

# 38 kids in a taxi

A taxi driver who crammed 38 children into a 16-seater vehicle was in a tight spot on Friday when he was stopped at a roadblock. The man was fined R500 for overloading and another R500 for driving without a licence.

Manenberg Police Station commander, Brigadier Enolium Joseph, says officers conducting a routine vehicle checkpoint got a skrik when they found the driver had more than double the amount of allowed passengers in his van.

He says the joint operation with Traffic Service was held in Heideveld on Friday morning following concerns about taxi traffic violations.

“The crime prevention operation under the command of Colonel Sanele Zama saw vehicle checkpoints set up at various main transport routes within Heideveld,” says Joseph.

“During a vehicle checkpoint at the corner of Heideveld and Hogsback roads, a white Toyota Quantum was pulled over. To the officers’s horror they found that the 16-seater vehicle had a total of 38 children in it.”

He says the learners from Khayelitsha, Gugulethu and Nyanga, aged between seven and 15 years old, were found crammed inside the van.

“The children all attend schools in Heideveld and were found sitting on each others’ laps and squashed into the taxi. When the officers checked the driver’s details, they found he was not in possession of a driver’s licence but was operating a school transport service which was run by a woman in Khayelitsha. This is a serious indictment on the rights of these children.”

The 21-year-old driver from Khayelitsha was given two fines by traffic cops.

“He was given two fines, which include R500 for overloading and R500 for driving without a licence. Taxi owners and drivers continue to flout the law and violate young people,” says Joseph.

“Overloading is just not a traffic violation, but a violation of the children’s human rights as children’s lives are being put at risk for business trying to make money. Communities and parents need to be a lot more serious in the prevention of crimes against children. We will continue with these operations.”

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