

MEDIA STATEMENT

DATE: 25 August 2010
TO: All Media
ATTENTION: News Editors / Transport Reporters

NINE CHILDREN KILLED IN COLLISION BETWEEN TAXI AND TRAIN

President Jacob Zuma and Transport Minister Sibusiso Ndebele have conveyed condolences to the families of nine children killed in a collision between a mini-bus taxi and a train in the Western Cape this morning (Wednesday, 25 August 2010).

According to preliminary reports, the collision occurred when a mini-bus taxi collided with a train at the Buttskop level crossing between Blackheath and Melton Rose Stations in the Western Cape, which left nine children dead. The mini-bus taxi was transporting 13 children to school. The taxi driver and four children were critically injured and were taken to hospital. No injuries were reported for the occupants of the train, including its driver.

The train was travelling out of Cape Town towards Eersterivier. The crossing is protected by road signs, flashing lights and booms which were confirmed to be in working order.

Deputy Transport Minister Jeremy Cronin said, "President Jacob Zuma and Minister Ndebele, who are currently on a state visit to China, have conveyed condolences to the families and friends of the nine children killed in the collision between a mini-bus taxi and a train in the Western Cape this morning. We also wish those injured a speedy recovery. We call upon road users to exercise extreme caution when approaching railway crossings.

"Metrorail investigators as well as the Railway Safety Regulator's (RSR) inspectors are on the scene, to assist in the investigation of the crash. The Road Traffic Management Corporation has also assigned an independent team of accident investigation and reconstruction specialists to assist with the investigation of this crash. Officials from the Road Accident Fund are providing necessary assistance to the affected families."

Ends.

ISSUED BY: Ministry of Transport
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