

GOING SMART

USING TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE SERVICE
DELIVERY

6th Annual ITMPOSA Conference 2024
Cape Town

INTRODUCTION

BEING IN THE NEWS FOR THE WRONG REASONS

So what's the point?

Zamandulo Malonde
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Even if you book via Nelson Mandela Bay's new online system, you will still likely spend half your day queuing at the Gqeberha licence testing centre.

The Herald tested the system — now in its second week of operation — but found it has a long way to go in terms of efficiency as long queues remain the order of the day at the Korsten centre.

While the process runs smoothly for driver's licence renewals and collections — people are in and out in minutes — for driver's and learner's licence bookings, there is little difference as residents still arrive and queue with those booking for the first time.

A Herald reporter this week spent more than four hours in the driver's licence test booking queue despite booking online three days prior.

The situation is so bad that some are even selling their spots in the queue for R100.

Residents who had booked online were further incensed when they were turned away after several hours of queuing because their documents were incomplete.

When users complete their



SNAKING QUEUE: Residents are still required to queue at the licence testing centre in Korsten. Picture: EUGENE COETZEE

booking online, they receive a confirmation letter listing the documents they must have when going to the testing centre.

But the online system only lists an ID, ID photos and the booking fee as requisites.

Many first-timers only discovered when they got to the front of the queue that a proof of address was one of the required documents.

A frustrated Thembele Sikawuti, 36, walked out empty-handed after queuing for about two hours to book for

her learner's licence without a proof of address.

"They definitely need to improve the system and list all documents," she said.

"At first I was surprised to find out that we still have to queue even though we booked online, and now I'm walking out without a booking because I didn't know I had to bring proof of residence."

She said the system had stated that the centre closed at 4pm but security staff closed the gates shortly after she arrived at 2pm.

"Now I can't go and get the proof of address and come back because it's closed."

"If I had known they closed earlier, I would have come earlier and still had time to collect the document they didn't mention online," Sikawuti said.

Shakur Grootboom, 21, booked online two days before he went to the centre.

He said he did not expect to spend so long queuing to book his learner's licence after having already booked online.

"It had its glitches but I managed to secure a booking."

"I thought booking online meant avoiding the long queues, but when I got here it wasn't the case."

Another resident, who asked not to be named, said he returned to the centre twice after making an online booking for his daughter's learner's licence.

His wife, he said, went to the centre with their daughter on Friday last week after having booked online the previous Wednesday.

But they gave up after queuing for hours in a queue

The online booking expired and they had to make another one this week.

"I took my daughter again [on Wednesday] and we were there at 6.30am."

"When we got to the front of the queue, the gentleman who was assisting us asked us for a proof of address and we didn't have it."

"He simply said he can't help us."

"When we asked why it wasn't listed on the system, he said it was still under construction."



Driver's licence nightmare

I finally received my temporary driving licence permit on February 19 after five failed attempts to even get my feet on to the steps of the Kariega branch (twice), the Korsten branch (twice) and Kirkwood (once).

My sixth attempt was back at the Korsten branch, but at the cost of a long wait as early as 3.30am to achieve my goal.

Exactly six months later, on August 18, I returned to the Korsten branch to collect my new card.

I breezed past the security to be seventh in line of only 12 people collecting theirs too.

Fifteen minutes later, a woman started gathering our ID cards.

Twenty minutes later, everyone in this queue began sighing in exasperation as we

wondered why it was taking so long for our respective cards to be collected.

It was only about five minutes later that the queue at least started moving.

Everyone signed for their respective cards in the foyer, but at my turn I was escorted to the public driving permit section and told to wait for "Dorothy".

Fifteen minutes later I called an assistant and explained to her what I had been told.

This woman listened attentively, but one could see the "surprised" look on her face and she immediately asked her colleagues where Dorothy was.

A man who walked out of an office nearby also seemed to be looking for Dorothy.

Unbeknown to him, I had been waiting for the same individual since my arrival.

It was an efficient, friendly woman named Elizabeth whom I have to thank for her decisiveness.

After inquiring on my behalf, she was told by the same individual(s) behind the cashiers counter that I had to return in four to six weeks' time since there was "something wrong" with my card.

My gripe remains: Why are no business ethics displayed in an organisation of this calibre?

Dorothy couldn't be found up until the time I left the building.

Why was nobody else informed of Dorothy's absence and why did we have to wait all that time to get such a simple

yet unexplained answer? It appears that communication skills need urgent attention in that department.

In my opinion, human beings should be more transparent in their dedication, especially in the execution of their duties as civil servants.

I sincerely hope on my next return to this department that I will not need to carry along my picnic basket and a separate chair meant for social distancing.

My expectations continue to run high for the collection of my new card in four to six weeks' time, as opposed to experiencing yet another round of "flawed" business ethics in an organisation meant to serve the public.

Caitlin Rens,
Gqeberha

the shortfall of R318,000 ("Businessman offers to repay R500,000 of NSFAS funds splurged by Mani"). If they had checked the date, it would have been obvious this was a joke. Good one, Herald!

Jax

April Fool's day: Not even one story to baffle and excite the readers? Don't you guys have a sense of humour?

Mark, Walmer

FUEL PRICE INCREASE

This week, South Africans will be faced with large petrol price increases. I did some digging (the numbers quoted reflect 2021 earnings from official company reports): BP profits soared to an eight-year high of \$13bn (R189.6bn); Shell's earnings skyrocketed to \$19.5bn (R281.4bn); Chevron raked in \$15.6bn (R227.5bn) and Exxon Mobil reported profits of \$23bn (R335.4bn). I think they can afford to lower prices, but why am I left with the uncomfortable feeling they'd rather exploit global crises for profit?

Dave Simpson, Gqeberha

BAY COALITION CRISIS

I hope that as a taxpayer my money is not being used to pay lawyers to sort out the mess the council has got itself into. The warring councillors must take the blame, as must the people who voted for them.

6/4/2022

Karen

POSITIVE TRAFFIC EXPERIENCE

NMBM traffic department: On April 1 I had an appointment to renew my diver's licence at the Korsten office. I was first in at 7.15am and out by

7.35am. Well done, and thank you, to all the friendly and helpful staff. Online booking works for me. Happy customer!

Henry Beukman

and we wait ...



B Guerra sent in this photograph and writes: 'Wednesdays are pensioners' days when it comes to renewing driver's licences. A handicapped woman on crutches and her husband decided to leave after two hours waiting in the sun. They were not the only ones. And no access to the inside parking. The cars might get Covid? Outrageous, pathetic, uncaring and disorganised.'

Drivers with expired licences won't necessarily have claims refused

Garth Theisen

The SA Insurance Association (SAIA) says insurers will not necessarily reject claims by policyholders who have not been able to renew their driver's licences before the August 1 deadline, as they are aware of the severe backlog that has clogged up the renewal process.

SA is battling to process a flood of driving licence renewals after the Covid-19 pandemic caused Driver's Licence Testing Centres to shut for months last year due to countrywide lockdown restrictions.

While transport minister Fikile Mkhabela granted an eight-month extension to the validity of all learners' licences, driving licence cards, temporary driving licences and professional driving permits that expired between the start of the lockdown on March 26, 2020 and the end of 2020, the resultant flood of applications has overwhelmed the system, particularly in Gauteng.

The Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (Ouita) has called on Mkhabela to extend the deadline, but the government has so far appeared unwilling to do so.

Oita CEO Wayne Dornagan said earlier this week it was preposterous that the govern-



RENEWAL DELAYS: Long queues were seen at driving licence and testing centres after lockdown measures were eased. PICTURE: PHOTOMONITOR

ment expected citizens to comply with a system that was ineffective and broken. But with thousands of motorists facing invalid and expired driving permits, SAIA now says insurers will grant

them a reprieve should they have to lodge a claim before being able to renew their licences.

Drivers can take comfort in the fact that an insurer will not automatically reject a claim

where a licence has expired," SAIA said yesterday.

"This matter is particularly relevant when there are backlogs or delays in getting appointments at [Driver's Licence Testing Centres]."

SAIA said insurers were following the guidance provided by the Ombudsman for Short-term Insurance (OSIT), which has since May 2021 ruled that insurers should not outright refuse to consider claims where the driver's licence or licence disc of policyholders have expired.

Insurers have to demonstrate that not being in possession of a valid and up-to-date licence was materially a critical factor in any possible refusal of a claim.

The ombudsman has said that insurers must consider the full merits of each claim they receive before making a decision, and cannot simply reject a claim out of hand solely because a driver's licence has expired.

Nevertheless, SAIA said it still advised policyholders to be proactive and contact their insurers or brokers to notify them of any difficulties they might be experiencing when trying to renew their licence.

Providing evidence that a renewal application had been made or that attempts had been made to renew a licence would likely prompt insurers to make the necessary licence validity concessions for possible future insurance claims, it said. — Business777

OVERVIEW

MAKING IT WORK

- Finding better, faster, easier, and simpler ways of doing things
- From old radars, old ID book drivers license and manual Image Scanning Sheets (ISS) forms
- Using books and landlines, making bookings to online booking
- Writing either book A,B or C, to touch screen learners
- Moving to Average Speed Over Distance (ASOD), Live Scanning Unit (LSU) to Smart Enrolment Unit (SEU) which is a new smarter way of doing things by keeping up with technology.



WHERE DID IT START

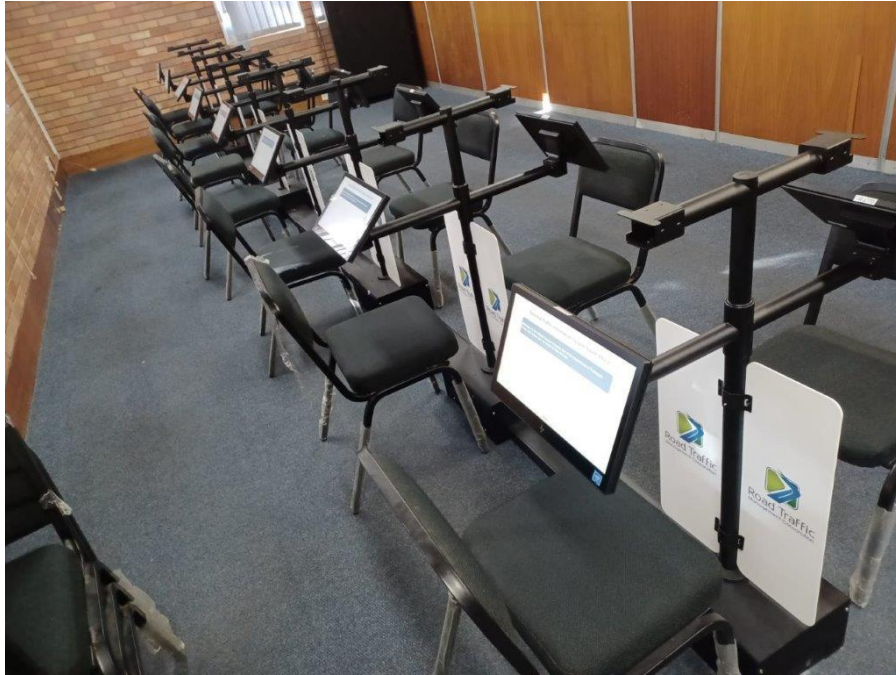
ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM

- December 2021 agreement was reached between NMBM, RTMC, and ECDOT to get the online booking system going
- March 2022 Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality together with the RTMC start the collaboration to introduce the online booking system
- To make an appointment for Learner License, Driving tests, renewals, and PrDP applications
- Applicants book their requests through www.online.natis.gov.za
- This can be done in the comfort of your home, libraries and kiosk at DLTC's
- Dates get reserved, cutting out queues and time spent at DLTC's
- User-friendly system and can choose the closest DLTC from work or home
- Same principle, ID, proof of address and fees (transaction on the day)
- Improved service delivery

COMPUTERISED LEARNERS LICENSE TEST (CLLT)

- This was a game changer in minimizing corruption in learners classes
- This technology is taking out the human intervention when learners license tests are written
- Minimise the risk of human errors by examiners, by issuing wrong codes or assisting applicants in manipulating the outcomes of the test
- CLLT administrates the test, from a database of 1200 questions, marks and captures the test automatically saving time
- Fingerprint and facial recognition were added to the system to curb any form of corruption further
- The feature locks applicants randomly out, and they must verify their identity using biometric fingerprint and facial recognition before continuing the test.
- The passing rate currently is about 33% (70%-80%)
- Applicants can download the app which has the same database of questions (K53 test)

MOTHERWELL / KORSTEN DLTC'S



SMART ENROLMENT UNIT (SEU)

- Latest edition to smart technology
- Going live from pilot project within 4 months in all three DLTC's
- All in one system (one-stop shop) – eye testing, fingerprints, signature payment, and printing
- Its link to Home Affairs using the biometric system verifying in real-time while the applicant is sitting in front of you
- Minimise risk of fraud by examiner or applicant
- Examiners must verify his/her identity by locking in with biometrics system
- A transaction can be done in 10 minutes (we do it in average 6.78)
- Saving money, eye tests get stored for three months
- Applicants re-applying for learners license can then just come and pay without doing an eye test
- The same goes for learners who pass his /her learners license and can then apply for the driving test within three months
- Fresh breath of air in using the latest smart technology
- Payments is cashless
- PrDP payment for finger prints , no more at the banks, hence shortening waiting period

LAUNCH OF THE SEU'S

01 AUGUST 2024

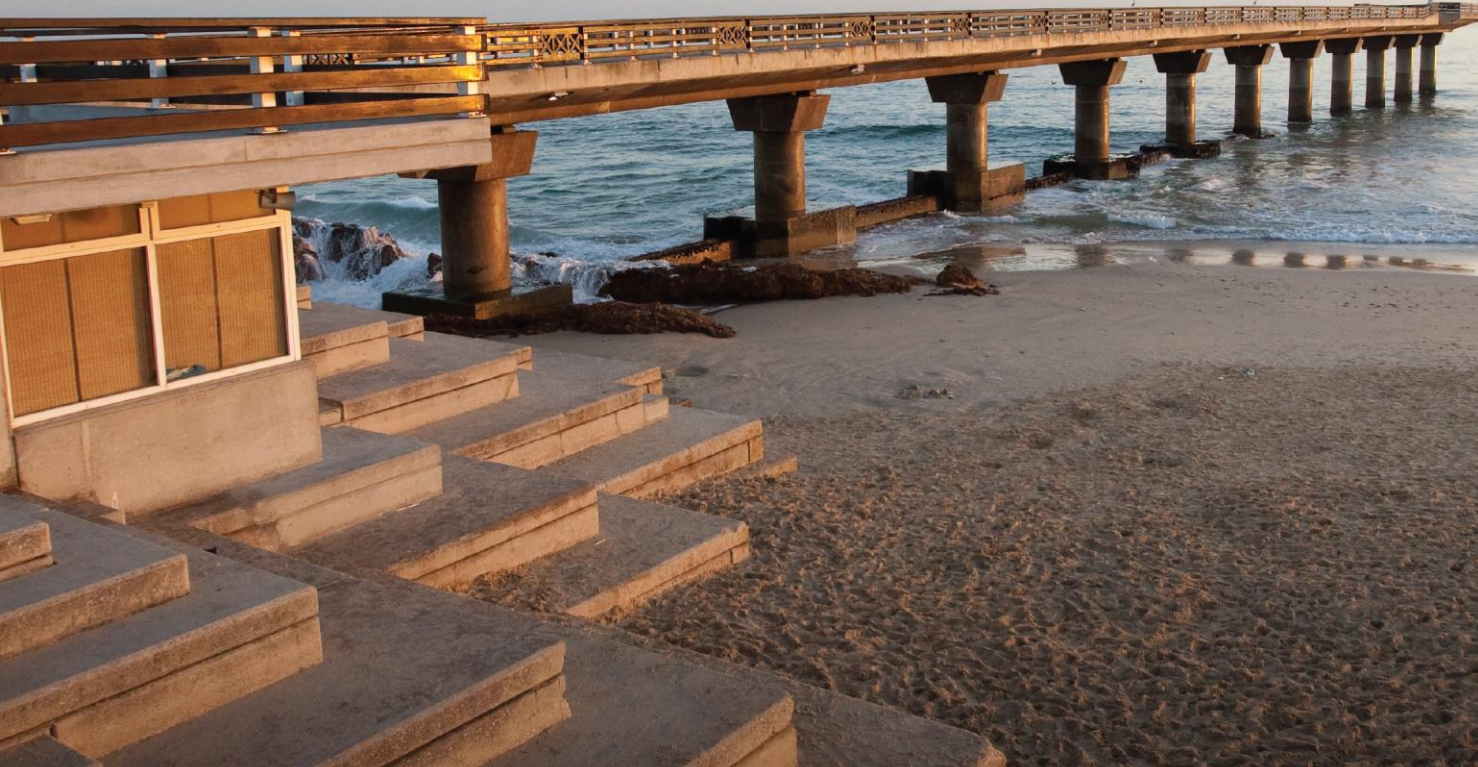


MMC for Safety and Security, Councillor Stag Mitchell (seated) at one of the SEUs, which aim at eradicating long queues and enhancing the customer experience. Behind him are Warren Prins (NMB Director Traffic & Licensing) and Neelesh Badasie (RTMC). Photo: SUPPLIED

CHALLENGES

- Is legislation keeping up with technology?
- Mindset of examiners
- Change management - To make this a success
- By in of staff
- Preparation by Driving Schools – using the app, regular meetings
- Fatigue management of staff
- Monitor performance
- Biometric log in to the system
- Communication platforms

CONCLUSION



FROM THEN TILL NOW

- We came along with the Nokia 3310 then technology advanced to smartphones
- The same with licensing, where we started with ISS, manual finger print, signature affix physical photo and sent to card production facility via post
- Risk of losing or damage ISS and redo the process and wait +- 4 months for the card
- On site training (RTMC) SOP's, cost implication = non and ongoing workshops
- Our process now gives meaning to public service in terms of the Batho Pele Principles;
- Service Standards, Access and Value for Money

THE GOOD STORY TO TELL



Charles Pullen

43m · 1

Wow Viva Motherwell Traffic department. Its clean the services very good I call it professional there are no car guards park in the very clean yard there seats in side for the Municipality services departments traffic side. It take us 2hrs and we on our way back. Finish and klaar. Book online. I was very inpress.



25/3/2021

yourviews

Send your letters and e-mail to
Private Bag X6071, Gqeberha, 6001 • heraldletters@arena.africa

Municipality ironing out online booking problems

After noting and working towards resolving numerous issues in the public discourse raised on The Herald's Letters to the Editor platform, e-mails, phone calls as well as the municipal social media pages, I decided to write this letter to clarify issues pertaining to the newly established online booking system.

Since we are only the second province in the country (Gauteng was first) and the only municipality in the Eastern Cape to introduce the online booking system, we expected teething problems.

We were obviously not wrong as numerous issues were flagged by ourselves and the public since we, in collaboration with the Road

Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), went live on March 1.

However, I am confident that we are taking a major step in the right direction to address the frustrations and friction caused by the old system.

The most highlighted complaint is the concern that although the booking system is online, consumers still experienced long queues at our facilities to conclude transactions.

Please be reminded that we previously had consumers queue in one long line to book driver's and learner's licence tests, renew driver's licences and to collect their driver's licence cards.

This caused major frustration and consumers were sometimes turned away without receiving help.

We now have four significantly shorter queues that move much more rapidly as most of the paperwork was completed online already.

It is important to understand why we had prevailing issues after the introduction of the system.

We allowed for a hybrid system for this month to complete transactions that were booked telephonically before going live.

This meant we were already booked until the end of March.

In addition, consumers who made online bookings from March 1 were required to physically go to the driving licence testing centre within three days to confirm those bookings.

Our solutions include the following:

- Only the online booking system will be used from April;
- In those cases where prospective consumers do not have access to the internet, terminals will be available at both the Kariega and Korsten DLTC from April;
- We upskilled four additional cashiers to perform transactions; and
- Obtaining accreditation for the Motherwell DLTC from the Road Traffic Management Corporation.

We have a few other issues that we are discussing with the RTMC that will further provide solutions for consumers. Announcements will follow in this regard.

When I first became the mayoral committee member for safety and security in 2016, this matter was one of my major focus areas and I am happy to see that despite the disruptive political changes, we are once again on track to provide relief for residents.

As part of my political oversight responsibilities, I will continue to closely monitor and evaluate the system.

John Best, Member of the mayoral committee: safety and security, Nelson Mandela Bay municipality

I wish to place on record my appreciation for the fantastic service I received from staff at the traffic department driver's licence renewal section.

So often ones hears horror stories about problems relating to the renewal of licences.

My experience was quite opposite: I'd booked to visit

Licence renewal was a breeze

Kariega on January 31 as I could not access the Gqeberha site. I arrived at 7.50am and was out by 8.15am; great service all round.

On March 25, after obtaining the email address from councillor John Best, I in-

quired when I could expect my new licence card.

Ten minutes later, principal examiner Pat Gounder not only acknowledged my email, but phoned me. He told me of the challenges being experienced and promised to keep

me updated. Later that day I received a call from a friendly and competent Alta van Wyk who advised me further on the status of my application.

I am so impressed by the personal attention to my case and must compliment all involved.

RL Robertson



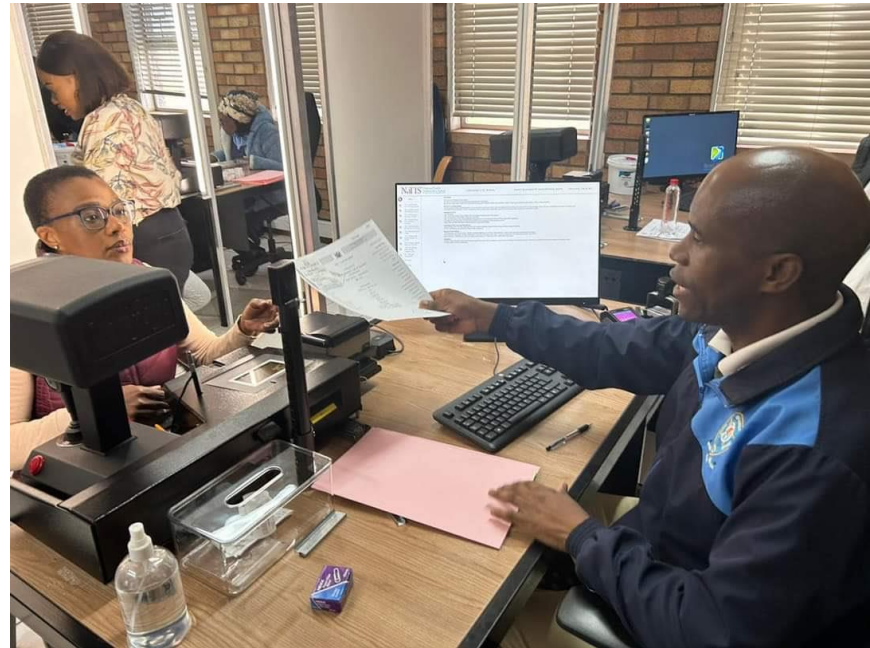
Dear Colleagues

The Municipality wishes to inform residents that the Korsten Driving Licence Testing Centre (DLTC) will be open tomorrow, Saturday 31 August 2024 for all services from 07:00 - 13:00.

The public must, however, still make online bookings at online.natis.gov.za. Please note that no bookings are required for persons 60 years and older, as well as for card collections and temporary driver's licences.

Issued by the Communications Sub-Directorate
Tel. [041 506 1555](tel:0415061555)

← ∨ Reply



HAPPY STAFF



A black and white photograph of the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality building, a grand neoclassical structure with a central clock tower and multiple arched windows. The building is set against a cloudy sky.

THANK YOU

Contact details:

Mr. W. Prins

Director Traffic & Licensing

Safety & Security Directorate

060 600 5251