

Unsafe trucks should be confiscated, impounded

The police should impound trucks that are unsafe or have faulty brakes or other deficiencies instead of merely fining their drivers.



A truck driver has blamed faulty brakes for the major accident that killed four, injured 20 and damaged almost 50 vehicles. Now there are calls for unroadworthy trucks to be impounded.

Image: [SA Breaking News](#)

This was the call made by road freight officials, nearly a week after a pile-up on the N12 highway, near Alberton, on the East Rand, that killed four people, injured 20 and damaged 48 vehicles.

Speaking at the Freight Summit in Boksburg, on the East Rand, Gavin Kelly, Operations Manager for the Road Freight Association, said imposing fines gave no protection to other road users.

"You must take the truck with the problem off the road. If you do not, you are keeping the problem on the road.

"If you find a truck with faulty brakes or tyres, take it off the road, otherwise it [could] cause the type of accident we saw last week." said Kelly.

The freight haulage industry is not regulated and membership of the Road Freight Association is voluntary.

Anyone can transport goods by road

This means, Kelly said, that anyone with a truck could apply for an operating licence and start transporting goods on the road. Kelly said that corrupt law enforcement officials turned a blind eye to road traffic violations.

"Even when we catch the bad guys the docket disappears. We cannot accept that," he said.

He said operators were not properly screened before being granted a licence.

"You can go to any licensing department in Gauteng and apply for an operating licence and you will get it. There is no checking of your vehicle, who your drivers are and what their records are," he said.

The summit was called by Gauteng Transport MEC Ismail Vadi to improve road safety and to find ways to increase the contribution of haulage to the provincial economy.

"Until now we have been focusing on the taxi and bus industries," said Vadi. "We will be interacting with our counterparts in community safety, and with metro police, to step up measures to regulate the freight industry."

Vadi said overloading was a problem because most of Gauteng's 18 weigh bridges were not functional. He said some trucks took detours to avoid inspection, thus damaging roads not designed to carry heavy vehicles.

He said the government planned get more freight moved by rail to reduce the burden on roads.

Source: The Times via I-Net Bridge



Road Freight Association's Gavin Kelly says widespread corruption, coupled with few barriers to entry mean that virtually anyone can become a truck operator in an environment that is almost completely unregulated. Image: RFA

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