DRAFT NATIONAL SCHOLAR TRANSPORT POLICY

PRESENTATION TO PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT, 18 JUNE 2013
Purpose
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Rationale for learner transport policy
Policy focus
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Comments from internal transport stakeholders
Recommendations
the purpose of the presentation is for the PCOT to:
- note the key elements of the draft scholar transport policy, and
- support that the draft policy Be processed forward
Background Information

- The revised draft policy document of 2011 was refined to integrate the inputs from provinces, industry, Portfolio Committee on Transport as well as the Department of Basic Education and Ministry of Finance- the National Treasury.
- The final version was developed and approved by the Director-General of the Department in October 2012.
- Prior to this approval, the draft policy was subjected to a rigorous process of scrutiny by provinces at an inter-departmental workshop of 30 Aug 2012.
- There are areas of convergence between the two departments.
- Clause 231 of the National Road Traffic Regulations on loads on vehicles and its impact on road accident was revisited – the loophole was the adequacy of the law enforcement system.
Rationale

Operational issues:
- Un-authorized services – those without road permits
- Un-roadworthy vehicles

Structural -planning issues:
- Un-coordinated transport planning
- Travel plans not linked/match the beneficiaries’ transport needs

Management issues:
Organisational, coordination and budgetary provision
- Insufficient scholar transport services with=majority of learners compromised
- Remuneration formulae not economically sound

Institutional capacity and support
- Insufficient management capacity, e.g. law enforcement
Rationale...
Policy Focus

- Central to the transport policy is How to manage learner transport operations, in a manner that support the education of that learner by focusing on:
  - the quality of vehicles;
  - performance and conduct of learner transport operators; and
  - enhance road traffic discipline - thus how best to contribute to an efficient and harmonious operations of Road traffic and safety management system.

- type of transport service: Dedicated transport services which have been contracted for the transportation of learners.
Scope of application

- The policy applies to public schools as defined by the SASA of 1996.
- It should be understood within the context of inter-governmental relation.
- Salient features include but not limited to:
  - Service standards and procedures
  - Route accessibility and design
  - Safety specifications and vehicle design
  - Capacity building and skills development, etc
  - Close collaboration and monitoring of the implementing agencies
Policy objectives

- To improve access to quality education by providing safe, decent, effective, and integrated sustainable learner transport
- To improve access to quality education through a coordinated and aligned transport system;
- To manage and oversee the implementation of an integrated learner transport service.
- To ensure an effective management of learner transport system.
- To provide for a safe and secure transport environment for learners through co-operation and collaboration with law enforcement authorities.
Desired outcomes

- Timeous delivery of service
- Rate of road accidents reduced
- A coordinated approach in relation to planning and implementation
- Learner transport operators that adhere to road traffic regulations
- Vehicle maintenance plan and technical support for emergencies
- Viable and sustainable operations
- Uniformity of services and tariff structure
- A coherent performance monitoring system
Policy principles

- Broad based access
- Equity and redress
- Quality and Effectiveness
- Functional relevance
- Operational safety and efficiency
- Operational sustainability
- Multi-modal integration
Key elements of the policy

Roles and responsibilities

- The national Departments of Transport and Basic Education:
  - Development and review of policy and national guidelines on learner transport and for monitoring the overall achievement of accessibility to schools and transport objectives respectively.

- The Provincial Departments:
  - Implementation and provision of learner transport, including procurement and contracting of providers and monitoring the achievement of accessibility to schools and the achievement of transport objectives.
  - The registration and licensing of operators, routes design and monitoring of the learner transport services.
  - Planning: identifying beneficiaries, inputs to the service design and the monitoring of the services.
Management of learner transport function

- A National Inter Departmental Committee (NIDC) shall be established comprising the DoT, DBE and Provinces to provide strategic direction in the implementation of the National Learner Transport Policy.

- The NIDC shall report jointly to the Education Ministers of Basic Education and Transport.

- Provincial learner transport implementation committees comprised of Provincial Departments of Transport, Education and other relevant stakeholders
Key elements of the policy...

Learner Transport Planning

- Provincial Education Departments in consultation with the provincial Transport Departments are responsible for learner transport planning, irrespective of where the learner transport function resides. A joint planning committee on learner transport with representatives of the PDOT and the Provincial Department of Education must be established.

Implementation of a sustainable learner transport system

- The implementation of this programme cannot happen in isolation but within the planning and management parameters of the transport system. The strategies and plans for scholar transport in a province must be included in the Provincial Land Transport Framework (PLTF) and Strategic Plans, PEDs strategic plans as well as in the Integrated Transport Plans (ITPs) of Local Government.
Key elements of the policy...

Regulation of Learner Transport
- The responsibility of developing safety norms, standards and regulations shall rest with the Department of Transport. Learner transport vehicles shall be easily identifiable and shall have a unique branding. This shall make it easy for law enforcement agencies and other road users to notice vehicles transporting learners.

Safety of Vehicles
- Vehicles used to transport scholars have to meet the (Act No. 93 of 1996) applicable requirements of the general regulations of the National Road Traffic Act e to the transportation of passengers.
- The Provincial Departments of Transport, in the provision of scholar transport services, must ensure adherence to legislation regarding vehicle specifications.
Key elements of the policy…

Operating Licenses
- All scholar transport operators must possess operating licences that allow them to operate the school service in addition to any other services for which they may be licensed. Provincial Departments of Transport, through their Provincial Regulatory Entities, must register and license learner transport operators, and keep a database of all learner transport operators.

Integrated Planning and coordination
- Inter-governmental co-ordination must also ensure integration of land use and transport, especially with regard to ensuring that settlements and the building of schools are co-ordinated through appropriate inter-governmental forums.
Key elements of the policy...

Criteria for learner Transport Beneficiaries

- Provincial departments of Education shall be responsible for the selection of learners to benefit from the service. Principals, after consultation with the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) must identify learner transport beneficiaries in line with the set criteria.

Service Design for learner transport

- The implementing department in consultation with other relevant stakeholders must design the learner transport services. A well-defined learner transport service which includes proper infrastructure and facilities are a requirement for the safe transportation of learners.

Procurement and contracting of learner transport services

- Contracting of services need to be co-ordinated in order to ensure a uniform scholar transport system for the entire country. When proper processes of contracting are not followed, it can result in fraudulent and corrupt practices.
Key elements of the policy…

Remuneration of learner transport operators
- The payment of leaner transport operators’ shall be **based on kilometres** travelled. **Remuneration of service should be standardised** to ensure uniformity throughout the country and should be in line with the public transport contracts.

Types of transport services
- Three **types of services** through which scholar transport is being provided. i.e. subsidized group and the non-subsidized group. **Recognised ones= Govt contracts subsidized / dedicated services**
  - class i operators: private services arranged by parents
  - class ii: organised by learners

classes i and ii NOT subsidized and to be regulated too
Key elements of the policy...

Types of transport services...
- The implementing department after consultation with relevant stakeholders will determine the type of services that is appropriate for their area of jurisdiction and for the beneficiaries. [e.g. a mixture of services and subject to regulations]

Safety and Security
- The safe and secure transportation of scholars is one of the pillars of this policy. Exposure to external factors that may pose a threat to safety of scholars must be minimized. The security of scholars will have to address factors such as hijackings, violence and other potential life threatening incidents [e.g. emergency no.s, tracking devises, livery and operating permits display, unique branding], etc.
Key elements of the policy...

Safety and Security...

- Provincial Departments of Transport must ensure that there is **sufficient and efficient law enforcement** to ensure that learner are transported safely and legally. [road-worthy certificates, etc]

- Punitive measures should be taken against operators that transport learner in **un-roadworthy vehicles**. Provincial Departments of Transport must work closely with Local Government to ensure that learner transport providers comply with the safety measures legislated by the Department of Transport. [collaborations with local traffic police]
Driver and learner behaviour

- It is the responsibility of the DOT to ensure that a code of conduct for drivers is in place. **The code must contain details of the expected behaviour and measures** for dealing with non-complying drivers, **procedures for drivers** and responses in the case of emergencies including accidents, theft, hijackings and when a scholar on board is seriously ill. **[first aid and advance drivers training]**

- Provincial Departments must ensure the development of a **code of conduct for passengers/learners** in scholar transport. The code must include expected/unacceptable behaviour and **Measures** for dealing with scholars who do not adhere to the agreed code
Key elements of the policy...

Funding
- The Departments of Transport and Basic Education shall pursue discussions with National Treasury for an establishment of a dedicated grant for learner transport. [ring-fencing of budgets]

Monitoring and Evaluation
- Monitoring and evaluation is an integral part of the policy making process. It ensures that challenges and opportunities are promptly identified and responded to, and assesses the impact, progress and achievements of the policy. Monitoring and evaluation must be undertaken at various levels, i.e. policy, programme and project
Key elements of the policy…

Policy Communication

- Both the Department of Transport and Basic Education shall be responsible for **advocating and communicating** this policy to the public and other sphere of government.

- A **communication strategy** for learner transport policy will be developed to create awareness of the need for safe and efficient transportation of learners.
# Key Milestones

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Concluding remarks

- This policy provides for a collaborative, uniform and integrated framework of governance, planning and management of scholar transport in the country.

- Upon approval by Cabinet, a framework for the implementation of the scholar transport system will be provided. [with key performance indicators]

- Those elements of the policy which require only administrative action will be implemented immediately. Major policy changes from existing practice would be done in a phased manner.

- The draft was workshopped extensively, presented to and supported by internal and external stakeholders.
Comments from internal Transport stakeholders

- COTO deliberated on the presentation and remarked as follows:
  - The draft policy is dominated by objectives to address operational issues.
  - Scholar transport is part of public transport in terms of the NLTA
  - There is sufficient regulatory mechanisms like the NLTA on operations and the NRTA on safety and vehicle specifications and therefore the sector should focus on the development of regulations that will address these issues and introduce norms and standards, minimum requirements and guidelines.
  - The majority of peak trips include learner travel (up to 60% at times) and therefore these service should form part of Integrated Public Transport Networks (IPTN’S) of municipalities as envisaged in the Public Transport Strategy of 2007.
Recommendations

- It is recommended that the PCOT notes and supports the amended draft of the Scholar Transport Policy as well as the process going forward.
Thank You