



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### ***Night-time closure for Huguenot Tunnel maintenance***

*Western Cape, 1 June 2021 – With extensive maintenance to the Huguenot Tunnel having been done under live traffic conditions over the last two years, the next phase of the upgrade will necessitate the **night-time closure of the tunnel from Monday 14 June.***

“Statistics show that only 10% of the daily traffic passing through the tunnel, do so at night-time. In terms of the least disruptive time, **the tunnel would thus be closed to traffic, from 10pm to 6am, Monday to Thursday. This means that the tunnel will still be open during the daytime Monday to Thursday and fully open 24 hours a day from Friday to Sunday, for all road users.**” said Randall Cable, SANRAL Western Region Manager.

*This year, the tunnel had been in service for 33 years, with an impeccable safety record and a remarkable capacity load of well over 110 million vehicles. The electrical and mechanical systems have however neared the end of its life and need replacement to ensure compliance to international safety standards.*

*Much of the required maintenance work has been completed under live traffic conditions, to ensure minimal inconvenience to road users. These include:*

- 11Kv line replacement between the tunnel and the Main Control Centre (MCC)
- Installation of back-up generators at MCC and portal buildings
- Most of the watermain replacement
- Main Control Centre building upgrade

- Replacement of variable message signs (VMS) and all electronic signage in the tunnel
- Replacement of Main Control Centre fire detection and suppression system
- Upgrade of Emergency radio system in the tunnel and Main Control Centre

“Some of the work, like the upgrade of the tunnel fire detection system, replacement of the tunnel strip and adaptation lighting and the asphalt overlay of the Eastern Approach Road (Worcester side) cannot be done under live traffic conditions and will therefore be done at night-time during the planned closures. We anticipate that this should all be completed by 30 September 2021,” said Mike Vinello-Lippert, SANRAL Tunnel Project Manager.

SANRAL has been engaging stakeholders from local and provincial government, the road freight industry, the agricultural sector, SANTACO and the local business community on how the closures will impact their businesses, so that they are able to make adjustments to their travel times or use any of the various alternative routes.

The least amount of inconvenience may be caused by adjusting travel times to arrive at the tunnel before or after closure times. Where this is entirely unavoidable, alternative **routes** include Paarl – DuToit’s Kloof Pass – Worcester ( $\pm 62$  km), Paarl - Gouda - Tulbagh – Worcester ( $\pm 121$  km) or Wellington – Tulbagh - Ceres ( $\pm 74$  km.) Depending on origin and destination, the N2 Grabouw to Villiersdorp (41 km) is also an option.

“Where unforeseen changes to the schedule are necessitated, we will communicate these as soon as possible, to ensure that road users are fully informed of the work being carried out and the effects this may have on traffic flow,” said Cable.

Real-time and accurate Huguenot Tunnel closure information will be made available on [www.i-traffic.co.za](http://www.i-traffic.co.za) and the SANRAL website [www.nra.co.za](http://www.nra.co.za), to allow road users to plan their journeys accordingly. Various other social media platforms will also be used to convey real-time and accurate information to all stakeholders.

“SANRAL apologises for the inconvenience these upgrades may cause. The safety of every road user passing through the Huguenot Tunnel, is however our prime objective,” concluded Cable.

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