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DA KZN

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Portfolio Spokesperson: Transport

30 September 2026

Hon. S Duma – MEC: Department of Transport

Hon. M Maphisa – Chairperson: Transport Portfolio Committee

M Zibusio Dlamini – HOD: Department of Transport

**RE: STATE OF ROADS ACROSS KWAZULU-NATAL AND FAILURE OF THE DEPARTMENT
TO RESPOND TO PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES AND STAKEHOLDERS**

The Democratic Alliance in KwaZulu-Natal writes to formally raise our concern regarding the deteriorating condition of roads across the province and, equally importantly, the growing difficulty experienced by members of the public and public representatives in obtaining meaningful responses from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport.

Across KwaZulu-Natal, communities continue to report serious deterioration of provincial roads, potholes, damaged road surfaces, inadequate drainage, deteriorating bridges and other infrastructure defects. A functioning road network is essential for access to hospitals and clinics, schools, employment, markets, emergency services and economic opportunities.

We are increasingly concerned about the lack of timely and substantive responses to complaints and requests for assistance submitted by members of the public and public representatives.

Public representatives routinely receive complaints from residents concerning dangerous roads and infrastructure failures. These matters are then referred to the Department of Transport with the expectation that officials will investigate, provide feedback and, where appropriate, implement remedial measures. Too often, however, complaints appear to disappear into an administrative process without clear feedback being provided. Where a road presents a safety risk, residents should not have to repeatedly approach public representatives simply to obtain confirmation that their complaint has been received. There should be a



clear system through which complaints are acknowledged, assessed, prioritised and responded to within reasonable timeframes. A lack of communication also makes it extremely difficult for public representatives to provide accurate feedback to the communities they serve.

We are equally concerned about the absence of sufficiently regular and structured engagement between the Department, public representatives, municipalities, traditional leaders, community structures, farming organisations, business representatives and other affected stakeholders.

The KZN Legislature itself recognises the importance of committees as structures for oversight, public participation and engagement on service-delivery performance. The Transport Portfolio Committee is therefore an important mechanism through which concerns regarding the province's road network should be interrogated and addressed. Engagement should not only occur when there is a crisis or when an oversight visit has already been arranged. There should be a predictable and transparent mechanism through which public representatives and stakeholders can raise road-related concerns directly with the Department, receive feedback on outstanding matters and monitor progress on interventions. The Department's own interaction with stakeholders should therefore be strengthened.

We accordingly request that the Department urgently provide the following:

1. A province-wide assessment of the condition of provincial roads, identifying roads requiring routine maintenance, rehabilitation, reconstruction or urgent intervention.
2. A prioritised road maintenance programme, including timelines for interventions and the criteria used to determine which roads are prioritised.
3. A breakdown of outstanding public complaints relating to provincial roads, including the number of complaints received, the age of outstanding complaints and the status of those complaints.
4. A formal response protocol for complaints submitted by members of the public and public representatives, including reasonable timeframes for acknowledgement, investigation, feedback and resolution.



5. A dedicated engagement mechanism with public representatives, allowing constituency-level road concerns to be formally submitted and tracked.
6. Regular stakeholder meetings involving the Department, municipalities, public representatives and relevant community and sector stakeholders to discuss road conditions and outstanding infrastructure problems.
7. Regular progress reports to the Transport Portfolio Committee on road maintenance, rehabilitation, emergency repairs and outstanding complaints.
8. A clear escalation mechanism for roads presenting an immediate danger to motorists, pedestrians, emergency vehicles, public transport operators and surrounding communities.

The condition of our roads is ultimately a service-delivery issue, but effective service delivery also requires effective communication. When residents report dangerous roads and receive no response, they are left without any indication of whether government is aware of the problem, whether an inspection has taken place, whether funding has been allocated or when the matter may be addressed. This undermines public confidence and makes it unnecessarily difficult for public representatives to perform their constitutional oversight and constituency responsibilities.

The DA therefore believes that the Department should move towards a more transparent, responsive and accountable system of road maintenance and public engagement. We further request that this matter be placed before the KZN Legislature Transport Portfolio Committee for formal consideration and that the Department be requested to provide a comprehensive response to the concerns raised in this letter. We would also welcome a dedicated engagement between the Department, the Portfolio Committee and public representatives to establish a practical mechanism for dealing with outstanding road complaints across the province.

We look forward to receiving a substantive response and proposed dates for engagement.



**KWAZULU-NATAL
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Kind Regards

Hon Riona Gokool, MPL
Member of the Provincial Legislature
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