



MINISTRY OF TOURISM & TRANSPORT

The Hon. Zane DeSilva, JP, MP
Minister of Tourism & Transport

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

**SUBJECT: Transport Control Department
Update**

28 February 2020



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Mr Speaker:

I rise today to make a short statement to clear up a few public misconceptions about the Transport Control Department (TCD) and traffic legislation.

Mr Speaker:

The TCD has recently changed its Mission Statement, which now reads “To Assure the Safety of All Roads Users.” With that aim in mind, there has been an increased presence of the department’s Traffic Officers, sometimes working in conjunction with the Bermuda Police Service (BPS). On a few occasions the TCD Traffic Officers, after having stopped a

motorist to address a traffic infraction, have encountered verbal confrontations and unpleasant exchanges.

Mr Speaker:

The issue appears to be that many of us are not aware that under the Traffic Offences Procedure Act 1974, TCD Traffic Officers have the same powers as a BPS officer. In fact, the definition in the said Act states, "...*“police officer” and “officer” include a traffic officer and a traffic warden*". It therefore follows that TCD Traffic Officers have the identical powers as BPS Officers to issue both parking and moving violation summonses to offenders they encounter in the course of carrying out their responsibilities.

Mr Speaker:

The next issue to be addressed by this statement is the Electronic Vehicle Registration (EVR) System. This system was installed in the mid-2000s and, as is the case with all computer and

electronic equipment, especially in our climate, over time it became in need of both software and hardware upgrades.

Mr Speaker:

While implementing the upgrades, which included installing new cameras, detection devices and antennas, re-wiring corroded connections and installing anti-tampering protection, it was decided to have the Traffic Officers focus more on street patrols, as mentioned above.

Mr Speaker:

The motoring public must know that the system is working at 100% and is detecting 10,000 – 12,000 activities on a daily basis. Many of these detected activities have already resulted in registered owners answering to charges of using or allowing the use of an uninsured and unlicensed vehicle.

And finally, **Mr. Speaker:**

The Motor Car and Road Traffic (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2020 contained a group of necessary changes to both address outdated legislation and current illegal motoring trends. One provision in the Bill dealt with the confusion surrounding the correct colours for licence plates.

Mr Speaker:

As I stated in my Brief explaining the Bill, the necessary work to change motor car licence plates from black with white letters and numbers to white with black markings was completed in July of 1975. An administrative mix-up at the time led to the confusion that exists today; meaning some people continued to believe that it is legal to have black licence plates with white characters.

Mr Speaker:

I want to inform the motoring public that as of April 01, 2020, legislation will reflect that the only legal licence plates for motor cars will be a white background with black characters. This announcement today is designed to give everyone with illegal

plates ample time to have the correct licence plates fitted to their respective vehicles.

In closing, **Mr Speaker**, the Transport Control Department takes its mission seriously - “To Assure the Safety of All Roads Users” – and the Department will continue to review and update legislation and its practices and processes to support this mission.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.