

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA applauds the Department of Transport and COGTA for their response to the midland's snowstorm
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EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) extends its sincere appreciation to the MEC for Transport, Hon Siboniso Duma, and the MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Hon Rev Thulasizwe Buthelezi, along with their teams, for their exceptional response to the heavy snowstorm that impacted the KZN Midlands on Friday and Saturday.

Their prompt and coordinated efforts, along with the hard work of disaster response teams, emergency services, traffic officials, and supporting agencies, ensured that affected communities were assisted and that public safety was prioritized. The PSA acknowledges the tireless work carried out over the weekend under harsh conditions to rescue stranded motorists, clear blocked roads, and provide much-needed relief to those affected by the storm.

The Department of Transport, under MEC Duma's guidance, was quick to deploy snow-clearing machinery and emergency vehicles, which played a key role in reopening critical roads. This allowed stranded individuals to be rescued, and emergency services to reach those in need, preventing what could have been a much more tragic outcome.

Under MEC Buthelezi's leadership, COGTA's disaster management teams acted swiftly to address the potential flooding risks from snowmelt in the Tugela River catchment area. Their timely warnings and safety guidelines have been vital in ensuring that communities are prepared and informed.

While we commend these efforts, the PSA is deeply saddened by the loss of Ms. Nozibele Nzonzo, who tragically passed away due to extreme cold while stuck in a taxi during the storm. We extend our heartfelt condolences to her family during this difficult time.

As snow continues to melt, the risk of flooding remains in areas downstream from the Tugela River. The PSA encourages residents in these areas to remain alert and follow safety advisories. Disaster management teams are closely monitoring the river from Ladysmith to uMsinga to manage any potential flooding.

People should always consider their safety by not walking, swimming, or driving through floodwaters and staying off bridges over fast-moving water. If flooding occurs, people should move to higher ground or a safer location. Evacuation orders issued by authorities should be followed and children should be kept away from rivers, dams, or other large bodies of water, especially during this time. With the reopening of roads, motorists are urged to drive carefully, as road conditions may still be hazardous due to snowmelt. The Department of Transport will continue monitoring road safety to ensure smooth and safe travel.

The PSA appreciates the close collaboration between the Departments of Transport and COGTA, which underscores the commitment of provincial authorities to protecting lives and ensuring the well-being of our

communities. The PSA furthermore encourages all stakeholders to stay vigilant and work together to manage the ongoing risks from snowmelt and potential flooding.

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