N3TC and I-Pledge road safety partnership makes a positive difference

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The pilot project between IMPERIAL’s I-Pledge road safety campaign and N3 Toll Concession (N3TC) has shown that increased visibility of traffic officials and support personnel is a key factor in reducing road accidents and related injuries and fatalities.

In December 2011, N3TC and Community Medical Services (CMS) joined forces with automotive and logistics group IMPERIAL and its I-Pledge road safety initiative to strengthen road safety and emergency support along the 415km N3 Toll Route between Heidelberg in Gauteng to Cedara in KwaZulu-Natal.

Six branded vehicles were provided by Europcar, a division of IMPERIAL, to support N3TC’s existing fleet of 11 route patrol vehicles with additional route surveillance, roadside assistance and law enforcement support during the six-week festive season period from 12 December 2011 to 10 January 2012. Two of the vehicles were manned by the KZN SAPS Highway Patrol, which provided outstanding 24/7 operations, one by Mpumalanga’s Road Traffic Inspectorate, and three by N3TC’s own route patrol service.

N3TC incident statistics for 12 December 2011 - 10 January 2012

- During this period, eight people lost their lives compared to 32 last year, reflecting a 75% improvement.
- The number of injuries decreased from 376 to 207 - an improvement of 45%.
- The number of road accidents/crashes decreased by 33% from 172 in 2010/2011 to 115 to the same period in 2011/2012.
- Fatal road accidents reflected a 61.9% reduction: eight fatal accidents this year compared to 21 last year.

Traffic volumes also increased by 0.7% during this period. On 2 January 2012, it peaked at 2,633 vehicles per hour at Mooi Plaza (northbound).

Commenting on the statistics, commercial manager of N3TC Con Roux said: “We have no doubt that this is a partnership that works. The overall impact of the I-Pledge campaign, the presence of the Europcar vehicles and the commitment of the CMS team have played a significant role in enhancing road safety on the N3 Toll Route during the festive season and in making this achievement possible.”
Contributing factors to the improvement

- Improved visibility and law enforcement.
- Improved response times to accidents and incidents.
- The continued and excellent core work of law enforcement authorities and emergency medical personnel along the N3 Toll Route.
- A well-executed Incident Management System (IMS) under the auspices of N3TC.
- The role of additional partners such as BMW Road Service.
- Prompt removal of obstructions from the Route.
- Increased awareness and a vast majority of motorists who clearly acknowledged the importance of safe driving particularly in heavy traffic volumes.
  - Some 31,500 people have taken the I-Pledge to date
  - N3TC and I-Pledge distributed 100,000 road safety awareness brochures and I-Pledge stickers to motorists at the Wilge Toll Plaza on the N3 Toll Route.

The battle is not won

Roux noted that the biggest risk factors continue to be driver fatigue, loss of concentration, speeding and substance abuse. In recognising these risks, N3TC, in keeping with the Decade of Action for Road Safety, launched a road safety campaign in May 2011 to address many of these road safety risks along the N3 Toll Route and will continue to focus on these in 2012.

IMPERIAL’s executive director for strategic development Tak Hiemstra added that IMPERIAL is delighted that the co-operation between I-Pledge and the N3TC made such an impact. “We are planning further actions to help improve road safety.”

“While visibility of and enforcement by road traffic officials is key, we all need to change our attitudes and in turn our behaviours to effect a positive and sustainable difference,” he said.

“We would like thank the N3TC and CMS teams for the dedication to making one of South Africa’s most popular holiday and commercial routes safer and friendlier,” said Hiemstra.

Take the I-Pledge

Visit www.ipledge.co.za. Take one pledge, take all of them or even write your own personal pledge. You can keep updated on the I-Pledge by visiting the website, following @IPlodgeZA on Twitter or joining its Facebook page.

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Source: Imperial Holdings