

# KwaXimba Accident : KZN Health MEC gets involved in post-mortems

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KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo is once again rolling up his sleeves and conducting post-mortems in a bid to ensure that relatives of the 20 people who perished in a horror crash at KwaXimba (near Cato Ridge) on Sunday get autopsies in time to conduct burials, which are expected to take place this weekend. Eighteen of the bodies are at the Pinetown facility.

MEC Dhlomo, who holds a diploma in Forensic Pathology, is currently conducting post-mortems at Pinetown Mortuary. Six of the bodies were processed and completed yesterday, while nine are expected to be completed today. It is anticipated that all the bodies will have been processed and completed by tomorrow, allowing the families to proceed with funeral arrangements. MEC Dhlomo says he decided to lend a hand in these post-mortems to expedite the process as Pinetown Mortuary already had its own schedule of post-mortems, and now were laden with an extra 18 bodies (while two are at other facilities).

Shortly after the accident MEC Dhlomo, working with other arms of government, sprang into action and ensured that the injured were rushed to hospitals, and that ambulances operating in the Durban Outer West area were all mobilised and dispatched to the scene. A helicopter was also placed on standby. He also deployed the deputy manager of Forensic Pathology Services to the scene to oversee the transportation of the bodies.

Remarking on this operation, MEC Dhlomo said: *"Losing loved ones is a traumatic experience, especially when it is under such sudden and tragic circumstances. When you are bereaved, the last thing you want is the secondary trauma that may arise from any delays with the funeral arrangements. I decided to get involved here in order to ensure this part of the tragedy is well-managed and goes off smoothly, so that other arms of government can play their part without any hindrances. We anticipate that there should be no further delays because all the bodies have been identified."*

The Honourable Premier of KZN Mr Willie Mchunu has, meanwhile, sent his condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones, and also assured them of full government support, saying: *"I was briefed that the officials from the Department of Transport met with the families of the deceased to offer the necessary support as they begin the difficult task of identifying the bodies of their loved ones. The trauma that has been experienced by the families will take many years to heal but we hope that the support to be provided by the provincial government will assist in healing their broken hearts."*

*The MEC for Social Development Weziwe Thusi and MEC for Health, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo have also undertaken to ensure that a team of officials from their respective departments are available to provide necessary support to the families.*

At the Pinetown mortuary, MEC Dhlomo praised the team of forensic pathologists for the compassion displayed when receiving and assisting family members who came in for identification of their loved ones and further asked them to join hands to ensure that all bodies are done and available by the end of the day tomorrow.

For clarity, please contact Desmond Motha @ 083 295 3901



*MEC Dhlomo*

*with forensic pathologist Dr Sibusiso Ntsele and official, Ms Tracy Pillay*