



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

TRANSPORT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DIRECTORATE:

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The Speaker

KwaZulu-Natal Legislature

Private Bag X 2119

PIETERMARITZBURG

3200

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO. 232/2021 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: DR. I KEEKA (DA) TO ASK THE MEC FOR TRANSPORT:

Regarding Learner Transport;

Question 1

How many learners are “overloaded” [those referred to as “overloads”] that the Department is aware of as part of the Learner Transport Programme?

Response 1

The KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Department of Transport is aware of 9 673 learners who constitute overloads within the Learner Transport Programme.



**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO. 232/2021 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: DR. I KEEKA
(DA) TO ASK THE MEC FOR TRANSPORT**

Question 2

- (a) Are such overloads lawful both during this state of disaster [COVID-19] and outside of the current status?
- (b) If unlawful, what remedy has the Department considered to rectify the matter?

Response 2 (a)

Such overloads are not lawful during this state of disaster (COVID-19] and outside of the current status. In terms of the Disaster Management Act, Regulations alert level 3 during the COVID-19 lockdown: "Bus and Taxi services – (a) May not carry more than 70 percent of the licensed capacity for long distance travel; and (b) May carry 100 percent of the licensed capacity for any trip not regarded as long distance travel in terms of Sub Regulation 1".

In this instance, Learner Transport falls under clause (b) above.

Response 2 (b)

The Department has a monitoring Firm that assists the Department in dealing with overloads daily. Furthermore, there is Law Enforcement to address the challenge of unavoidable overloads in Learner Transport Programme.

When the Learner Transport received a slight increase in the 2021/22 budget, the Department of Education and Transport used that budget to reduce the number of learners who constitute overloads in the programme. This intervention was brought to the attention of the Provincial Treasury as this has to do with inadequate budget in the programme that has an ever-increasing demand.



**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO. 232/2021 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: DR. I KEEKA
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In addition, an agreement was reached with the Department of Education that learners who attend schools of choice must be removed from the programme, and the transport they were using was rerouted to learners in need of transport and attending schools of need.

Question 3

What are the other and current challenges experienced by your Department related to:

- (a) This programme.
- (b) Working with DoE; and
- (c) Treasury.

Response 3

- (a) There are no other challenges except for more budget being required for the programme to be able to address the issue of overloads as well as the issue of learners who qualify to benefit, but because of budgetary constraints they are on the waiting list.
- (b) There are no challenges working with DoE.
- (c) Due to the current financial constraints facing the whole country, the Provincial Treasury is unable to assist the Department of Education with the additional required budget to allow for the provision of learner transport to all qualifying learners in the Province.



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Question 4

With regards to any, if not all, in 3) what attempts have been made to resolve the challenges?

Response 4

The challenge of insufficient budget for the Learner Transport Programme in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal has been presented to both Provincial and National Treasury.

It has also been presented to the Transport Portfolio Committee in the Provincial Legislature with an intention of requesting more funding for the programme.

MR JS MBHELE

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: TRANSPORT

DATE: 19/08/2021

MS. NP NKONYENI

MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON

DATE: 23/08/21