

# Maputo traffic keeps moving despite refugee 'exodus'

SPECIALISTS IN cross-border traffic between SA and Mozambique have described the "flood" of refugees out of SA reported by the media as no more than a "mere trickle".

And it's having no effect on the movement of commercial cargoes between the two countries.

Danie Parsons, MD of Sturrocks Focus Clearing in Komatipoort, said: "A few trucks have had minor delays, but it's no worse than normal, and certainly not affecting commercial cargoes in-or-out of Mozambique."

He did note that some SA drivers had been a little worried about going into Mozambique because of a feared backlash against the xenophobic violence in SA. "But that seems to have faded, and there have been no reported problems," he told FTW.

Jeanette Kriel, MD of Dynamic International, agreed.

"There's no problem at all," she said. "We haven't seen a lot of Mozambicans returning home, and the roads are no busier than normal."

The same feelings were expressed by Janice Nerssenheimer, MD of Pierral International.

Indeed, she told FTW that things were actually a bit quieter on the forwarding front between the two countries. "But," she added, "I'd say that's more the effect of the diesel price than anything else."

"The trucks crossing the border are experiencing normal delays."

The Maputo Corridor Logistics Initiative (MCLI) also dispelled rumours about the lack of safety of travel to Maputo from SA.

"We would like to put an end to these rumours," said

CEO Brenda Horne.

This followed discussions between the MCLI and the SA high commissioner in Mozambique.

"He indicated that things were calm in Mozambique and that the high commission had received no reports of attacks or incidents involving South Africans," said Horne.

Also, discussions with the border police at the Lebombo border post indicated that no incidents had been reported – in spite of a slightly higher than normal passenger flow to Mozambique.

"Both the SA high commissioner and the border police have undertaken to advise MCLI should this position change in any way," said Horne, "but we make an urgent call on all stakeholders to remain calm and committed to the movement of freight on the corridor."