

Cost of highway robbery

SPECIAL RISKS COVER: STATE-OWNED INSURER PAYS OUT OVER R200M

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Over the past year, the special risks insurance cover has paid nearly a quarter of a billion rands in trucking claims as a result of riots, strikes and civil unrest.

The South African Special Risk Insurance Association (Sasria) has watched a spike in claims in terms of numbers and severity of damage in the past three years, mainly attributed to riots, strikes and civil unrest.

Sasria is short-term insurance for damage caused by special risks, such as politically motivated malicious acts, riots, strikes, terrorism and public disorder.

Sasria spokesperson Andiswa Madolo said during the Mooi River toll plaza incident in 2018 – the single biggest event – a number of trucks were burnt and

the total paid out by Sasria was R77 million.

“As far as we know, no arrests have been made and therefore we do not have the information or knowledge of who is responsible,” she said.

Chaos erupted when aggrieved truckers closed the Mooi River toll plaza at Easter, one of the busiest weekends, with angry protesters setting fire to trucks, with reports that the nearby Greytown community was looting stranded vehicles, particularly grocery trucks.

The Mooi River N3 toll plaza, one of the busiest in the country, links KwaZulu-Natal's two major seaports with most of the heartland, including SA's economic hub of Gauteng and Southern African Development Community countries.

Madolo said over the past three

years, they had paid more than R200 million in claims as a result of trucks being damaged by strikers.

Last month, a logistics company's truck was set alight during a community protest on the N6 road between Newlands and East London, causing damage of more than R1.2 million.

Protests have resulted in highways being blockaded and several trucks being torched as drivers protested against foreign nationals getting jobs ahead of them.

In June, at least six trucks were torched by armed men in KwaZulu-Natal, as the drivers went on a national shutdown.

The general cost of civil unrest had more than doubled in a year, the state-owned insurer said in April last year.

The cost of service delivery protests to the private sector increased to more than R1.7 billion

in the 2018-19 financial year, from R800 million in the 2017-18 financial year.

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➔ **Riots, strikes and civil unrest result in blockades, trucks being looted and set alight.**

