

Be moved



prasa

PASSENGER RAIL AGENCY
OF SOUTH AFRICA

TINYELETI EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2011

ADDRESS BY THE GROUP CEO OF PRASA, MR LUCKY MONTANA

18 NOVEMBER 2011 – SANDTON CONVENTION CENTRE

Chairman of the PRASA Board – Mr. Sfiso Buthelezi

Members of the PRASA Board

The CEOs of the various PRASA entities and Group Executives

Regional Managers from Metrorail Regions

Our Union Representatives

The PRASA family at large

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Tonight is indeed a special occasion where we salute the over 15 000 employees of the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA). These are employees who on a daily are involved in rail operations, bus operations and property management and asset development. It is a proud moment for us to inaugurate the Tinyeleleti Awards where we recognise our shining stars within PRASA. - employees who dedicate their hearts to the cause and making it possible for PRASA to deliver annually over 525 million passenger trips through Metrorail services in six of our Metropolitan centres of our country, over 3.5. million passengers travelling on our Translux and City-to-City Buses and almost 3 million passengers on our long-distance trains. Many are involved in managing our asset and property portfolio and beginning to unlock value from these assets located in all corners of South Africa. These are model employees whose tireless efforts are beginning to position our company as the vehicle to champion public transport transformation in our cities and villages of our country.

I am particularly proud of this day because we also recognise the stars that worked tirelessly in the making of

our South African history by delivering quality and reliable passenger services during the 2012 FIFA Soccer World Cup where we transported on our upgraded trains and through new generation stations 1.4 million national and international spectators to various soccer games (stadia and fan parks) as well as over 13 860 bus trips through 420 new, modern buses for transporting the FIFA Family under MATCH and 110 general spectator buses dedicated for the event. PRASA had the honour of transporting Presidents and Prime Ministers from our SADC countries and the Continent on a Premier Classe train trip from the Capital City of the Republic to Soccer City through our new NASREC Station. We salute the workers who ensured that our trains and stations are maintained and cleaned 24 hours during the tournament without asking for additional payment. We pay tribute to our partners in the trade union movement as well as those in the Cities, Transport Authorities, who worked with us to deliver integrated and quality passenger services during this period.

I am even more proud because I attended two days ago the Maintenance Excellence Awards in recognition of our top performing engineers, artisans and graduates from our maintenance training school on making this the second occasion where we celebrate PRASA employees.

We have more reasons to celebrate after a challenging yet fulfilling year for our company. We will continue not only to celebrate our employees but excellence among members of the PRASA Family as we move family.

Tinyeleti, or Stars in xiTsonga, are an integral part of our African culture as they were observed by our forefathers to, among others, chart a course during travels. This analogy is quite befitting to this particular occasion because we are indeed observing OUR stars within the PRASA family in the aim of charting a course towards service excellence that translates to a positive customer experience within our environment.

As a young company faced with many historical challenges of under-investment into passenger rail services, we are mindful of the hard work ahead that still needs to be undertaken to realise our vision as the number one public transport provider. We have demonstrated our potential during the Soccer World Cup, and continue to prove our commitment and potential to become an organisation capable of delivering high-quality and decent public transport services to South Africans. We will continue to work hard in restoring rail as the backbone of transport system in the years ahead.

These stars being celebrated tonight epitomise the drive and the determination to bring our vision to fruition and are a shining example of the kind of employee that we need to take this company to new heights.

I also wish to take this opportunity to pay special tribute to employees who have laid down their lives in the course of duty for our company. I want to single out the six members of the A Team in East London that were killed in a car accident on Saturday, 22 October 2011 on their way to Berlin to fly a train. One of those killed was Nonyaniso Maninjwa, a ticket official who was not supposed to be on duty on that day yet she decided to come to work to relieve an older employee from coming to work. We salute this single mother of a 3 year child and commit ourselves to honour her memory by renaming one of our stations after her name and I will personally contribute from my salary to the upbringing of this 3 year child. PRASA will honour the memories of the other team members, though not directly employed by PRASA, and that their children are considered for PRASA bursaries to further their studies and meet the wish of their late parents.

PRASA has embarked on an ambitious programme to recapitalise and modernise our commuter rail system. With the support of the Government, PRASA will spend over the next 20 years over R136 billion to replace its fleet, signaling system and other rail operating systems. We have commenced already with our signal upgrade programme in Gauteng and we will see over the next six months a similar rollout of state-of-the-art signaling technologies in both the KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape commuter rail network. The full signaling upgrade will be implemented over the next 10 years to the tune of R17 billion. PRASA will next March (2012) issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the new trains in March next year and we'll be on course to receiving delivery of our first set of new trains in 2014/15 FY – addressing therefore, an urgent need to reverse over three decades of under-investment in rail transport. Similarly, work is underway within PRASA CRES, our property and facilities management division to unlock the value of our property assets. We continue to implement innovation solutions through the Bridge City Project in the INK Region of EtheKwini Metropolitan Area where we are investing over R1 billion a train station below a huge mixed-use development and other infrastructure projects such as the Greenview Rail doubling project to the tune of R380 million. These are but some of the critical projects that are currently underway within PRASA, to name a few.

These are practical examples of work already underway to realise our vision. This work and all that we are trying to achieve in re-writing our history as an organisation however will not be successful without investing in our biggest asset – our employees, in particular, our hard-working employees who go beyond the call of duty to service our customers on a daily basis.

The Board of PRASA has directed me and the Executive Management that the huge investment in new trains,

signaling, station, and depots must be accompanied with a clear programme to invest in our people. We will during this time develop and invest in a new generation of transport and railways workers. This view was echoed strongly by the Portfolio Committee on Transport when we presented our programme in Parliament over two weeks ago.

We do not seek to invest only in new skills but also in the facilities used by employees so that they could see that this is a company that indeed values its employees. PRASA has set aside R196 million over the next 3 years to improve facilities for our employees under the Workplace Improvement Programme. We have committed R63 million for spending in this current financial year. PRASA needs proper depot, mess rooms, toilets and shower facilities, lockers for our train and bus drivers, Metro Guards as well as proper chairs for customer and security personnel at stations. We are investing in canteens in two of our corporate buildings and proper gym facilities for many of our people to keep fit. We will continue to improve on our current Employee Wellness Programme as well as Medical Surveillance Programme to ensure that critical employees lead healthy lifestyles and always fit for duty.

In celebrating our Stars this evening, we must acknowledge that their success is PRASA's success. We must further acknowledge that all our financial investments, in the absence of a vibrant and motivated workforce behind it, amounts to nothing.

To those successful employees recognised tonight, the PRASA Family expresses our deepest appreciation for all your efforts in moving South Africans to their places of work and back safely and conveniently each day.

I thank you