

The background of the page is a close-up photograph of autumn leaves in shades of orange, red, and yellow, resting on a glass surface covered in water droplets. A large, dark blue circular graphic is positioned on the right side of the page, containing the text.

Road Safety

ROAD SAFETY

Community Medical Services

Years Funded: Fifteen • Province: Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal

Route Key: **E**



Community Medical Services (CMS) was formed in 1983, primarily as a joint venture with BMW South Africa, who mobilised onto the N3 with technical teams to assist BMW owners whose vehicles were affected by the introduction of alcohol in the fuel.

At the time CMS founder, Philip Hull, received a request from BMW to assist with medical support primarily over long weekends, the start and end of school holidays and the month of December to assist the BMW technical teams. Two BMW's were sponsored and that's where the CMS journey began.

More than three decades later, 37 years to be exact, the team is still operating and supporting N3TC's Route Patrol Services on the N3 Toll Route. Stationed at Van Reenen's Pass over long weekends and other peak traffic periods when increased traffic volumes are expected, the CMS team has become part of fabric of the N3 Toll Route.

BMW withdrew four years later once the fuel issue had been resolved. Since then numerous motor vehicle manufacturers have assisted CMS with the generous provision of vehicles for what has become a vital service on the N3 Toll Route. These include Fiat, Ford, Honda, Land Rover, Mercedes Benz, Peugeot, Volvo and Volkswagen.

The CMS team runs on the generosity of highly skilled paramedics and medical professionals who volunteer their time. As people have moved on so the team has adapted and adjusted, never missing a long weekend or a peak traffic period to date. The CMS team has been responsible for saving countless lives through the varying degrees of professional medical care and attention provided at every incident or crash scene. These are the unsung, unseen yet remarkable heroes of the N3 Toll Route.



Once N3TC took over the management of the N3 Toll Route, a solid relationship was formed with CMS, which has grown from strength to strength. It is difficult to adequately describe the physical and emotional hardships of treating patients' day or night, rain, mist or snow and for many of those years having inadequate local medical support available.

Philip Hull recalls one particular incident: *"I remember one occasion in the early 90's when a truck pulled out of the Caltex garage at Van Reenen around 2am in heavy mist. Halfway across the intersection, a taxi with eleven occupants collided with the truck and shortly after a light vehicle with three occupants impacted from the other side. With our base literally 100 metres away, we were woken by the impact and were on scene within minutes.*

"Not only did we have two fatalities, but eight seriously injured patients, five of which had bilateral fractures of the femurs (both femurs fractured). Temperatures were extremely low and hypothermia was one of our main concerns as four of our patients were trapped in the taxi and we had no way of getting them out. The mist and light drizzle continued unabated making secondary accidents a very real possibility. Cutting a long story short, it took over an hour and a quarter for the first ambulance to arrive due to the heavy mist and it was over three hours before our final patient was removed and the road cleared, fortunately with no further accidents."

The team is nothing short of determined and has braved all weather conditions while assisting the N3TC Route Patrol Vehicles and the various traffic authorities at numerous accidents and obstructions in the Van Reenen's Pass vicinity, and beyond, in an effort to keep other motorists safe. This has built a level of camaraderie between the various teams, all united with one objective - to keep motorists safe.

There are many occasions that bear significance in how CMS together with the other services





that form the backbone of the N3 Toll Route's Route Incident Management System (RIMS) have responded to incidents such as aircraft and helicopter crashes, searching for an ambulance transporting a post-operative patient stuck somewhere on the Pass in heavy snow and many others.

The CMS team, however, has not limited its involvement to the N3 Toll Route community through the provision of medical and rescue services only. The team has assisted with blanket, beanie, food hampers, clothes and various educational materials donations to schools and organisations in the area.

One of the highlights of the CMS outreach efforts was the case of an elderly villager who had 'borrowed' a pair of glasses from a friend who had since passed on and were worlds away from being effective for his eyes. The CMS team arranged a consult that resulted in a pair of proper prescription glasses provided to the gentleman. The delight he expressed as he squatted in front of a car and read the number plate is forever etched in the minds of the team. "I can see again," he kept muttering as the tears ran down his cheeks.

Another remarkable story was that of Samkelisiwe (Sam) who was observed by Ansie Jooste, a member of the CMS team at the time, as always being on her own and she did not appear to



have friends. On further investigation, it turned out that Sam had been in an accident at home that had resulted in extremely bad scarring under her eye and had been shunned by her classmates. The CMS team took Sam and her mother to Johannesburg for a consult with a leading plastic surgeon. A few weeks later, Sam underwent facial surgery to correct the scarring. Sam now has many friends and has grown into a beautiful young lady with aspirations to become a doctor.

"As a team, every one of us shares the sentiment of feeling blessed to be in a position where we are able to make a positive difference in other's lives and for that we are extremely grateful." Philip Hull
In 2008, the CMS team was recognised for its efforts on the N3 Toll Route and was awarded the 'Mayoral Meritorious Award' from the Emnambithi/Ladysmith Municipality – but one of many other awards bestowed on the team over the years.

While the team has undoubtedly made a difference, it could not have been done without the support of the local community. There have been many occasions where local residents have arrived at an accident scene where emergency services have been busy for hours, with cold drinks, sandwiches and other sustenance to keep the teams going. Meals and accommodation for the team have also been provided where necessary, but more than this, lifelong friendships have been established.



ROAD SAFETY

SADD - South Africans Against Drunk Drivers

Years Funded: Four • Province: KwaZulu-Natal

Route Key: **K**



SADD is focused on raising awareness of road safety and educating youth in the importance of safe road practices whether as a pedestrian, cyclist or motorist. Their efforts are centred on education and everything undertaken is intended to support ongoing awareness and education efforts.

Typically in South Africa we concentrate on the statistics of those killed on our roads and often forget about those who are injured, often left traumatised with life changing consequences. Many crash victims have either no or infrequent visitors and would have been hospitalised for extended periods of time.

This is the motivation behind the SADD teams' visits to road crash victims in Greys, Edendale and Northdale Hospitals in Pietermaritzburg, to offer support and conduct research to further support their education efforts – N3TC's funding award, in part, supports this programme. The victims are provided with a reflective road safety goody bag that contains a t-shirt, toiletries, pens, writing materials and road safety materials.

Many of the victims visited were struck by a vehicle while walking on the pavement, or side of the road where there were no pavements. It is for this reason that SADD is advocating for the construction of pavements with guardrails to be built on all roads to protect pedestrians having to walk in these areas. This is especially important in high traffic areas and public transport drop-off and collection points.

Some of the crashes had been caused by reckless and intoxicated drivers as well as unroadworthy vehicles such as tyre bursts. SADD also found that some victims – either passengers or drivers – were not buckled up and subsequently thrown out of vehicles in crashes. All good reasons for SADD's continued efforts to have these issues addressed through law enforcement.

SADD's efforts are not only noteworthy and meaningful they are a necessity as they advocate for improved safety on South Africa's roads – a concern for each one of us.