

# SANTACO and Nissan bring good news for taxi passengers

A joint venture between the mother body taxi association, SANTACO Western Cape and Group 1 Nissan, the largest Nissan dealership in the Western Cape will see the profits from sales of the new Nissan NV350 taxi being split equally so that vitally needed funds may be used by Admiant, SANTACO Western Cape's commercial arm to empower taxi owners better.



This means that taxi owners will have more money not only to maintain their vehicles, but also, importantly, to reward the taxi drivers more fairly so that safety on the roads can be increased. This good news for both the taxi industry and taxi users is the first deal of its kind in South Africa and is expected to set a precedent for other taxi-related JVs in the industry.

SANTACO WC's, second deputy chairman, Nazeem Abdurahman, explained: "Despite popular belief, the high and constantly rising costs of running a taxi means the owners are left with extremely small margins - fuel prices, as well as service and new tyre costs, are going up all the time. As a result, and in order to keep the very small margin between income and costs, the taxi drivers are under enormous pressure to carry as many passengers - as many as they possibly can - every day.

## A big step towards involving the industry

"As we know, and from some tragic events, this situation means that road safety is sometimes compromised. We believe that this JV deal is a big step towards involving the industry in helping to address the province's commuter safety crisis. Group 1 Nissan is making a bold statement on behalf of the industry and we applaud the dealership for helping us meet some of our biggest challenges in this way."

Group 1 Nissan's MD, Marcel Swanepoel, said: "How can the country expect taxi owners and taxi drivers to regulate themselves if the industry doesn't help them commercially and financially? The only way that the taxi industry can be empowered is to have the proper means to deal with their issues. We're very proud to have carved this deal with SANTACO and, while it is a big step, it's actually only the first small step towards helping the taxi industry help more than a million people a day in the Western Cape. We sincerely hope that this move by Group 1 Nissan signals a new dawn for the industry."

Robin Carlisle, MEC for Transport in the Western Cape said when the agreement was signed: "It is important that the taxi industry strengthens its bonds with other associations. I welcome the re-entrant - Nissan and Group 1 - into the taxi industry. To Group 1 and SANTACO, I say this: "You are leading an experiment that is hugely important to the taxi industry. Don't let the taxi industry or me down!"

The deal coincides with Nissan's launch of a new and safer taxi: the NV350 Impendulo Manual, which will be launched in March 2014 and will be helping to transport some of the 17 million people per day who rely on taxis in South Africa.

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