



ROAD TRANSPORT AND SAFETY AGENCY

PRESS STATEMENT

RTSA SUSPENDS SCORPION BUS SERVICES OPERATOR'S LICENCE

LUSAKA, 17th May, 2019- The Road Transport and Safety Agency has suspended the Road Service Licence (RSL), for Beta Build Hardware and Electronics trading as Scorpion Bus Services for violating the terms and conditions upon which the operator's licence was granted.

This comes in a wake of a road traffic crash on 17th April, 2019 around 19:20 hours, involving a Scorpion bus registration number BCA 8977ZM were fourteen (14) people died and sixteen (16) injured. The crash occurred along the Chingola – Solwezi road.

Accident investigations conducted by the RTSA revealed that the driver of the bus, Mr. Eddie Katoyo, was over speeding as evidenced by the fact that he overtook several vehicles and subsequently hit into a stationary truck in the opposite lane.

RTSA records indicate that on 11th April, 2019, the same bus driver was reported to have been driving at excessive speed around Chisamba area on Great North Road. He was summoned through his employers, but the operator failed to avail Mr. Katoyo to answer to the charge.

Further, investigations into the accident indicate that the driver, Mr. Katoyo was not licenced to drive a Public Service Vehicle. It was also established that the driver gave false information to officers when he presented fake documentation stating that he was a holder of a PSV licence when in fact not.

In a letter dated 15th May, 2019 addressed to the Director of Beta Build Hardware and Electronics, who's buses are branded as Scorpion Bus services, the RTSA expressed concern that the operator allowed or employed an unlicensed and inexperienced driver to drive a Public Service Vehicle, undoubtedly putting lives of passengers at risk further resulting injuries and loss of lives. The operator's action was described as tantamount to violating the conditions upon which the operator's licence was granted thus posing serious danger to the travelling public.

The RTSA has therefore, evoked Section 108(16) of the Road Traffic Act No. 11 of 2002 that empowers the Agency to revoke, suspend or vary the terms of a RSL if the conditions subject to which it was granted are not being complied with. Section 108 (16) of the Act provides that:

"A Road service Licence may be revoked or suspended in whole or in part or its terms or conditions may be varied by the Director on the ground that any condition subject to which the licence or a variation was granted has not been complied with."

"Provided that the Director shall not revoke, suspend or in terms of this subsection, vary such a licence unless owing to the frequency of breach of conditions on the part of the licence holder or to the breach having been committed willfully, or to the danger to the public involved in the breach, the Director is satisfied that the licence should be revoked."

The Agency is of the view that the operator exposed the public to needless danger owing to the action of employing an unlicensed driver to drive a passenger Public Service Vehicle (PSV). In view of the foregoing and pursuant to Section 108 (16), the RTSA has suspended RSL No. NDL22241/1 (and all variations thereto) effective Saturday 18th May, 2019.

RTSA has forthwith given Scorpion bus services 48 hours from 16th May 2019, to cease operations and thereafter none of the operator's buses shall be expected to be on the road. The RSL will only be restored subject to the operator meeting the conditions that the Agency has set to address the findings from the accident investigations which include the following:

1. The company avails all its vehicles to the Agency for road worthiness inspection, pursuant to section 126 of the Road Traffic Act No.11 of 2002;
2. The company avails all its drivers to the Agency for retest, pursuant to section 68(1) (c) of the Road Traffic Act No.11 of 2002;
3. Installing of Global Positioning System (GPS) on the buses using the RTSA recommended installation firm;

Furthermore, the firm will be expected to implement the workplace Road Safety Policy which is underpinned by the following five factors: Driver management; Vehicle management; Journey management; Health and safety at the workplace; Organization management and Monitoring and Evaluation. The RTSA will fully facilitate the re-testing and re-inspection of the drivers, buses and monitor the operator in a bid to uplift their road safety profile.

Issued by:

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