



**FESTIVE SEASON ROAD SAFETY MESSAGE**

**BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**OF**

**MVA FUND**

**AT THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE**

**2019 MVA FUND ANNUAL REPORT**

**19 NOVEMBER 2020**

**All media houses here present;**

**Stakeholders;**

**Ladies and gentlemen;**

We are at a critical time of the year which is usually characterised by festivities and heightened travel across the country by all road users. Trends from the past years indicate that high road traffic crashes and casualties mostly happen during the last two months of the year. Analysis of road traffic crashes statistics from Botswana Police Service for the years 2015 – 2019 reveals that on average 82 people die from road traffic crashes during November and December every year. The month of December contributes around 63% of this festive season casualties.

In the current year, Botswana has experienced the lowest road traffic deaths thanks to Covid-19 pandemic containment measures imposed by Government. According to Botswana Police Service, 270 deaths were recorded as at the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020, compared to 391 deaths recorded in the corresponding period in 2019. This is a significant reduction of 30.9%. In the recent past weeks however, we have noted a worrisome trend of increasing number of single road crashes that claim multiple lives. In one of those weeks, we lost seven (7) lives in two road crashes. The trend is as follows;

<b>PERIOD</b>	<b>NUMBER OF DEATHS</b>	<b>MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DEATHS RECORDED PER CRASH</b>
Week 42 (11 – 18/10/2020)	14	3
Week 44 (25/10 – 01/11/2020)	8	3
Week 45 (01 – 08/11/2020)	13	4
Week 46 (08 – 15/11/2020)	8	3
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>43 deaths in 4 weeks</u></b>	

This trend is likely to worsen as we approach festive season if we do not play our part to prevent recurrence of road traffic crashes. We should therefore, all play our part to reverse this trend.

Further analysis reveals that majority of the deaths result from road crashes where the driver is alleged to have lost control of the vehicle resulting in rollover or head-on collision. The question is “what really leads to loss of vehicle control?” The most probable contributing factors are;

- driving at excessive speed,
- driving while intoxicated,
- distracted driving and,
- driving while under fatigue.

As MVA Fund, we pledge to continue providing public education and road safety awareness through various media platforms during this festive season, focusing on the above risk factors. Currently the following programmes are in place for festive season road safety campaigns:

- Road safety documentary named “Safety on the Road” that is airing on BTV every Sunday at 1930 hours;
- Sponsored Radio programme on RB 2 every Sunday from 0900 – 1200 hours;
- Social Media campaigns to maximize our reach to the greater populace of Botswana;
- Influencer marketing road safety promotion in partnership with Mr. Refilwe Thabang Ramokate a.k.a. Mjamaica who is a well-known comedian;
- Road safety promotion interviews and adverts on various radio stations; and,
- Pedestrian/passenger campaigns at bus ranks and bus stops using our activation vehicles PA systems.

This week we continue with activities to commemorate the World Day of Remembrance for Victims of Road Safety, which was officially launched by the Honourable Minister of Transport and Communications Mr. Thulaganyo Merafhe Segokgo on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020 under the Theme “**Remember, Support, Act**”.

I therefore encourage all road users to play their part and take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of other road users. It is true that road safety begins with you.

Lastly, ladies and gentlemen, I believe we are all aware that we are in the period of “60 Days of Action on Crime and Road Safety” which was launched by the Commissioner of Police Mr. Keabetswe Makgophe on the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020 in Gantsi. The campaign runs from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. MVA Fund, as a key road safety stakeholder, is in full support of this campaign. As key

stakeholders in the road safety promotion, we usually spend the festive season participating at various campaign sites, to encourage road users to use the road responsibly to save lives. Owing to Covid-19 pandemic protocols, MVA Fund will not be physically present at the campaign sites these festivities.

However, we will as usual continue to provide moral support and motivate these respectable men and women in uniform to continue serving road users diligently during this festive season.

Director of ceremonies, let me conclude by thanking all who attended this event, and wish you a safe festive season. Please remember to keep the distance, wash or sanitize hands regularly, wear your face mask, and avoid unnecessary travel as it is beneficial to do so.

**Thank you!**