

National road safety campaign urges motorists not to use phones while driving

(Cape Town, 15 December 2016) Road Safety Angel launched its Festive Season road safety campaign nationwide today ahead of the traditional December 16th start to the holiday commute. The focus for this year is on encouraging road users not to text or use their cellphones while driving.

According to Guillaume Olivier, SHEQ Manager at Unitrans, the initiators of the campaign, cellphone use while driving is the cause for 1 in 4 of all accidents. “Studies have shown that cellphone use reduces parietal lobe activity (the part of the brain responsible for effective driving) by up to 37%. Despite this, more than two-thirds of motorists make calls while driving. Cellphone use makes a significant contribution to the number of accidents on our roads, which costs the South African economy between R40bn and R76bn annually. In addition, the trauma of losing a father, mother, husband, wife, child or family member is impossible to quantify and can affect the lives of loved ones for decades.”

The Road Safety Angel campaign was started by Unitrans three years ago along the N4 route, and has gained the support of a number of partners including MiX Telematics, DriveRisk, Scania, Van Wettens and GRW. On December 15th between 09h00 and 15h00, the Road Safety Teams will gather pledges at six venues across the country, namely:

- Total Petroport N3 Highway, Heidelberg West
- Shell Ultra City N4 Highway, Middelburg
- Shell Retail Service Station Gateway, Nelspruit
- Caltex Service Station V&A Waterfront, Cape Town
- Shell Ultra City N3 Highway, Estcourt North
- Engen 1Stop N4, Belfast

“We are asking all motorists to commit to not using their cellphones while driving, to drive safely and patiently and in doing so contribute to making our roads safer. Last year we secured 1400 pledges from across the country – this year we hope to double that figure to at least 3000 pledges. We are passionate about encouraging good driving behaviour and promoting road safety awareness to reduce the number of accidents, injuries and fatalities on our roads. We encourage all motorists to take the pledge for a safer Festive Season on all our roads,” says Olivier.

Motorists can pledge their support at any of the participating service stations or by visiting www.roadsafetyangel.co.za/