ways of a physical taxi rank never worked any more. We need to find a way of avoiding what we saw back then and with people killing each other and so on. We're now looking at autonomous vehicles. If I tell you that we have finished the first draft of the regulations on autonomous vehicles and we are consulting DTI now on them, we have also finished the first draft of regulations from flying Taxis and flying cars.

We have done a gazetted now regulations on the Rbus or remotely promoted piloted aerial vehicles or the drones as popularly they are called. We are looking at all these disruptive technologies that are emerging and we are continuously scanning the environment and preparing ourselves for the eventuality of what is to come. We are trying to be up to date and on the Cutting Edge and in return for this policy, we have done for public transport funding. We have been relatively fast how fast will

we do. Well, I must not lie to you. It's going to be a big fight. I must tell you for people who from time immemorial like bus companies that are entrenched, Golden arrow and up in 137 years of subsidization in the same format. They are not going to take it laying low. You knew, this was your cake and this is how much you used to get annually and treasury tell us that there is an expenditure siling meaning that there will be no more money. So, the money must be found within the system. So, what we're doing is to pull resources all together of public transport funding everything from what we fund the Gautrain to the buses to the subsidy for trains to everything we are giving we pull it together into one fund, the public transport fund and then will give the base cost to all mounts. And from there you will then start to calculating on a pro rata basis on a zero base and pro rata based on how many commuters you carry. Now, you can already know that the taxi industry carries about 63% of commuters today. Yeah also themselves playing in a space where they shouldn't be playing for instance personally. I believe that, taxis shouldn't be allowed to do long distances and I do not agree with that. They hate me for saying this but is the reality I don't agree that Taxis should play in that space and that we should not be subsidizing them for that. We should be looking at using the carrot of subsidization for other things in the same manner. We should also allow for other moves to enter spaces that they should be in but they are not in there and even in other instances the road subsidy must be shifted to rail. Look at corridors like a GA-Maskraal to Pretoria or Botshabelo in the Free state to Bloemfontein, all of those people who are on the N8 there and those who are R101 here shouldn't even be at the road at all. They should be on rail and efficiency should be improved in that way and the subsidy has to shift but they will be resistance there would be and I think that they would have to fund creative mechanisms. We have some of them for instance with the taxi industry and IPTNs.

We have seen that the deadlock braking mechanism if we offer them the right of first refusal to surrender their licenses and to enter into at the business of running their BRTs and many of them and associations have done so and they've accepted at the logic of what we are saying. So, it may be that you must allow the current operators that will be displaced by our zero-based budgeting system. To also shift and to look for New Opportunities where the subsidy goes and how it goes. So, therefore we will have to explore we'll cross that bridge when we come to it, but I can tell you now that our anticipation and it's correct that we should anticipate this so we are ready and prepared for it that they would be a backlash and they would be gross resistance to change. I guess it's human nature that the first response to changes resistance.

So that's what we're anticipating already. So it will take us significantly amount of time because of the objections but not because of our uniqueness salute preparedness to get their policy design and I think the fact that we have done it relatively quick after in this regard considering how big the machinery stages and how long it takes for us and how long previously some policies took us to bring the first

draft stage tells you how readily prepared we are and as I've indicated earlier we are dangling this carrot to the taxi industry to say we are prepared to subsidize you and to bring you into the subsidization but in order for us to do so, we're not going to subsidize individuals, we are going to subsidise registered companies that pay tax and that are in good standing with the law. I think that's the long and short of it. We can anticipate it will take us a relatively longer due to the objections and perhaps legal challenges that we follow from what we're trying to do.

Chairperson: We've seen with the economic regulator have been I think you've been very Hands-On pushing that that process. So is it safe to assume this year would be the push for the policy to be adopted so, you know this year or not.

DG: No, it will be this year, certainly it will be this year because our indication on the round table with the treasury is that we're targeting 1st April 2022 for the introduction of the first form of indirect subsidization to the industry and this Now does not speak to the money that goes directly into the hands already with GTI we're discussing I'm letting the cat out of the bag but Let me just tell you what we're looking at subsidization of vehicles for them. So, an operator enters dealership and produces their license if a vehicle is say R800,000 we can buy let's say R750 or R700 depending on the size of the subsidization of that vehicle and they buy it at that price, but the dealership knows that you coup its money from the manufacturer, manufacture who's a member of NUMSA which is part of the automotive sector package and subsidization that DTI will then print as part of the automotive package and treasury said it will be much faster more easier to piggyback on an existing package and an existing infrastructure and make the resources available so that the subsidization is quicker so that way if I buy the theory goes if I buy the vehicle cheaper than What I should be paying my monthly payments are less and therefore the pressure for pricing and passing on to the consumer I passed their savings on and the ticket or the fair price is much lesser and therefore that indirect subsidization is the most easiest until we have the time horizon finished by which now we can start giving subsidization passenger journey.

So in order for to do that the work we have asked SANRAL of mobility account for everybody and the infrastructure will have to install the new subsidization vehicles including the cashless system taking cards that can count passengers and every other thing that can work much better and the industry can be subsidised based on a passenger journey to do so and so on.

But you see, we are looking at a two-faced approach starting 1st April 2022. We are looking at the indirect subsidization and perhaps a year or two later than a direct subsidization of the passenger journey. So, we're looking at those 2 phases and if we looking at 1 April 2022 it means that at least by

September this year and the policy should have gone to White paper and by latest February or, so it must have been approved and gazetted as formal policy for us to introducing that. So, but from a budgeting point of view and that's why you see it in Minister's budget, this is the first time is being highlighted and showing that within the **MTURF** framework, which is the next three years. This thing must be expected and it will come so I think the details of which will come perhaps in next year's budget votes or the third one.

So, that's the design and the thinking but we are in a hurry obviously will only be slowed down by our thinking and we may not achieve the white papers status after out for public comments and what their legal wrangling and delays in this regard and there is Hemant opposition to this. Obviously, we won't finish it by our target date and now government works on a daily cycle. So, if we miss that deadline then it's referring us to 1st April 2023. So, God forbid we don't have to arrive at that but we are keen on getting on with it.

Chairperson: Thanks DG. Moving to touch on to touch on SANRAL just now. During our data collation process, we found that the majority of the SANRAL comprehensive Traffic Observation station across the country were discontinued at the end of 2019. And of course this data set is for many things, asset management, revenue forecast SANRAL and many things associated with it. So, this this of course creates that large gap data in South Africa, what are the reasons for this discontinuation? If any and other plans to reinstate those systems?

DG: No, certainly we have begun, I think the issue of the **CTOSI** is like quite critical and important to us but during the hard lockdown level 5 there are 2 contracts at least not all of them. I think we have a number of contracts in place, but two of them which are critical for the key corridors where had expired and because of the circulation by the treasury during hard lockdown Level five and four. It was clearly indicated that no tenders should must be issued during that period. So this has led to a lot of backlog of tenders on the SANRAL side, but SANRAL has now done the replacement tenders for this they worked on them and they are part of the procurement plan now for 2021/2022 financial year. In this regard we are planning for April 2021 for the first of the two to be issued and the second one will also be adjudicated and be done. And the second one will be issued by June 2021. So, indeed we agree with what you say. It's important to us who were impacted heavily by this but nevertheless we are getting on to replace the 2 that had expired and even the ones that are coming for expiry the third one by August will be issued before the expiry date.

Chairperson: All right thanks DG. I think it's clear there also on the issue of traffic statistics Road crashes seem to have declined disproportionate to traffic flow reduction. That's indicating that alcohol ban has had a large positive impact in the system. Are there lessons that the department is taking from this experience?

DG: Now certainly, I think all the studies that have been done previously and now has always told us that Alcohol was a problem in the system and alcohol also was an important contributor to many of the fatal crashes that we have seen and alcohol involvement even among pedestrians majority of them the pedestrians that get to be involved in accidents or they get bumped on the highway trying to cross and so on are themselves having invited consumed alcohol and I think as a result of this we have taken a number of steps first to amend the national road traffic act with the viewpoint of making the penalties for alcohol involvement with quite much more simple and also stiffer penalties charges and offenses for those who have been found to have been drinking and driving.

And also one of the things we are doing which people consider controversial is of a zero tolerance to alcohol consumption and then be behind the wheel and I think that people think that we're saying they must not drink at all. That's not a life story, our story is simple if you want to drink anything that has alcohol then don't get the wheel. They argue that they are gonna find arrest people failing taken medication. Hang on but even that medication on his own bottle tells you that you drink this thing lead to drowsiness and so on. Why would you want to drink this and be behind the wheel also now looking at intoxication as a whole and not just alcohol intoxication but we bringing into place drugs those who consume drugs and who use drugs and then want to drive later previously when we tested them for alcohol, we had to let them go along the way because we had only a breathalyser but you can see this person is in no shape to be driving.

But there is no smell of alcohol, there is nothing so on and even if you look at others the highest concentrations of TCH now in some of the cannabis plants that are being bred tells you that these people should not be behind the wheel. So, so we're bringing all of that and we have learned our lessons from the countries that have managed to significantly reduce to two things. There is zero tolerance and but secondly better policy that enforcement and so if you look at our revised pillars we are doing three things first is tightening this side and strengthening the law, second better enforcement which is what we have been dealing with we are now in terms of enforcement strategy you find us even on roads. You never anticipated that would be there but importantly now we work 24/7 you will find us at night. I remember that one of my distant uncle's used to be a traffic cop as I was growing up at Ramos and one of his standard issues was a raincoat. As part of his uniform but today's traffic officers don't even have that. They say they work during the rain. They may be struck by lightning and so on and I also know some of my naughty friends who say when is raining is the best time to speed because no traffic officers will be on the road house to be because its the time the road much more actually dangerous, but they hit 160/180 with their big German machines because they know that they'll be no one waiting for them. But now if you look at the things we have our procured and bought, water resistant cameras, we are putting covers for this cameras. We're giving them

umbrellas and we're giving them a raincoats. They must be there with the enforcement has to be there and we're also supporting provinces and municipalities that are smaller with funding for overtime to make sure that some days even days that were not expected to be making you will find us there. So the enforcement is non-negotiable is what we're doing but lastly an education campaign to educate Society about this, I think earlier on the department didn't drop the ball, arrive alive campaign and TV adverts used to be a daily thing that you saw but now those things are all but gone but yet we're expecting that Society will learn. We must continue educating them, we have partnered with many companies Distell, SAB and others and they are coming on board and we're talking to the alcohol industry for an independent campaign. And we also running or we have refreshed the arrive alive campaign now and soon will also be paying for adverts and all of those things once more to educate society as a whole and to have greater Partnerships around this matter.

So yes, we have learned a lot. And we do need and acknowledged the role and I think Covid and with the lockdown regulations have only vindicated our advice strategy around this and has shown that indeed with the reduction of alcohol now on our roads and of consumption, there will be a correlation of no one or as you put it is proportionate reduction in fatalities.

Chairperson: All right DG. We have less than about 10 minutes left but also for so things to cover but will be guided by you in terms of how to take the rest. The Nexis around the licensing testing centres vehicle. Testing centres there was quite a bit of backlog reported. What specific lessons has the department learned in this regard for future purposes planning and management purposes?

DG: Yeah, I think that the biggest lesson really for us in this regard is that, As I've indicated even with the issue of Destructive technology, we need to move ahead with times and we need to diversify our offering and our service delivery points and diversify them as much as we could and embrace more and more technological platforms for this purpose. When we started with the issue of online licensing and registration small pilot in Gauteng and then Covid hit us very hard. There very few people, we still have long queues testing centres people applying physically for Slots for licenses and so on so forth and then Covid hit everybody now was afraid of coronavirus but they still wanted their licenses people cloaked the system. The system wasn't coping at all and the capacity of the system was never get to be at what they demand have now become. We have since invested in that improved a lot of the capacity of the system address the glitches that we were there that kept on rejecting appointments despite the fact that there's a back end we could see that the slots are available all of those technological challenges were addressed and resolved but the backlog is still there. People are still finding it difficult but, in the sense, that they are being given appointments like three months from now, so they are unhappy with that and that's why you see people who now go across the provincial borders through the first towns across the borders to try get appointments at these stages.

But nevertheless, the situation is significantly improved and we also see that the number of our DLTC are now coping in places like Mabopani and others are now taking this needs and its a breeze with how the people are now experiencing this so we will need now to change their offerings and spearhead this for instance with the RTMC we are looking at mobile DLTC that could go around and we will start with 18 across all the nine provinces. We're also expanding when we've been in discussions with the post office where the verge of signing up on this and to also extend some of the DLTC services to the post office for license renewals and all of those things and for slots and to diversify our service points and make sure that they are broader. Also the post office has proved to us quite resilient during the time when our DLTC actually being closed. One staff member tests positive for for coronavirus and then all of a sudden the whole testing station must be closed and there are no services for people. We have now asked them to work on a rotational basis as stuff to rotate to make sure that even if one team was exposed and that there is a secondary team that can take over the functions immediately and on the system of rotation, this has helped us with keeping most of the DLTC sees and the vehicle centres operational. But importantly we need to move full speed ahead to diversify our service offerings including service points to embrace more technology right across all provinces business at this stage.

Chairperson: All right DG, your portfolio is very large as it's got many facets. So just for two more areas to cover, one is around freight and then the last is around international travel. So on the freight we can take both in one around the cargo movement restrictions. The transportation of cargo as the least the regulatory, was the least regulated but, were the specific issues raised by the freight transport industry on the regulations? And then also the violent attacks on what we referred to as foreign drivers. What has Department learned from those incidents?

DG: The road Freight Trackers Association did to talk to us during the hard lockdown level 5 for you would recall that be no fried food have been served and many of the so-called tourism establishments had to close. So now if you are a truck driver our campaign and the Law requires you or the regulations require you to take 2 hour rests in between 2 hour driving periods and to also stop every 200 kilometres or so. I issued them for the ultra-cities and engine one stops and so far, they are done in 200 kilometer distances in that regard and the distribution is meant to make sure that we can move from one and find a safe place to stop, you can buy some food, you can have a restroom and so of and you can also fuel. Having said that truck logistic sector complained bitterly that had nowhere to stop because where they normally have to sleep over now the lodges or the accommodation establishments closed where they expected to sleep in this regard, but secondly now, there's no food

for them on the roads. What do they eat along the corridors as they travel from one Province to the other delivering goods in another instance of traveling to nearby ring countries.

So, this became big issue during the hard lockdown level 5. Except you also had stories of truckers who was trying to cook for himself with a gas stove as he's still driving and there was an explosion and got badly injured and everything was that, so the were all of these issues that they raised challenges pertaining to the regulations. Nevertheless, when we arrived at level 3 many of this regulations were eased, but they are main gripe has not been around this softer that has been around the issues pertaining to the impact of Covid on the businesses. They were not to make a lot of money there was reduction in cargo that they could move and many businesses were really threatened during this period.

We did advise them to approach the DTI for the schemes that who are available for the loans that they could get to save their businesses. Then other side of the coin is what you raised about their migration regulations, and we do note that know what we have learned is that this migration regulations must be tightened and there are things that were already correcting out of this attacks that we have seen. Now many of this company's this is what they do despite the fact that there is a SADAC protocol on the free movement of persons and goes to in South Africa is a signatory. Countries like Zimbabwe are cheating the system. They are charging South African trucks that goes Zimbabwe or even in Botswana is the same thing our tracks or companies tracking companies registered on the South Africans side. They cross the border they are charged user charges and however, are we the cross border agency wrote agency of our country does not charge any user charges for trucks registered in Malawi or in Zimbabwe coming into South Africa as an example. So as a result because South African trucks are charged in Zimbabwe. Some companies are moving their head offices or small but they just opened a small office in Bulawayo or Harare and they are now domiciled in Zimbabwe and they are a Zimbabwean company, when they drive on Zimbabwean roads they are not charged. And also when they come to South Africa they are not charged, because South Africa does not charge. Zimbabwean laws for instance would say that companies registered in Zimbabwe must give Zimbabweans jobs. And because this company is a South African company, which is now Zimbabwean is hiring Zimbabwean truckers, to drive the vehicles into South Africa and they avoid all the user charges and everything. So we have said to in the SADAC trilateral Forum for Transport and we said to them that all those countries to say they must stop the user charges against this and they must Force countries that are primarily operational in a specific country that do that must be a primary domicile of the of the country because you can't just have an office in Bulawayo, but your depo and everything is in Johannesburg.

But then you are a Zimbabwean Company. So we are challenged all of this and that we've set up is an abuse of system and have registered this officially and we had given a period of three months for them to respond. The three months has expired and at our last engagement we gave notice that would in turn to introduce the user charges so we will now impose user charges such ideas like we are reciprocated. We have had a meeting with their DIRCO to raise this matter that through the Diplomatic channels and this matter must now be taken forward. We have begun work with the CBRTA on the proposed user charges and we have made an application to the treasury for approval for the imposition of user charges. This will take away the incentive for the migration and avoidance of companies going elsewhere and with our imposition, obviously this unfortunately increases the cost of doing business, but nevertheless it's unavoidable if this matter is continuous if we do not address The underlying factors then there will always be a flare-up of the violence and the burning of trucks and every other thing and ultimately the economy cost and cost to the insurance industry far supersedes the user charges we are imposing so it's a better solution under the circumstances that we have been hard at it in the inter-ministerial committee chaired by the Department of Labour But we have also said that labour must effectively strengthened the Labour migration regulations and that the primary residence your domicile of your companies should determine the law of application in terms of appointment of citizens and non-citizens that thus the long and short of it.

Chairperson: On the freight perhaps also looking at the border posts, Beitbridge in particular is heavily congested and then the regulations have created other things that exhibited the problem what was specific interventions or recommendations as the department made to improve the flow. Traffic flow through land border posts?

DG: All right. We saw this flare-up of number of vehicles that arrive at our borders during the periods of social migration, particularly December, for the festive season, and Easter in the may is the bulk of the term we see a spike in the number of people going through our border. First and foremost the peak of this is Beit Bridge and it's followed by the Bombo. Then we have the Maseru Bridge in between Free State and Lesotho and **Tlerematlaba** border post in the Northwest with Botswana. Migratory patterns and it being a major gateway to the rest of the continent through Zimbabwe and for goods as a main Corridor and the border with Maputo as well. I think you know that 1 kilometres before Gate that road does not belong to us transport is not under SANRAL and its actually under Public Works that one kilometre, that's why when you approach most border Gates and start driving nicely on the good roads, and then just one kilometre before you arrive at the bother you see the road condition has changed and is quite different. So, we had for a long been saying Public Works must hand over the

roads to us SANRAL right through they have now turned now the roads have been proclaimed that will be handed over to the new border management agency, which would be an entity of Home Affairs even if some of the functions really ran over will be ultimately handed over. So what we have done as an intervention to respond to the challenge we have seen in December was the introduction of a new unit within the national traffic police the border traffic management unit within their RTMC. We must acknowledge that because of the Constitutional Arrangement this is the responsibility of the provincial traffic police, but we can see in the Free State as well as in the Limpopo and Mpumalanga at the provincial traffic police have been overwhelmed and we have now created new units to support them to take over command and to direct traffic and also do that.

One of the things we have also done was also greater cooperation and planning with municipalities for diversion sites if the corridors are getting clogged. Also we need a new bridge expanded wider and the continuation of using the current bridges for purposes of heavy vehicle and for trucks and buses to go onto that lane. And for the new operations on the new bridge on the South Africa side all approvals have been given to SANRAL and everything has been done. In the bilateral with Zimbabwe, they accepted that the new bridge is necessary and required but nevertheless they have they do not commit any resources. They want us to build a bridge and they want South Africa to pay for everything and then they just want to benefit out of that.

So, this is disaster because you can see that even with Beitbridge. We were much more prepared ourselves South Africa and we were moving vehicles relatively fast and our SARS is capable with its technology and system at customs to actually move excess of 250 vehicles per hour, Zimbabwe can only move 25 vehicles per hour so that tells you the story in terms of customs. We are proposing a one stop border post but both you must find both the customs of Zimbabwe and South Africa under one roof, also the immigration officials. Now and also like the most busy border post between Canada and USA you see the express lane where you don't even get out of your car and you are processed there and the technology and everything can read this. SANRAL has all of that technology and thanks to the e-tolls we have number plate recognition. We have all of these things and so for that we can deploy at the new Beit Bridge, but obviously Zimbabwe doesn't want that and the revenue pool and sharing thing because we're going to stop a lot of things that normally they do on their side which can be mentioned on this record that platform, but they do happen and they think that South Africa play big brother sort of scenario. The chaos at the Border Gates continue, but we know what the solution should be for busy border post like that because Beit Bridges is the busiest land border post on the rest of the African continent and I think that tells you a story about what we should be doing and

lessons could withdraw but we are stuck with this. We also introduced the new highway patrol unit and you may have seen what they have done in resolving the clock age and traffic jams for that and we have also under very difficult circumstances also on some of the congested routes. We've been giving the so-called happy hour breaks where SANRAL rings the bells and all the gates will open and there's free passage for that momentary period to ease the congestion banking by the time you rang the bell.

So all of this mechanisms are there now in place and but the long-term solution is exactly what I said the One-Stop solution and you know, we are getting better joy with Botswana which is indicating its interest in making sure the three busiest borders between us and Botswana and I think Home Affairs is negotiating and leading those negotiations and we should be good to go.

Chairperson: All right, on 2 December cabinet resolved to take the one stop policy for consultation. What are the probable timelines for this I know we are probably putting you in a corner, but indicatives and also noting also that the Zimbabwe already has this arrangement with Zambia in the Shurundu border Post. I think is there working on occasions but what are the timelines.

DG: It is purely driven by home Affairs and its Home Affairs that will know the probable timelines and how far they are going, but I know that we are sitting in the BMA agency working group and the bulk of the information I was giving you about this comes from that working group. So we do accept and we do acknowledge that once something is a solution. In December cabinet issued this for public consultation, but how long it will take? I think the timetable sits with Home Affairs. That's should easier but this stage is not known what Home Affairs plan are.

Chairperson: Okay DG: we've taken an extra bit out of your time. But thank you very much for allowing us to ask these questions critical questions. Your portfolio is quite large live in touch on the maritime and you know, the aviation but it's very useful information that you've got and it will cover a lot of gaps that are in the report so that you know history records things properly and it's not just on the basis of secondary information. But is there anything that you just want to highlight in terms of recording lessons that we may have missed that is quite critical.

DG: I think is just to thank DPME and yourselves as a panel to handle ourselves to take time to consult with us so that we are not just horrified in seeing the reports that are returned and chapters that are written about us and no one has ever even had an opportunity to say anything to hear about thinking

and I want to considerations and what I'm sure you can see, Maybe starting with the issue of the Tax relief that if you didn't hear what you said, it does go by what the media reports could be very misleading in terms of our posture and our thinking and appetite for correcting what fundamentally system for a long time, but nevertheless we are very grateful that we have been consulted in this regard. I should think you and you team. We will continue at least you have direct access to us. So anything you need let's talk more don't wait for misunderstanding.

.....The End.....