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City of Johannesburg  
Johannesburg Roads Agency

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## MEDIA RELEASE

20 March 2015

For immediate release

### INCREASING ACTS OF STRIKE INTIMIDATION TO IMPACT SERVICE DELIVERY ON ROADS AND TRAFFIC SIGNALS

The **Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA)** is gravely concerned about the escalating acts of violent intimidation and damage to property of non-striking employees, and the resultant impact on the Entity's ability to maintain the City's road infrastructure.

The South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) JRA employees embarked on a strike on Friday, 27 February 2015 due to a dispute on 3 main matters, from an original 15, that Management and SAMWU had not been able to reach consensus on.

"Despite agreements for a peaceful strike, free of intimidation, we have over the past week, noted a significant increase in intimidation of JRA workers and contactors out on site attending to road maintenance as well as those fixing traffic signals, cautions **JRA Managing Director Skhumbuzo Macozoma**, "Acts such as petrol bombing homes, damaging property; and injuring and threatening employees at work is criminal behaviour and cannot be tolerated in a constitutional democracy in which the right to safety of every individual is protected by the Constitution."

Since the beginning of the strike action, the following acts of intimidation and damage to property have been reported:

- A traffic signal technician was assaulted yesterday at Malibongwe & Witkoppen by four people who had vandalized the controller and were waiting for his arrival whereupon they attacked and hit him with a sjambok;
- A non-striking shop steward's home was petrol bombed in Bramfisherville (18 March 2015);

Directors:  
Chairman: J Manche, Managing Director: DS Macozoma, CFO: G Mbatha  
Non-Executive Directors: M Ramasia, J Maina, A Torres, N Msezane, E Ngomane,  
L Mashamaite, L Nxumalo, H Mashela, Company Secretary: K Mills

Registration No. 2000/028993/07

- Three employees sustained minor injuries after they were attacked by stick wielding assailants while attending to road maintenance in Mayfair yesterday;
- Technicians re-cabling a traffic signal intersection at Marshall and Mooi streets on 18 March at 11:09 am were intimidated by four men – JRA has camera footage of this which will be used in prosecution;
- A number of acts of intimidation of employees at JRA Regional depots has been reported, including assaulting a general worker and threatening an employee with his life should he not stop performing his duties;
- Two employee vehicles have been spray painted as well as a house in Bramfisherville; and another two vehicle windows smashed.

“Stemming from yesterday’s incident we are also in the process of investigating allegations of illegal tampering with traffic signal controllers causing the traffic light to malfunction, which is increasing the number of faulty traffic signals across the City. This is done to alert non-striking technicians to the site for repairs whereupon intimidation takes place.”

“Close to two thirds of the JRA’s 1600 workforce is currently on strike, and we are reliant on the good work done by non-striking staff as well as contractors appointed as part of the strike contingency planning”, explains Macozoma, “Additional security has been solicited through security contractors and the JMPD who are placed at all JRA depots and patrol workers out on site. However we cannot place lives at risk, and with these increased levels of violence and intimidation of staff and contractors, our ability to attend to all road related issues and faulty traffic signals reported within the agreed Customer Service timeframes is compromised, and to this end we thank the community for their patience and understanding until final resolution on the strike can be reached.”

The JRA will be engaging with SAMWU to address these concerns as well the strike.

**ENDS**

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#### **About the Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA)**

The JRA is a City-owned agency responsible for the maintenance, repair and development of Johannesburg’s road network and storm water infrastructure, including bridges and culverts, traffic lights and signage.

The organisation is committed to providing quality roads that are accessible, safe and liveable for our communities.  
***The JRA encourages residents to report road and storm water issues to 0860 562 874/ [hotline@jra.org.za](mailto:hotline@jra.org.za) /  
twitter @MyJra so that we may be of service.***

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