



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
**CORPORATE COMMUNICATION SERVICES**

Natalia, 330 Longmarket Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201  
Private Bag X9051, Pietermaritzburg, 3200  
Tel.: 033 395 2220, Fax.: 033 3420429  
thusim@dohho.kzntl.gov.za

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**EMBARGOE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **ALPHA OPERATION: A HUGE SUCCESS**

During the Easter holidays the Provincial Department of Health had deployed 40 additional ambulances to ensure rapid and effective medical emergency response to all incidents. These ambulances were stationed at strategic points in all the major roads within the province and its immediate borders. This was part of the Alpha Operations plan initiated by the department's Emergency Medical Rescue Service (EMRS). The aim of this operation was not only to increase the current number of ambulances on major routes but to have 100% operation and visibility throughout the holiday period.

Priority areas included the N3 from Durban to Van Reenen, the N2 from Durban to Port Edward, Durban to Mtubatuba, Mtubatuba to Mkuze, Mkuze to Pongola, Ladysmith to Majuba Pass, Port Shepstone to Matatiele, Pietermaritzburg to Umzimkulu, Bulwer to Matatiele, Ixopo to Umzinto. The operation officially wrapped up on Monday, 04 April and it was a resounding successes. During the operation EMRS attended to 524 emergency and trauma cases throughout the province. Last year during the same period EMRS attended to 203 emergency and trauma cases. This year the average response time to all rural areas was 28 minutes compared to the 31 minutes response time recorded last year.



The response time to urban areas averaged at 19 minutes an improvement when compared to 22 minutes response time recorded last year. The response times are in accordance with national norms, which is a true reflection of the department's commitment in reducing mortality and morbidity to all trauma cases. Uthukela and Umgungundlovu districts recorded a total of 34 incidents with Umkhanyakude, Zululand and Uthungulu recording 19 fatalities.

The department is still very concerned about the high number of hoax calls received during the Easter holiday period. A total of 371 hoax calls came through the emergency line costing the department a hefty R 271, 743. Uthukela district recorded the highest number of hoax calls totaling 127 and costing the department R 93, 023. The department would like to urge parents and the community at large to talk to children about the dangers of making hoax calls and that doing so is a criminal offence.

The MEC for Health, Mrs Peggy Nkonyeni would like to thank all KZN road users and the public at large for their good behavior and support in celebrating the Easter holidays in a safe, healthy and responsible manner.

**ENDS**

**For more information please contact Ms Lindiwe Khuzwayo on 083 393 9943.**