



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, August 25, 2010

TRANSPORT-RELATED INCIDENTS A HUGE BURDEN ON EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Transport related incidents in the Western Cape accounts for a huge burden on Emergency Centres at hospitals throughout the province, Western Cape Health Minister, Theuns Botha, said after the tragic accident at the Buttskop level crossing between Blackheath and Melton Rose Stations.

Botha and Western Cape Minister of Education, Donald Grant, visited the four patients at Tygerberg Hospital shortly after the accident, and were briefed by the hospital's Dr. Richard Muller.

Botha said he was satisfied that the patients are receiving the best possible treatment. He sympathized with the families of the deceased. Botha also thanked Emergency Medical Services staff for their quick response. Social workers from the Western Cape Department of Health are counseling the traumatized families. "Please ensure that the counseling will continue long after today," he said.

"The Department of Health will assist the Department of Transport and Public Works with the investigation. Our statistics show that in the past four months an average of 50 bus- and taxi incidents per month were reported to the Emergency Medical Services call centre, and 31 train and railway incidents. These are staggering figures and an indication of the burden of transport related accidents on our emergency medical centres."

At the time of going to press (15:00), the patient airlifted to Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital, was in surgery. Of the 4 learners that were treated at Tygerberg Hospital, one boy was discharged. A girl has a fractured humerus, fractured pelvis, stomach trauma and head and facial lacerations. One boy has stomach trauma, haemothorax and pneumothorax and one boy has a left humerus fracture.

Nine bodies (6 boys & 3 girls) were recovered at the scene and taken to the Tygerberg Forensic Pathology Laboratory.

ENDS

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