



Address by Cllr Ntando Khuzwayo on the occasion of the Transport Operators Pace Initiators Conglomerated Association's 3rd Lustrum, National Conference, on 23 October 2018 at the Olive Convention Centre.

- Program Director
- President of the Transport Operators Pace Initiators Conglomerated Association
- Distinguished Keynote Speaker : The Honourable KZN MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs : Mr Sihle Zikalala
- TOPICA General Secretary : Piet Sizani Mahlangu
- The Various TOPICA Structure Representatives
- Members of Corporate South Africa
- Distinguished Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

All protocols observed.

Good morning.

I am indeed moved with pleasure and it is a conveyance of great honour, to welcome all delegates to the 3rd Lustrum, National Conference of the Transport Operators, Pace Initiators, Conglomerated Association.

I wish to extend a special welcome and heartfelt greetings, to guests who have arrived from other parts of the country. Welcome to the KZN Province, and welcome to eThekweni.

It is also my pleasure to acknowledge and welcome today's Keynote Speaker, the Honourable KZN MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mr Sihle Zikalala.

Program Director, TOPICA is an inspirational, forward looking organisation and presides over an industry which truly captures the Mzansi spirit!

The South African taxi industry is an organic model, of a successful black economic, "self-empowerment" industry. This is the only business that was started by black people, and it not only survives, but it is growing and thrives, year on year.

The Taxi Industry is a noteworthy transport network which is responsible for moving between 16 to 20 million people to work each working day, in South Africa.

The industry continues to play an important role in the creation of employment opportunities.

Program Director, the industry directly and indirectly creates jobs for:

- taxi drivers who are hired by those who own a fleet of taxis;
- car washers who wash taxis at taxi ranks;
- rank marshals who manage taxi ranks;
- car manufacturers who specialise in minibuses, such as Toyota and Nissan
- mechanics and auto body builders
- There are about 123 000 individual taxi operators in South Africa
- The industry spends about R39 billion per annum on fuel.
- And spends about R2 billion annually on insurance.

Program Director, this is a home grown industry, which makes us South Africans very proud. Apart from contributing directly to the nation's economy through its operations, the taxi industry transports human capital to work places in our cities, and industries. Without this industry, our economy will not move on any day, of any month!

With a narrow operating window for the day's earning, which is brief, and restricted to morning and evening rush hour, and in an excruciatingly competitive environment, to expect the South

African Taxi Industry to perform smoothly, is excessively ambitious, and quite a big ask.

Program Director, this conference is therefore convened to wrestle these challenges that are particularly acute. Challenges which have precipitated in the Industry, over the last five years.

Coming together as a conglomerate, is meant to resurrect mitigating steps, to move the industry in the right direction. This meeting as an Industry shindig, is to tell naysayers, the doubters, the dubious, the general public and its backers, that things can only get better, hereon.

Ladies and gentlemen, you know, the ocean has been perceived as a bottomless source of abundant opportunities, providing means of subsistence for mankind, since the dawn of time.

As such, eThekweni is an ocean city, and it is only befitting that we give our 100 per cent backing to the Taxi Industry, which provides a means to our citizens to grasp their daily subsistence.

The City is proud to receive this conference as a mooring for the Mzansi ship, which has come to set sail in eThekweni, to catch the winds of national optimism.

As a caring city, and in the best interest of commuters, business and other road users, the eThekweni Municipality has budgeted more than R200 million for improvement incentive programs, for

minibus taxis over the next five years, operating within the jurisdiction of the Municipality.

This is an increase from the initial R131 million budget, which was approved in 2017, to R202 million, in 2018.

These incentives are also a give back to the industry, as a recognition for its contribution to our city's economy. We all know, when taxis cease to operate, cities come to a screeching halt. And we do not like the sound of that.

Program Director, the incentives programme was officially launched in October 2017 after consultation with the industry's leadership.

A pilot of 500 vehicles was agreed upon and during this phase, additional functions were identified to ensure the effectiveness and success of the programme.

Participation in the programme is voluntary and some of its objectives were to promote regulation, the provision of better levels of service and safety to commuters, and to improve the standard of public transport in the city.

In the near future, eThekweni anticipates the Taxi Industry to be instrumental in rolling out GO! Durban - the City's new Integrated Public Transport Network.

Program Director, this Association meets once every 5 years, and there is certainly going to be lots and lots of deliberations over the duration of the conference.

In closing and as I welcome delegates once again, I wish to thank this Industry for providing a crucial service to so many South Africans.

I wish all participants of this highly anticipated conference, fruitful discussions.

And I wish you all, an exciting few days in the city.

I thank you.