

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE FROM CITY OF CAPE TOWN, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN CAPE, METRORAIL, GOLDEN ARROW BUS SERVICES, CAPE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

31 JANUARY 2012

CAPE TOWN PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROLE-PLAYERS SET UP COORDINATING GROUP TO HELP COMMUTERS

At a meeting requested by MEC Robin Carlisle, Provincial MEC for Transport, on Friday, 27 January public transport roleplayers agreed to put in place mechanisms to try and ensure that travel on public transport is improved.

In attendance were representatives from Metrorail, the Provincial Department of Transport, Cape Chamber of Commerce, Golden Arrow Bus Service, the South African Police Service and the City of Cape Town.

Metrorail are currently undergoing a very severe crisis. Their systems; rail assets and rolling stock are being vandalised and sabotaged leading to 73 train cancellations and 2503 train delays since November 2011.

Metrorail briefed the meeting on its revised security strategy. It has revised its security strategy and procured additional resources to give effect to the strategy. These included the installation of CCTV cameras and beefing up Metrorail's Protection Services unit by employing 100 ex-SANDF personnel.

Regional manager Lindelo Matya explained that despite this past weekend's repairs of vandalised assets, points would remain clamped as a safety precaution and trains will continue to be manually authorised through affected sections of the rail-track. The current operating conditions, although safe, reduce the flexibility and capacity of the rail system. To alleviate congestion at the most affected stations, additional express buses will operate between Cape Town – Khayelitsha/Chris Hani/Kuyasa/Nolungile/Stock Road/Nonkqubela until further notice.

The meeting agreed that all of the roleplayers would work together to look at how the different bodies can support security for public transport routes, interchanges and nodes; how different public transport providers can supplement each other's services particularly during times of crisis; improving communication to users of public transport, and utilising the City's Transport Management and CCTV cameras where possible.

An operational task team was convened which will be chaired by the City of Cape Town. The City of Cape Town, Metrorail, the Provincial Department of Transport, Cape Chamber of Commerce, Golden Arrow Bus Services, and the SA National Taxi Council will immediately convene a working group to share information; co-ordinate services; provide additional transport where one or more modality was not functioning at scheduled levels; and work together to improve modality headways. They will also be operationalizing integration initiatives that will best serve the needs of all commuters in the City.

The Cape Chamber of Commerce has also called on business to be aware of the current situation and the resulting impact on workers during this time, and to plan accordingly. They have recommended implementing practical measures such as shifts, flexitime and even remote work, where appropriate, as options to be considered.

The meeting comes ahead of the planned future coordination of public transport activities, in accordance with legislation proposed by national government. It is expected that this framework will be formalized over the next five years.

Mayoral Committee Member for Transport, Roads and Stormwater, Councillor Brett Herron, described the meeting as very important for everyone making use of public transport in Cape Town.

“Over this last month and particularly **last** week we have seen train commuters being unfairly inconvenienced by criminal acts of vandalism. As a Caring City and a responsible partner in the public transport sector, we must have a plan in place so that we can come to their assistance,” said Herron.

End

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