



MEDIA RELEASE

Road safety prioritised on Mpumalanga construction projects

Mpumalanga, 7 December 2021 – With more than R3bn worth of infrastructure upgrades across the province of Mpumalanga, SANRAL's commitment goes beyond economic impact, into the realm of road safety.

The upgrade of the N17 section 5 in particular, involves the repair and reseal of the road with safety upgrades at two intersections between Chrissiesmeer and Warburton.

"In responding to road safety needs in this area, we are cognizant of the fact that land use adjacent to the road includes plantations (forestry), cattle grazing, saw-mills and other agricultural activities. To this end our contractors and subcontractors play a vital part in facilitating the safety of all road users, especially given the risks of animals entering the road reserve, as well as pedestrians," said Madoda Mthembu, SANRAL Operations and Maintenance Manager in the Northern Region.

Over and above conventional construction projects, Routine Road Maintenance operations are key to ensuring not only a well-maintained road network, but significant emphasis is placed on road safety engineering.

"SANRAL supports a safe systems approach to road safety which involves the provision and maintenance of safe road infrastructure that reduces the risk of serious injury or death when a crash occurs," explained Mthembu.

There are currently six RRM projects located in the Gert Sibande District Municipality. On the N17, R23 and other national roads within the Gert Sibande District Municipality, the scope of maintenance works include:

- general road maintenance of the road reserve
- grass cutting
- storm water drainage,
- fencing
- erecting and maintaining road signs
- potholes or road surface repairs

Zenzele Hlope, owner of Kuthele Civil Engineering and Construction is one of the SMMEs who were recently awarded a contract for RRM on the N17. "I am very proud of the work we do in the road construction space, because we play a direct role in ensuring the safety of all road users. Currently we are working on fence repairs, maintaining road edges, pothole repairs and inspections as well as guard rail repairs and installation. All these aspects of our work directly impact road safety, as the fences prevent stray animal from wandering into the road reserve, the guard rails prevent vehicles that have lost control from hitting hazards next to the road (i.e. bridge piers, trees, etc.) or falling over into cliffs or dongas and the pothole detection and repairs create a safer road surface."

Hlope is also highly appreciative of the growth and development he has seen, as a subcontractor. He started out with a 1CE grading from the CIDB and within just over one year, worked to acquire

a 3CE grading. He currently employs 11 staff and is excited about the economic development opportunities that can be unlocked within the road construction sector.

“When road safety meets economic development, tangible progress is made. We recognise that South Africa has a long way to go for economic recovery in the midst of a pandemic, but at the same time we are excited about how SANRAL is spearheading this process,” said Progress Hlahla, SANRAL Northern Region Manager.

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