

The George Municipality would like to clarify that the traffic officers present at the Kaaimans Pass incident were not municipal officials. The N2 is a provincial road, and therefore Provincial Traffic Services would have been the responsible authority on the scene. Municipal Law Enforcement officers were present at the time. For confirmation, please contact the Western Cape Provincial Traffic Department.

The Municipality is aware of the footage circulating regarding the altercation between two tow truck operators.

Concerning the Municipality's position on ongoing disputes between local tow truck operators, George Municipality strongly condemns any contravention of traffic legislation or criminal conduct at the scene of an accident. Such behaviour is unacceptable and endangers both emergency personnel and the public.

In terms of measures to regulate or mediate the conduct of tow truck services at accident scenes, various steps have been taken, including:

- Meetings held with certain tow-in service providers;
- Engagements between Emergency Services: inclusive of Provincial Traffic, Local Traffic and SAPS to address operational coordination; and
- Instructions issued to all Community Safety personnel to uphold proper protocols at accident scenes.

Regarding the notification or allocation of tow-in services, the George Municipal Traffic Department does not allocate or notify any tow-in services when an accident occurs. It must be noted that SAPS is the lead authority in cases where a criminal offence is alleged or where injuries or fatalities occur. The Fire Department is responsible for rescue and recovery operations as required.

On the allegations of preferential treatment or possible compensation to certain tow truck companies, the Municipality confirms that it is aware of such allegations. Individuals who have made these claims have been requested to provide substantiated evidence to enable investigation and disciplinary action, should such conduct be proven. No sufficient evidence has been submitted to date.

To ensure fairness, transparency, and safety at accident scenes going forward, the Traffic Chief and management team, together with other emergency services, will meet with local tow-in companies to reiterate legislative requirements and appeal for their cooperation in the interest of public safety.

THE PUBLIC SHOULD BE REMINDED THAT IT IS THEIR CHOICE WHICH TOW IN SERVICE THEY UTILISE IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT, UNLESS IN TERMS OF the National Road Traffic Act as below:

ACCIDENTS AND ACCIDENT REPORTS

Duties [S 61(1) subs by s 17 of Act 64 of 2008.]

(2) No person shall remove any vehicle involved in an accident in which another person is killed or injured from the position in which it came to rest, until such removal has been authorised by a traffic officer, except when such accident causes complete obstruction of the roadway of a public road, in which event the vehicle involved may, without such authority and after its position has been clearly marked on the surface of the roadway by the person moving it, be moved sufficiently to allow the passage of traffic.

(3) Subject to subsection (2), no person shall remove a vehicle involved in an accident from the scene of such accident, except for sufficiently allowing the passage of traffic, without the permission of the owner, driver, or operator of such vehicle or a person who may lawfully take possession

No person (including the tow truck drivers) may enter an active accident scene without permission from the incident commander, SAPS officer, or municipal enforcement officer on the scene. George Municipality wishes to utilise this opportunity to indicate to the public of George the following:

- If they are medically able to
- that emergency services should be contacted first
- that it is their choice of which tow-in service to utilise (after consultation with their own insurance companies) if involved in an accident and the vehicle is not capable of moving
- that no tow-in services should ever be allowed on an active accident scene to obtain vehicle details until the scene is cleared.
- When dealing with tow-in companies, they should always establish the amount to be charged for all aspects, including towing, salvage, and storage fees. Always agree on towing charges before their vehicle is towed.