

Road traffic flows expected to rise this week

Traffic volumes on freeways are expected to rise this week, when people travel back home from their holidays, the Road Traffic Management Corporation said on Sunday (30 December)



Image: GCS

"Traffic volumes are expected to be on the rise today [Sunday] and tomorrow [Monday] with major peaks expected from Wednesday onwards as holiday makers travel back home," said spokesman Ashref Ismail.

He said traffic peak was 1300 vehicles per hour on the N3 in the direction Durban and Johannesburg. On the N1 between Polokwane and Pretoria a maximum of 1400 vehicle per hour was recorded.

On the N4 traffic volumes were less than a thousand vehicle per hour. The N1 in the direction of Bloemfontein also recorded under a thousand vehicles per hour.

Ismail said there had not been any major crashes in the past 72 hours.

"We hope it remains that way," he added.

The department of transport said over 2,000 drivers had been arrested for drinking under the influence of alcohol since the beginning of December.

"These are people who deliberately ignore the dangers associated with driving under the influence of alcohol and go on to endanger the lives of other road users," said Transport Minister Ben Martins.

"Many other moving violations such as dangerous overtaking and excessive speeding at times have alcohol abuse as a common denominator," he added.

Martins said drinking and walking (jay walking) by pedestrians was also another major problem that required urgent attention.

"At least 40% of road fatalities recorded annually in SA involve people walking on foot," Martins said.

He said traffic officers would pay special attention to people driving under the influence of alcohol, excessive speeding, dangerous overtaking and other moving violations.

"We have issued an instruction to our law enforcement officers to arrest and detain any person found to have committed any of the above violations that all have one common consequence -- death. No person who takes alcohol in excess and still drives deserves to be on our roads. Such people should be taken away to a place where their barbaric deeds won't endanger the lives of other law-abiding citizens," he said.

He said drivers found guilty of drinking and driving, excessive speeding and reckless or negligent driving would be subjected to a re-test of both their learners and drivers' licences to ensure competence, compliance and rehabilitation if they wished to continue driving.

"We wish to remind road users that a traffic violation is an act of criminality and a person can be charged, prosecuted and convicted for breaking the rules of the road.

"We have precedence in this regard where people are currently doing time or being pursued by the law for traffic violations particularly in instances wherein their irresponsible actions have had fatal consequences," Martins said.

He urged motorists to exercise extreme caution, travel with lights on during the day, adhere to all set speed limits, observe safe following distances and to take sufficient rests.

Source: *Sapa* via I-Net Bridge

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