# National Assembly

**Question No 2329**

**Mr K P Sithole (IFP) to ask the Minister of Transport:**

Noting that her department only invests heavily in road safety campaigns during festive holidays while reckless driving and accidents occur throughout the year and furthermore noting that even then the specified campaigns are often aimed at motorists and freight drivers rather than their employers, who often subject them to unsafe and near impossible driving conditions that do not allow for rest periods during drives, what policies have been designed by her department to ensure that employers create a safer environment for long-distance drivers? NW2646E

1. **REPLY**

**Section 49 of the National Road Traffic Act, 1996 deals with the duties of the operator and provides as follows:**

## 49 Duties of operator

The operator of a motor vehicle shall­

1. notify the registering authority concerned within seven days of any change in the circumstances in relation to his or her registration as the operator of such vehicle and return the operator card in respect of that motor vehicle to that registering authority;
2. keep safe and protect from theft an operator card issued to him or her and, if any such card is lost, stolen or destroyed, he or she shall notify the nearest police station within 24 hours and the registering authority within whose area the holder is ordinarily resident within seven days after having become aware of such loss, theft or destruction or after it could reasonably be expected that he or she should have been aware of such loss, theft or destruction, whichever event occurred first;
3. *exercise proper control over the driver of such motor vehicle to ensure the compliance by such driver with all the relevant provisions of this Act, in particular the provisions regarding­*
   1. *the requirements in respect of the professional driving permit referred to in section 32; and*
   2. *the loading of such vehicle as prescribed by or under this Act;*
4. *ensure that such motor vehicle complies with the fitness requirements contemplated in Chapter V;*
5. *conduct his or her operations with due care to the safety of the public;*
6. *if dangerous goods or substances are conveyed, ensure that all requirements for the conveyance of such goods or substances, as prescribed in­*
   1. *any other law in relation to such goods or substances; and*
   2. *this Act, are complied with; and*
7. *take all reasonable measures to ensure that such motor vehicle is operated on a public road in compliance with the provisions for the loading and transportation of goods as prescribed by or under this Act.* ***(my emphasis)***

When traffic officials issue citations for transgressions of the above they are also expected to issue one for the operator.

As part of their Road Safety programme, the RAF has embarked on a Road Safety Wellness programme where attention is directed towards the safety of long-distance drivers, i.e. busses, taxis and trucks. They have a bus in which a nurse and an optometrist on board assist in checking for vitals like blood pressure and if there is a medical problem with the driver the nurse will prepare a letter referring them to the nearest clinic whereas, in the case of eyesight, the optometrist will prescribe glasses at no charge.