

SEIFSA NEWS



MARCH / APRIL 2020

MANAGING CORONAVIRUS IN THE WORKPLACE GUIDELINES ON MANAGING THE LOCK-DOWN

INSIDE:

Impending Economic Challenges from
the Corona Virus to constrict Africa's
Growth by at least, one percent point

**Inaugural BRICS Manufacturing
Conference To Take Place in May**

UNDERSTANDING
CORONAVIRUS – AND SAFETY AWARENESS





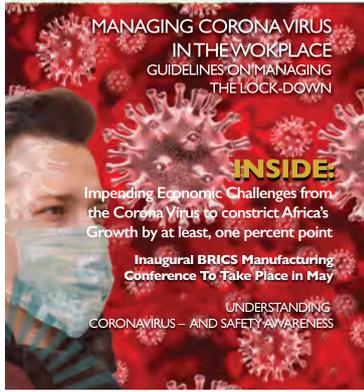
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March / April 2020

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S DESK



Kaizer Nyatumba

Over the past few months, especially since he assumed office as Head of State after the May 2019 general elections, President Cyril Ramaphosa has been seen an indecisive. He has been perceived – not without reason – to have been pre-occupied with efforts to hold the ANC-led alliance and its disparate factions together at the expense of the country, at a time when South Africa desperately needed bold leadership and tough decisions to be made in an effort to salvage our economy.

That we are in trouble as a country has not been in doubt, even on the part of those fond of platitudes and radical-sounding slogans on the left of both the tripartite alliance and our politics. Differences have occurred, however, when it came to the kinds of actions necessary to arrest the economic decline – which has led to massive retrenchments and, consequently, frightening levels of unemployment – and to turn the situation around. Typically, the usual suspects have advocated adoption and implementation of the same type of populist, socialist dogma which has reduced Venezuela and Zimbabwe to the economic basket cases that they are today.

The situation in which South Africa has found itself over the past year – during which we have twice experienced recessions and business confidence fell to its lowest since 1985 when apartheid South Africa was on the receiving end of punitive international economic sanctions from a growing number of countries – has desperately cried out for inspirational leadership which would have arrested the decline and sent the country on a growth trajectory. Our public infrastructure has collapsed in a number of towns and even big cities like Johannesburg whose suburban roads are filled with potholes.

The only thing that has thrived has been crime, with more and more people being emboldened to take the law into their hands, fully knowing that either there will be no consequences or, once they have been arrested and sentenced, powerful voices like those of Justice Minister Ronald Lamola and Transport Minister Fikile Mbabula will campaign for a presidential pardon for them, as they did when Khanya Cekeshe was denied leave to appeal against his conviction for unleashing violence during the Fees-Must-Fall protests in 2015. Others, like Mcebo Dlamini, have known that, once convicted, they will be able to rely on some misguided by sympathetic voices to support their campaigns for their conviction to be expunged.

Ours has been a veritable criminals' paradise, with no more than the usual, monotonous condemnations from our law-

enforcement agencies, with Police Minister Bheki Cele leading the verbal denunciations. So far, our leadership has appeared to be far more concerned about the welfare of the criminals in our society, for whose presidential pardon they have clamoured, than they have been about the vast majority of us, law-abiding citizens.

That is why, given that context, the stance taken by President Ramaphosa on Sunday, 15 March 2020 on the fight against the Coronavirus has been a most welcome – but surprising – development. Here, at last, was Ramaphosa showing the kind of leadership that we have long cried out for. Given the spread of Covid-19 on our shores, Ramaphosa – who had moved from merely calling on South Africans not to panic – convened a Cabinet meeting that Sunday and subsequently announced a raft of important measures intended to contain the spread of the virus and, in the process, avoid the kind of situation that developed in European countries like Italy and Spain following the advent of the disease in China.

As one listened to him that Sunday, one could not but be filled with pride.

While some might quibble about some of the decisions taken by the Cabinet and announced by the president that Sunday, the one thing which nobody can gainsay is this: finally, in his address to the nation that Sunday evening, Ramaphosa showed admirable leadership. He demonstrated that, during a national crisis, he and his Cabinet can be relied upon to analyse whatever challenges correctly and to take action.

That, after all, is what leadership is about. It is not about endless consultations and the fear to take action because there is bound to be a group out there that will be critical and disapprove of the chosen course of action. Instead, it is about dispassionately diagnosing a problem, regardless of its nature, and having the courage to take decisive action to deal with or contain it. The president and his team showed such leadership on Sunday.

While Health Minister Zweli Mkhize – no doubt assisted by the Inter-Ministerial Team that he led – had done well over the past few weeks, visibly taking charge and communicating at least once daily to the nation on the state of the Coronavirus and the country's preparedness for it, he was still not the Commander-in-Chief. There continued to be doubt about the Government's preparedness and the extent to which it would be willing to take tough – and potentially unpopular – measures the situation demanded.

While the mere fact that Ramaphosa convened a Cabinet meeting on a Sunday spoke loudly about the seriousness with which he approached the growing number of confirmed Covid-19 infections in the country, more impressive was his address to the nation that evening. It was clear, from his confident demeanour and delivery, that this was a man in charge, who was willing to

do everything possible to protect the country during a time of crisis, as the Constitution enjoins him to do.

That was visible leadership on display, and it is important that we commend Ramaphosa for it – especially since a dominant and growing perception had developed that he was incapable of taking tough decisions.



That, after all, is what leadership is about. It is not about endless consultations and the fear to take action because there is bound to be a group out there that will be critical and disapprove of the chosen course of action. Instead, it is about dispassionately diagnosing a problem, regardless of its nature, and having the courage to take decisive action to deal with or contain it.

Ramaphosa has often responded to the criticism against him that he is not a dictator, but leads by building consensus and taking people along with him. As far as I can tell, nobody – certainly not me – is asking him to be a dictator. We would all rise up against him if he were to develop such tendencies. Instead, all we are asking for is for him to lead, to provide that critical leadership that our countries so desperately cry for.

He passed that test that Sunday. Surely it is not too much to ask that he does the same more often, including in other facets of our lives and the economy? ■

Kaizer M. Nyatumba
Chief Executive Officer

MANAGING THE CORONAVIRUS IN THE WORKPLACE - GIVING CONSIDERATION TO THE LOCKDOWN

APPLICATION OF THE MAIN AGREEMENT VS THE BCEA

GUIDELINES ON MANAGING THE LOCK-DOWN

We have all been hit with fast and dramatic changes that we now need to deal with and apply to the workplace. The government enforced 21 days lockdown due to COVID19, which also falls into the definition of a force majeure, means that we are entering uncharted territory.

Obviously there are numerous questions regarding pay during this time period, please note key applications in this regard, namely:

The lockdown period is an unprecedented scenario, beyond the control of the employer (and employees).

Employers should consider allowing employees to take from their accumulated leave to assist in this time period. The decision to allow employees to apply for normal leave is yours to take, however, if possible it would be morally appropriate to allow for that arrangement. You would be guided by your financial position and affordabilities.

Employers must as soon as possible assist employees to apply for special leave of up to 14 days through UIF.

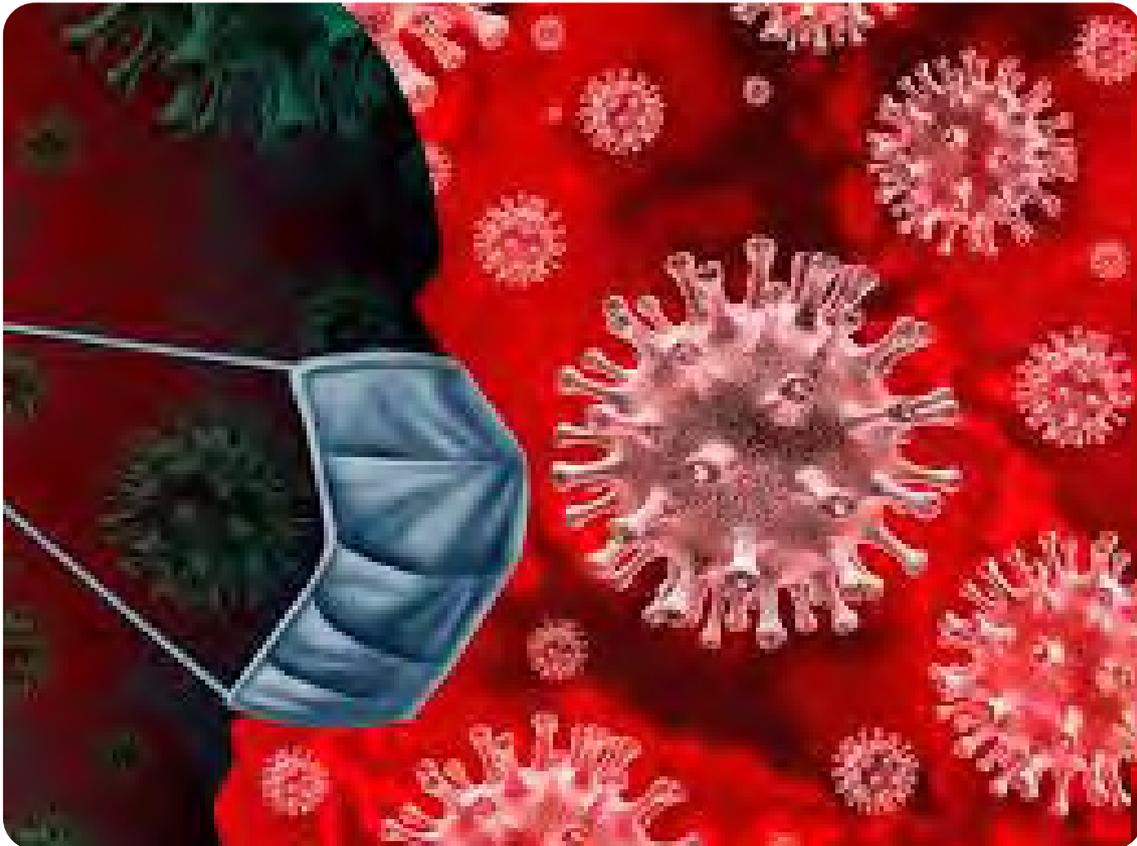
No work no pay will apply on the shop floor and in the offices. However it can be agreed that certain or all office staff can continue to work from home and be paid, this could take the form of partial pay for partial work, or full pay.

During the lockdown period, employees will still be entitled to be paid for the Public Holidays.

During the lockdown period no shifts for the leave pay and leave enhancement pay will be lost during this period.

One could also give consideration to working in time arrangements after the 21 day lockdown period, which will allow companies to catch up lost production and allow employees to catch lost wages. It could be agreed that these extra hours worked are not paid at overtime rates but at normal rates as one catches up lost normal. Section 4 (alternative / flexible working in time arrangements) and section 38 (working in time arrangements) of the Main Agreement gives guidelines on these.

It must be noted that the banks are prepared to give a three month loan/debt/bond repayment holiday.



DEALING WITH THE PANDEMIC AFTER THE LOCKDOWN

One would hope that the lockdown has the desired result of reducing the infection rate dramatically or even getting to the point of no new infections as they have managed to achieve in China.

However, there is the possibility that there may be further COVID19 infections after the lockdown across the country. Employers will therefore need to best manage the situation and this will need an understanding of various employment and labour laws including health & safety considerations to manage and mitigate the risk of Covid-19 in the workplace.

SEIFSA has received many queries on how to manage the situation, with queries ranging from a health & safety perspective to general employment contractual laws and obligations, taking into account the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) and the Main Agreement, with queries concerning quarantining and payment of remuneration in times of emergencies.

This article will unpack and provide advice and guidance on how to practically deal with these matters and steps employers can take to safeguard employees.

I. WHAT IS THE CORONAVIRUS?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) describes coronaviruses as a “family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases”. At the end of 2019, a novel strain of the coronavirus (now known as Covid-19) broke out in Wuhan, China. Since the outbreak, and at the time of writing this article the WHO has reported that there have been over 250 000 confirmed cases of Covid-19 across the world, (nearly every country in the world had reported confirmed infections of Covid-19), including African countries (in ten days the number of African countries with confirmed cases rose from 5 to 35 countries) and over 10 000 people across the world have died after contracting Covid-19.

Of significance and a glimmer of hope, China advised on 19 March, that, on 18 March, there had been NO new infections in China. The only new cases were from people who flew into China from other countries.

At the end of January 2020, the WHO declared the outbreak of Covid-19 as a public health emergency of international concern.

2. FROM A HEALTH & SAFETY PERSPECTIVE, WHAT LEGAL OBLIGATIONS DOES AN EMPLOYER HAVE IN LIGHT OF THE GLOBAL OUTBREAK OF COVID-19?

The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act 85 of 1993 places an express obligation on the employer to maintain a working environment that is safe and healthy. On the issue of a healthy working environment, the employer must ensure that the workplace is free from any risk to the health of its employees as far as it is reasonably practicable. Within the context of Covid-19, there is a clear obligation on the employer to manage the risk of contamination in the workplace.

Practically, the employer can ensure a healthy working environment by ensuring that the workplace is clean and hygienic, promoting regular hand-washing by employees, promoting good respiratory hygiene by employees, social distancing (if possible keep a two meter gap between each other), not coming to work if displaying cold or flu type symptoms and keeping employees informed on developments related to Covid-19.

3. WHAT PRACTICAL STEPS CAN AN EMPLOYER TAKE TO ENSURE THAT THE WORKPLACE IS SAFEGUARDED FROM COVID-19?

The employer should conduct a risk assessment to determine the likelihood of contamination in the workplace. This assessment should include a contingency and business continuity plan should there be an outbreak of the illness.

Employers should consider the following proactive steps given the scale of the illness globally

- Follow health advice and information: the employer should follow health advice from the WHO (as an international source) and the Department of Health and the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (as local sources).
- Communicate with employees and provide updates on Covid-19 to employees, especially if these can be provided

in positive manner to address any irrational fears that employees may have.

- The employer must also advise on its approach at work regarding attendance, leave, isolation and preventing the spread of infection. The employer may also wish to display posters that provide information on the illness and hygiene.
- Prevent the spread of infection: the employer should ensure that there are adequate facilities for employees to wash and/or sanitise their hands regularly within the workplace. Employees with a mild cough or low-grade fever (37.3 or more) should be encouraged to stay at home and seek medical attention. To properly manage the situation the employer would require sick notes
- Identify vulnerable workers: Covid-19 poses a greater risk to employees with weakened immune systems and long-term health conditions. Vulnerable workers include pregnant employees and disabled employees. Employers should pay special attention to such employees, whether it be taking further measures to provide a safer working environment, such as providing masks, gloves and ensuring that these employees maintain a social distance with others. Consideration could also be given to allow these employees to remain at home during this time.
- Update emergency contact information: employees should be required to review and update their emergency contact information.

Employees should however be encouraged to disclose general symptoms of a cold or flu to the HR Department without delay. Such employees will be required to stay at home until such time they are fit to return to work. They will however still be required to justify their absence by means of a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner. Should the employee be able to justify absence from work by means of such a certificate, the period of absence will be paid from the employee's sick leave entitlement. Should the employee not have sufficient sick leave available, such absence will unfortunately be without any remuneration or benefits, unless annual leave is available for payment purposes or if otherwise decided by the employer.

4. MANAGING COVID-19 - QUARANTINE AND THE MAIN AGREEMENT'S SHORT-TIME AND LAY-OFF PROVISIONS:

Let us consider various scenarios and give consideration to the Main Agreement and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act:

Scenario 1: If a medical doctor places an employee in quarantine, the employee needs a medical certificate, then the employee is entitled to sick leave.

Scenario 2: The employer enforces compulsory quarantine on one or more employees. The employee will not be on sick leave unless a medical certificate has been issued, and this would normally be paid time off. However, for employees covered by the Main Agreement, one can consider using the short-time provision in section 7 and the lay-off provision in Annexure A of the Main Agreement. To note that this forced quarantining by the employer is not annual leave, however by mutual agreement annual leave may be used.

Scenario 3: The employer sends everyone home. For employees covered by the Main Agreement, the employer may make use of the short-time and lay-off provisions contained in the Main Agreement. However, for employees covered by the BCEA, one would need to look at alternative arrangements as the BCEA does not have a short-time or lay-off provision. Alternative arrangements one can consider could be:

- one can consider working from home,
- working at an alternative site,
- working a skeleton staff on site in a strictly regulated environment to ensure no infections take place,
- working skeleton staff on a multiple shift system, to ensure minimum personnel are on site at any given time, with sterilization taking place between shifts, or
- any suitable and mutually agreed arrangement, like annual leave or 'special leave'. Any 'special leave' given by the employer is at the employer's discretion, as there is no legislation obligating the employer to make 'special leave provisions'.

Scenario 4: Where there is a self-imposed quarantine by an employee, then it would be unpaid, unless the employee claims sick leave and provides a sick note as required.

SHORT-TIME – SECTION 7 OF THE MAIN AGREEMENT

Let's give consideration to, and more fully answer questions that there may be regarding an employer implementing short-time (Section 7, Main Agreement), to enable social distancing and / or to compensate for the economic effects of COVID-19.

The short-time provisions do require that management spread the available work among employees as far as is practicable. However it must be noted that short-time can be implemented in such a way that only some employees are affected and others not, or that some employees are more affected than others.

The Main Agreement in section 7 says that one can implement short-time due to, "Justifiable contingencies and/

or unforeseen contingencies and/or circumstances beyond the control of the employer". Contingencies are also defined as emergencies, and certainly COVID-19 and the possible negative economic impact are emergencies and contingencies.

How short can the short-time be? The Main Agreement allows short-time to be as short as four consecutive hours in a week, and the employer would be required to pay the four hours.

Employers in a state of emergency may, therefore, implement short-time, whether it be to enforce a quarantine and send employees home, or to implement skeleton shifts, where you would have only a portion of the employees working on certain days and the rest would be off.

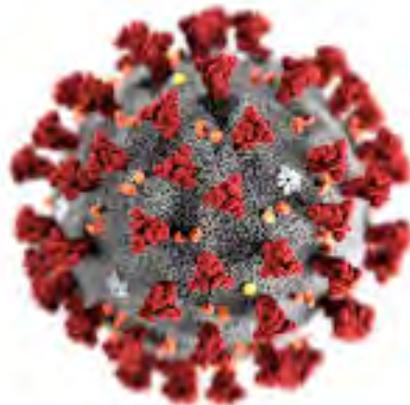
One can also consider having split shifts in any one day, don't forget to disinfect between shifts!

PLEASE NOTE! – new UIF benefits to compensate for reduced pay due to short-time, lay-offs or for being quarantined. If employees end up getting less than the UIF benefit that they would get if they were unemployed, the UIF will top up an employees pay so that they can get the same financial benefit as if they were unemployed

LAY-OFFS – ANNEXURE A OF THE MAIN AGREEMENT

An employer may also consider implementing Lay-offs (Section 4, Annexure A, Main Agreement) to compensate for the economic effects of COVID-19?

Lay-off is a temporary suspension of employment without pay for a minimum of five clear working days due to a reduction of work or due to other economic circumstances at an establishment or section thereof .The lay-off may not continue for more than eight weeks, unless agreed upon. The employer must give notice, which must reach stakeholders 14 days before intended lay-off is to begin. If pressed for time and urgent relief is sought, lay-offs may not be the best procedure to follow, because of the 14 day notice period. One could, however,



implement short-time first and then submit the lay-off notice, with the intention to proceed on to a lay-off.

Working in-time arrangements – section 38 of the Main Agreement

Companies can also consider an arrangement with the employees to work in lost time so that employees can catch up the hours and pay that have been lost. This will also allow the employer to catch up on lost production. It can be agreed that the hours that are being caught up are paid at normal time, this would also assist employers in minimising overtime pay.

5. WHAT IF AN EMPLOYEE REQUESTS SELF-QUARANTINE?

In the case of voluntary quarantine, the employee is not sick and therefore, is not entitled to sick leave. There is the possibility that if employees are forced to take unpaid leave or annual leave in these circumstances, they may opt not to self-quarantine. We, therefore, recommend that the company consider initiatives to encourage employees to come forward and not hide any infection that they may have. These initiatives could be special paid leave, working from home, which will allow employees to be paid, or any other workable arrangements which will be mutually beneficial, such as being able to catch time up and, thereby, not lose pay.

The employer must carefully consider the circumstances under which special paid leave will be awarded to employees. These circumstances must be made clear to employees. It should be an option of last resort as it may be open to abuse by employees.

If the illness spreads across South Africa, the reality for employers is that employees may request to be placed in quarantine to minimise their risk of infection. In this instance, the employer will need to consider implementing remote working for employees who can work from home, and other initiatives that are mutually beneficial.

6. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE QUARANTINE PERIOD?

After the quarantine period and even if an employee does not display any symptoms, the employer may nevertheless

require the employee to be tested by a medical practitioner and to provide the employer with a medical certificate confirming that the employee can return to work.

7. WHAT IS A REASONABLE PERIOD OF QUARANTINE?

The WHO has indicated that a person should be in quarantine for a period of at least 14 days.

8. WHAT IF AN EMPLOYEE CONTRACTS COVID-19?

In such an instance, the employer should apply its sick leave policy to such an employee. The employee must obtain a medical certificate and any time out of the office will be considered as sick leave.

Due to the nature of the illness, an employee with Covid-19 should not be permitted to return to work until that employee is cleared to do so by a medical practitioner.

9. HOW SHOULD AN EMPLOYER MANAGE EMPLOYEES WHO TRAVEL OUT OF SOUTH AFRICA AT THIS TIME?

The employer should issue clear travel guidelines to its employees on international travel, particularly to countries affected by Covid-19.

The employer may elect to place a moratorium on business travel until such time as Covid-19 is contained. If this is not possible, a moratorium should be placed on business travel to affected countries.

It may be more challenging to regulate personal/holiday travel by employees. Employees should be encouraged not to travel to affected countries. Importantly, employees who nevertheless choose to do so should not be allowed to immediately return to work after such travel. Such employees should be required to self-isolate (compulsory quarantine) for at least 14 days. Employees should be informed that they must take all reasonable steps to avoid exposure to the illness which may mean cancelling or postponing international travel until Covid-19 is contained.

The employer should also bear in mind that travel by

employees to countries which are currently unaffected by Covid-19 could still pose a risk of infection as such countries may become affected at any time. In any event, at this stage, the risk of infection is high given the nature of travel, exposure to different people of different nationalities particularly on flights with multiple legs.

It is advisable for employers to consider requesting all employees to disclose international travel (to all countries) undertaken by them (or any person who they live with) since 1 February 2020. This may assist the employer with its risk assessment to determine the likelihood of contamination in the workplace.

10. THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR'S COVID-19 GUIDELINE

The Department has developed a COVID-19 guideline. This COVID-19 planning guidance was developed based on traditional infection prevention and occupational hygiene practices. It focuses on the need for employers to implement the following:

Engineering controls - isolating employees from work-related hazards, installing high-efficiency air filters, increasing ventilation rates in the work environment and installing physical barriers such as face shields to provide ventilation.

Administrative controls – these controls require action by the employee and employer. Examples of administrative controls include: encouraging sick workers to stay at home; minimizing contact among workers, clients and customers by replacing face-to-face meetings with virtual communications e.g. conference calls, Skype, etc.; minimising the number of workers on site at any given time e.g. rotation or shift work; discontinuing nonessential local and international travel; regularly check travel advice from the Department of Health at: (www.health.gov.za); developing emergency communications plans, including a task team for answering workers' concerns and internet-based communications, if feasible, providing workers with up-to-date education and training on COVID-19 risk factors and protective behaviours (e.g. cough etiquette and care of PPE); training workers who need to use protective clothing and equipment on how to put it on, use/wear it and take it off correctly, including in the context of their current and potential duties. Training material should be easy to understand and available in the appropriate language and literacy level for all workers.

Safe Work Practices – these include procedures for safe and proper work used to reduce the duration, frequency, or intensity of exposure to a hazard. Provide resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene. For example, no-touch, refuse bins, hand soap, alcohol-based hand rubs

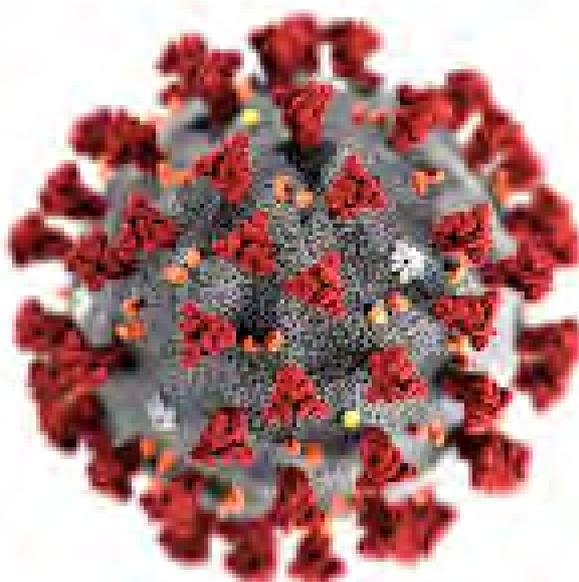
containing at least 70 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels for workers to clean their hands and their work surfaces, regular hand washing or using of alcohol-based hand rubs, and display handwashing signs in restrooms.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – while engineering and administrative controls are considered more effective in minimizing exposure to SARS-CoV-2, PPE may also be needed to prevent certain exposures. Examples of PPE include: gloves, goggles, face shields, face masks, gowns, aprons, coats, overalls, hair and shoe covers and respiratory protection, when appropriate. Employers should check the NICD website regularly for updates about recommended PPE.

Employers and workers should use this planning guidance to help identify risk levels in workplace settings and to determine any appropriate control measures to implement. Additional guidance may be needed as COVID-19 outbreak conditions change. In the event that new information about the virus, its transmission, and impact, becomes available you may have to modify your plans accordingly.

For employers who have already planned for influenza outbreaks involving many staff members, planning for COVID-19 may involve updating plans to address the specific exposure risks, sources of exposure, routes of transmission, and other unique characteristics of respiratory infections (i.e., compared to influenza virus outbreaks).

In the case of suspected exposure contact the coronavirus hotline in South Africa: 0800 02 9999



The Department of Employment and Labour will for now keep its labour centres opened. The Department has put in place a Crisis Management Team which will be guided by the Department's business continuity plan. The Crisis Management Team will meet every day at 09h00 to assess the situation and put measures in place to promote health and safety of staff and its clients.

The queues at labour centres and services provided will be managed to adhere to the 100 people not gathering in one place at the same time.

11. REGULATIONS ISSUED ON 18 MARCH 2020 IN TERMS OF THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2002.

It is important to be familiar with the recently released Regulations issued on 18 March 2020 in terms of the Disaster Management Act of 2002. These have been issued with the intention to minimise the effects of this disaster (Covid-19), and include the –

- banning of gatherings of more than 100 people,
- banning of the assembly of more than 50 people on premises where liquor is sold and consumed,
- places that sell liquor must be closed between 6pm and 9am, and between 1pm and 9am on Sundays and public holidays, this includes places like restaurants and bars where alcohol is sold,
- no person who has been tested positive for the corona virus may refuse quarantining,
- places of quarantining will be established,
- schools to be closed from 18 March until 16 April,
- any person that contravenes any of the above is guilty of an offence and could be imprisoned for six months and receive a fine.

CONCLUSION

A company should advise employees of guidelines that they will be following, such as advising employees that,

- If you have been tested positive for the Coronavirus and have a sick note from a doctor, you will be required to stay at home in quarantine. This will be treated as sick leave.
- If you choose not to come to work, and do not have a doctor's sick note, time taken will be treated as unpaid leave or may be taken against your annual leave if you have accumulated days.

- If you cannot get to work because of a lack of public transport, taxis, trains etc the principle of no work no pay will apply.

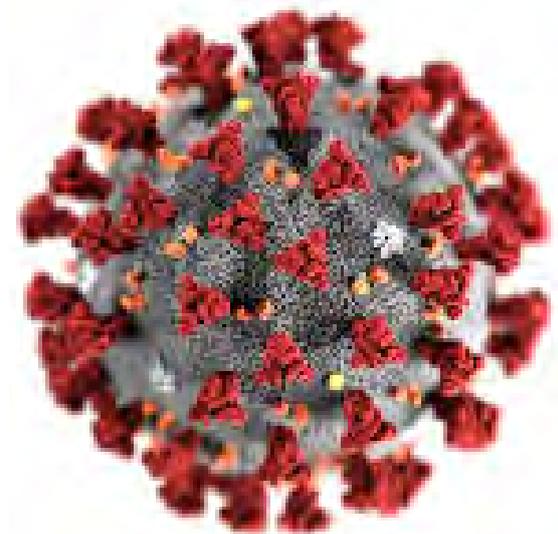
PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

1. Please ensure that you wash your hands regularly
2. Maintain social distancing
3. Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
4. Practice respiratory hygiene
5. If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, see medical care early

Employees should disclose general symptoms of a cold or flu to the HR Department without delay.

In order to manage the risk of contamination effectively, employers should consider appointing an internal committee of professionals. The committee will be responsible for issues such as monitoring the spread of Covid-19, assessing the risk of contamination and taking measures to ensure that the workplace is healthy and safe. The committee should include representatives from the health & safety, human resources and risk and compliance departments of the employer.

We wish you all the best during this trying period and pray that you, your loved ones and employees remain unaffected. ■



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ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A MEANS TO REVITALISE SA'S STEEL INDUSTRY

South Africa's diverse metals and engineering sector is in a critical state of regression. According to the latest State of the Metals and Engineering Sector Report for 2020/21, performance in this sector declined by 0.6 per cent from 2018 to 2019. Further to this, South African steel production capacity decreased from 7.6 million tons in 2010 to 6.3 million tons in 2018 - a 17% decline in nine years.

Reduced infrastructure spending due to steadily escalating steel manufacturing costs means that the production of steel for exports shrank by 7.9% in 2019, while local demand for steel has also diminished considerably. Exacerbated by a combination of a stagnant local economy, drop in global steel price and inconsistent energy supply, it is clear that the metals and engineering ecosystem is at a tipping point.

Though measures are being taken to resolve issues around current industry policy through Trade and Industry Minister Ebrahim Patel's reconstitution of the Steel Committee and the development of a Steel Master Plan, changes to legislation will only come into fruition over the next five years. In the face of increasing uncertainty and a bleak forecast for 2020, what can be done now to revive the ailing steel industry?

According to Veer Steel Mills, Business Strategy & Projects Manager Neil Reddy, bridging the gap in the steel industry requires essential short-term interventions geared towards entrepreneurial empowerment. This support is made possible by facilitating partnerships between governmental and private stakeholders. "It is the responsibility of both



government and public companies to create enabling environments for private business enterprises. A fundamental industry shift is required, and sustainable change can be achieved through championing small- and medium-sized steel manufacturers and suppliers. The steel industry creates 150,000 jobs nationally, and this number is bolstered through entrepreneurship.”

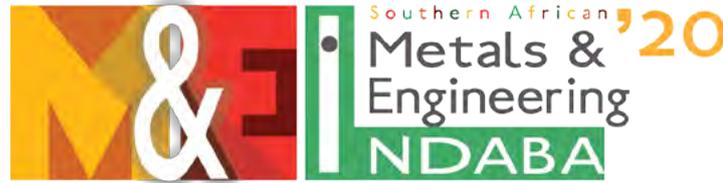
It is with this mandate in mind that Veer Steel Mills implemented Ubhoko, an entrepreneurial development programme focused on creating business opportunities and promoting economic growth and skills in townships.

“It is the responsibility of both government and public companies to create enabling environments for private business enterprises.”



“The nature of traditional steel industry practices disempowers SMEs. Through this initiative, we drive inclusion by developing a direct support and logistics network for customers living in informal settlements. We offer business development support by creating avenues of access to credit and funding and are currently putting structures in place to incubate potential entrepreneurs. This network challenges the norms and shortfalls of the industry in terms of participation, ultimately making the market more competitive as a whole,” says Reddy.

While the steel industry faces very serious challenges for 2020 and beyond, support is needed from all stakeholders to increase demand, ramp up production, attract investment and stimulate export opportunities. In order to weather the storm, close collaboration is required from government, public and private enterprises and SMEs within the steel industry to establish sustainable solutions. ■



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ERGONOMICS: A NEW REALITY FOR EMPLOYERS IN SOUTH AFRICA



On 10 March 2020, Department of Employment and Labour (the DEL) launched the Ergonomics Regulations, 2018 (the Regulations) which came into effect on 6 December 2019. These Regulations fall under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993 as amended (the OHSA) and are intended to protect the health and safety of persons who may be exposed to ergonomic risks in the workplace.

Ergonomics is defined as a scientific discipline concerned with the fundamental understanding of interactions among humans and other elements of a system, and the profession that applies theory, principles, data and methods to design in order to optimise human well-being and overall system performance.

Minister of Employment and Labour Thulas Nxesi, emphasised, during the launch, that the Regulations seek to strike a balance between worker well-being and productivity.

In achieving this, the DEL recognises that stakeholder engagement and the role of inspectors are imperative in enhancing compliance. In line with this approach, the DEL has sent about 30 inspectors to be trained on ergonomics and these Regulations in order to ensure compliance.

WHO DO THE REGULATIONS APPLY TO?

The Regulations apply to employees, self-employed persons who carry out work at a workplace which may expose any person to physical or cognitive ergonomic risk factors in that workplace and any designer, manufacture or supplier of machinery for use at a workplace.

NOTEWORTHY REGULATIONS

Regulation 3: Information, instruction and training

Employers are required, in consultation with its health and safety committee, to establish for all employees, mandatories (contractors) or persons other than employees who may be affected or potentially exposed to ergonomic risk a suitable training programme, which includes refresher training on ergonomic risk factors. This programme is not a standalone programme but should form part of the employer's standard health and safety management system. Ergonomic risk factors are those actions/conditions in the workplace which may cause or aggravate work related musculoskeletal injuries and/or disorders.

Regulation 6: Ergonomic risk assessment

Employers are under a general duty to ensure that the exposure to ergonomic hazards and risks is either prevented or adequately controlled. The employer must ensure that an ergonomic risk assessment is conducted in two-year intervals or when it becomes invalid or ineffective, by a competent person, prior to the commencement of any work. A competent person is a person who has the necessary training and experience in ergonomics and where applicable, holds qualifications specific to ergonomics and is familiar with the OHSA.

The ergonomic risk assessment must take into account not only the physical ergonomics applicable to the workplace, but also cognitive, organisational and environmental aspects. This assessment must also identify persons who may be affected by ergonomic risk and include a plan and safe work procedure to mitigate and control the hazards and risk factors identified.

Regulation 8: Medical surveillance

In the event that the ergonomic risk assessment reveals that employees are potentially exposed to high ergonomic risk factors, the employer has a duty to ensure that these employees should be placed under medical surveillance. This refers to situations where, for example, employees are potentially exposed to identifiable diseases or adverse health effects due to the nature of their work or an occupational medical practitioner recommends that a particular employee is placed under medical surveillance. Vulnerable employees who would be identified as requiring medical surveillance include, for example, pregnant employees and those employees with pre-existing illnesses.

Importantly, employers are also required to keep record of the training, risk assessment and medical surveillance for prescribed periods ranging from three years to 40 years (see Regulation 10).

Regulation 12: Offences and penalties

Employers who fail to comply with the Regulations will be guilty of an offence(s) and may be subject to specific penalties as defined by the Regulations. The penalties for non-compliance include imprisonment (for up to 12 months) and/or the payment of a fine.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE EMPLOYER?

The Regulations are not prescriptive in approach and, therefore, require that the employer be proactive in identifying ergonomic risk factors in the workplace. However, compliance with the Regulations is imperative. This is achieved through the implementation of an ergonomics programme which clearly identifies all ergonomic risk factors associated with that workplace. In implementing an ergonomics programme, employers must ensure that all employees are properly trained on these Regulations and the risks associated with ergonomics in the workplace. ■

In Memory of



CHRIS CLARKE (FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE)

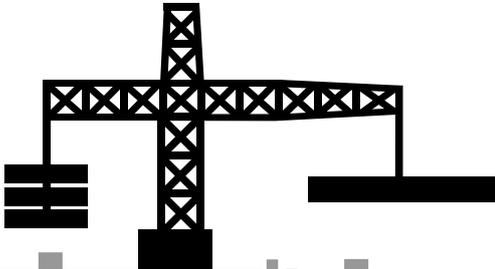
Our sincerest condolence to the family of Chris Clarke who recently passed away under tragic circumstances.

It is with fond memories that we wish to bid farewell to Chris, who added much value to the Recruitment and Temporary Services Industry and who was gainfully involved as a founding member of the Constructional Engineering Association (Labour Broking Division). Chris was also directly involved in the participation of the CEA Executive Committee representing the TES Industry as the Vice Chairperson for several years. Further contribution to this Industry involved him dedicating much time and energy to the Accreditation and Compliance of the membership.

Chris is also remembered as an astute business man who was bent on applying both ethical and professional standards and who because of his leadership, commitment, enthusiasm and vision was able to make a positive contribution to Labour Broking within South Africa.

We also wish to remember him as a very good friend and as an inspired motor racing enthusiast.

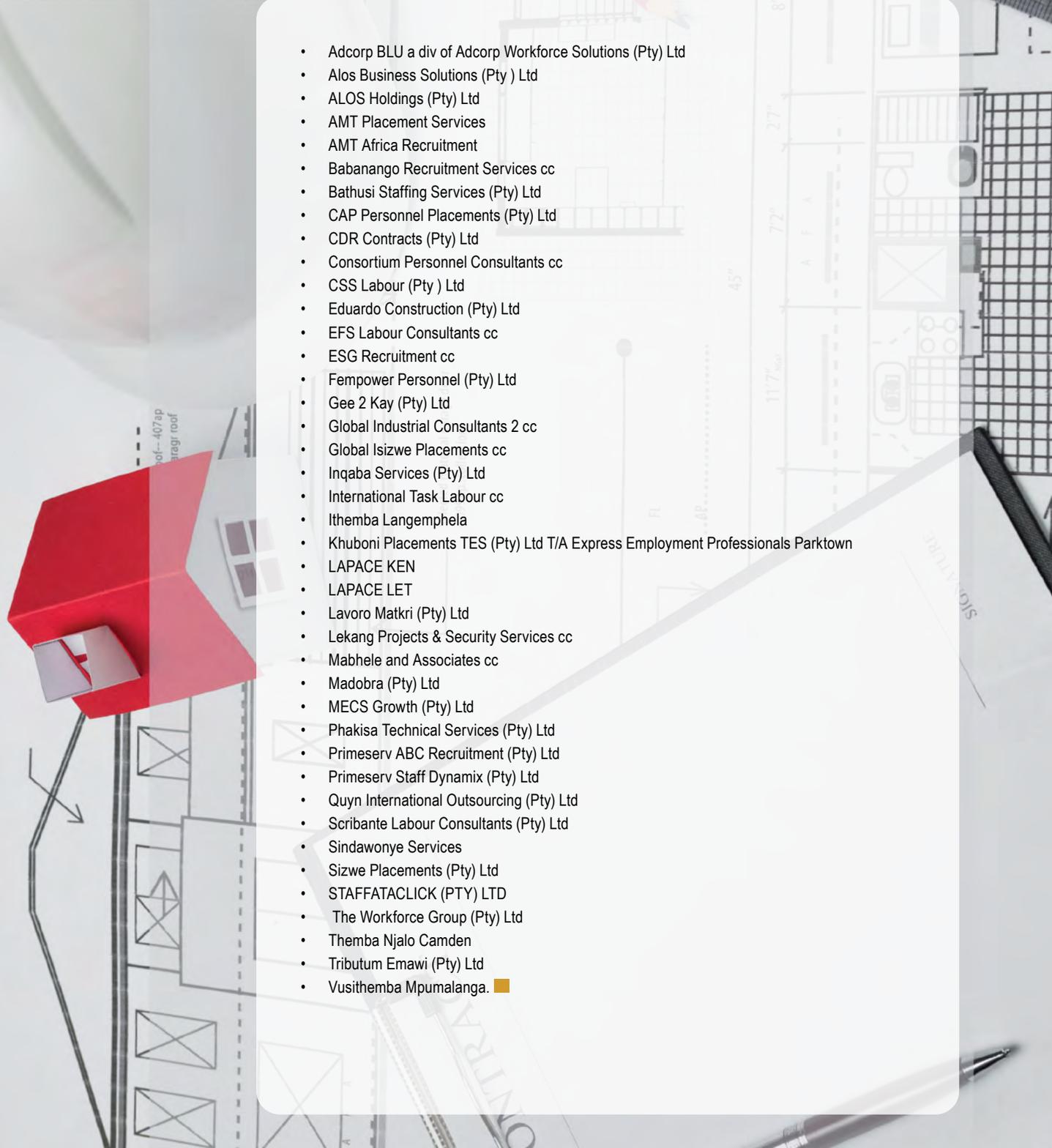
Good bye Chris , may your rest in peace, you will be forever in our memories. ■



ACCREDITED LABOUR — BROKERS —



 **CEA (TESD) Accredited Companies as at 9 March 2020**

- 
- Adcorp BLU a div of Adcorp Workforce Solutions (Pty) Ltd
 - Alos Business Solutions (Pty) Ltd
 - ALOS Holdings (Pty) Ltd
 - AMT Placement Services
 - AMT Africa Recruitment
 - Babanango Recruitment Services cc
 - Bathusi Staffing Services (Pty) Ltd
 - CAP Personnel Placements (Pty) Ltd
 - CDR Contracts (Pty) Ltd
 - Consortium Personnel Consultants cc
 - CSS Labour (Pty) Ltd
 - Eduardo Construction (Pty) Ltd
 - EFS Labour Consultants cc
 - ESG Recruitment cc
 - Fempower Personnel (Pty) Ltd
 - Gee 2 Kay (Pty) Ltd
 - Global Industrial Consultants 2 cc
 - Global Isizwe Placements cc
 - Inqaba Services (Pty) Ltd
 - International Task Labour cc
 - Ithemba Langemphele
 - Khuboni Placements TES (Pty) Ltd T/A Express Employment Professionals Parktown
 - LAPACE KEN
 - LAPACE LET
 - Lavoro Matri (Pty) Ltd
 - Lekang Projects & Security Services cc
 - Mabhele and Associates cc
 - Madobra (Pty) Ltd
 - MECS Growth (Pty) Ltd
 - Phakisa Technical Services (Pty) Ltd
 - Primeserv ABC Recruitment (Pty) Ltd
 - Primeserv Staff Dynamix (Pty) Ltd
 - Quyn International Outsourcing (Pty) Ltd
 - Scribante Labour Consultants (Pty) Ltd
 - Sindawonye Services
 - Sizwe Placements (Pty) Ltd
 - STAFFATACLICK (PTY) LTD
 - The Workforce Group (Pty) Ltd
 - Themba Njalo Camden
 - Tributum Emawi (Pty) Ltd
 - Vusithemba Mpumalanga. ■

THE PLIGHT OF THE **FORGOTTEN LEARNERS** INTENSIFIES AS WINTER LOOMS



Winter is almost upon us and while some of us will, wholeheartedly, welcome the change of seasons in the comforts of our heated cars and homes, for Amahlaya Primary School learners, the beginning of winter spells even more misery that will see them exposed to even harsher elements than what they've grown accustomed to. But who are the Amahlaya Primary School learners and what is the School's connection to SEIFSA? You might ask yourself.

In July 2019, the Principal of Amahlaya Primary School Njabulo Khuzwayo wrote to SEIFSA requesting assistance, of any kind, in building ablution facilities for the young learners at his school. At the time, Mr Khuzwayo said his worst fear, which kept him awake at night, was that one of his own would suffer the same fate as the late five-year old Michael Komape who drowned, in 2014, after falling into a pit toilet at his school in Limpopo.

After deliberating on the best way SEIFSA could assist, a decision was taken that we would appeal to our KwaZulu Natal-based members for assistance. It was, however, after conducting an in-depth interview with the Mr Khuzwayo that we began to understand the intensity of the problems facing the school and that, similar to other schools located in rural areas, Amahlaya Primary was a case of forgotten rural learners and that it needed much more than just ablution facilities.

Situated in the Mgyai area of Umzinto on the south coast of Durban, KwaZulu Natal, Amahlaya Primary School, was established in 1981. It is home to about 365 learners that are taught by 10 educators from Grade R to Grade 7.

In 2001, the school, which previously operated from an abandoned store building, benefitted from good Samaritans who, through a project called Operation Jump Start, built the

school from the ground. Prior to this intervention, Mr Khuzwayo who joined the school in July 2019, said learners moved around a lot.

“They were taught wherever educators found space because either than one mobile classroom given to us by the Provincial Department of Education, we had no school and no classes. At some point teaching took place at an abandoned store and at a private kindergarten at another,” Mr Khuzwayo told SEIFSA News.

The Operation Jump Start project came on board and built five classrooms, while three more classrooms were built from the norms and standard funding and community contributions, this was a significant upgrade from the Department of Education’s only contribution to the school (the one mobile classroom).

“This also made a huge difference to the lives of the learners who no longer needed to move around or wonder where teaching would take place the next day.”

Mr Khuzwayo says although the Operation Jump Start project and the contributions from the community helped the learners significantly, in terms of classes, the project did not build ablution facilities, which led to the parents erecting pit toilets made of mud.

“The main issue with any pit toilets is that they are large and a typical tiny Grade R learner could drown anytime, that is my worst fear. Another issue besides the ablution facilities is that the project built the school in 2001, using poor building material and workmanship, and has never been renovated. The school is now in serious state of disrepair. Classes could collapse at any day.”

Mr Khuzwayo says it was, in fact, not that long ago that a door fell on top of a learner. He says, fortunately the injuries the child sustained were not too serious and he survived the accident.

In addition to the classrooms’ state of disrepair, Mr Khuzwayo states that Umzinto becomes extremely cold in winter and the fact that most classrooms have no doors and no intact windows means that as winter approaches, the children will get exposed to the extreme cold weather conditions and potentially get sick.

Though Amahlaya Primary is a Government school, Mr Khuzwayo says the school does not receive much support from Government. The majority of classes are in a state of serious disrepair. There is no staffroom, teachers and children use the same makeshift ablution services.

“There is also a shortage of teaching material, no library and science, technology, and maths teachers are discouraged because they are only able to teach theory but cannot conduct

any experiment because there is no laboratory, yet we are told that we need to produce high-quality maths and science students. How can we do this without even a skeleton, how do you teach a child biology without a simple skeleton? There aren’t even geography charts. This has a great and negative impact on the outcomes of the learners.”

Mr Khuzwayo says the school has written a series of letters to the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education to no avail.



The main issue with any pit toilets is that they are large and a typical tiny Grade R learner could drown anytime, that is my worst fear. Another issue besides the ablution facilities is that the project built the school in 2001, using poor building material and workmanship, and has never been renovated

“I started working at the school in July 2019. I have written letters to the Department in addition to letters written by my predecessor, the response we subsequently received stated that the Department’s financial situation is dire, which means that nothing will change for our learners anytime soon.”

He says the only contribution that the Department makes is ensuring the delivery of textbooks and making sure that children eat, through the nutrition programme it runs at the school.

Another fear that Mr Khuzwayo has is that some children whose parents cannot afford to pay for transport have to walk about two kilometers to get to the school, and Umzinto is home to lethally venomous Black and Green Mambas.

We appeal to anybody who has the means to help the learners of Amahlaya Primary School either as a company or as an individual to please do so by contacting the author of the article who will connect the donor with the school (ollie@seifsa.co.za). Alternatively, donors can contact the Principal, Mr Njabulo Khuzwayo directly (amahlayaprimar@yahoo.com). Together, let us make sure that no other child drowns in a pit toilet. If you can save a life, you wouldn’t you? ■

INTERNATIONAL WATCH



AUSTRALIA



Alloy Steel International Announces Acquisition of Core Intellectual Property

Alloy Steel International has recently announced the acquisition of core intellectual property utilized by AYSI in its production of key products.

AYSI Board Chairman, Alan Scott, stated that over recent years, the AYSI Board has pursued within its group of companies complementary strategies of business expansion and consolidating all of the assets and activities that it considered to be core holdings or functions.

While AYSI's work to expand the product types and product specifications it offers continues and is supported by its internal research and development efforts, ownership of the core intellectual property for its primary Arcoplate product has resided with the Kostecki family from the time of AYSI's formation (the Arcoplate IP).

For some years the Board has considered the acquisition of the Arcoplate IP if it would prove potentially beneficial to shareholder value moving forward. AYSI has accumulated cash for several years with this objective in mind.

Recently, the Board established an Independent Select Committee (ISC) that is not affiliated with the Kostecki family or the entity that owns the Arcoplate IP (Seller). Thereafter, the ISC commissioned an estimate of the range of fair market value of the Arcoplate IP and recently negotiated a purchase price of AUD\$17.8m with the Seller. The terms of payment include a cash element of AUD\$10.4m due upon the signing of the definitive purchase agreement and AUD\$7.4m due in instalments pursuant to a promissory note. The note will be repaid in monthly payments of principal plus accrued interest over five years. The notes carry an interest rate of 400 basis

points over cash rate of interest announced from time to time by the Reserve Bank of Australia. The price and terms fell within the advised fair market value range.

The acquisition of the Arcoplate IP effectively completes AYSI's core asset consolidation strategy allowing it to focus even more strongly on new product development activities and further supply rationalisation activities.

ABOUT ALLOY STEEL

Alloy Steel manufactures and distributes Arcoplate, a technically superior and market leading 'alloy overlay' wear plate, servicing the global marketplace from its modern manufacturing facilities in Perth, Australia. Arcoplate is used throughout the mining and materials processing industries, from opportunistic one-off specialty applications in small companies to large relationship based repeat business applications with leading international companies.

Arcoplate provides users with superior wear protection due to its premium alloy mix, its high ratio of carbide rich alloy and its unique manner of manufacture. The product's technical superiority combined with its unbeatable 'whole-of-life' cost has resulted in Arcoplate's wide acceptance in the mining and mineral processing industries to reduce wear in a host of fixed plant and mobile equipment applications.

In mining and materials processing industries, where premature equipment wear is the primary cause of downtime, to undertake repairs or refurbishment, Arcoplate can provide users with significant profit improvement. Arcoplate can substantially lower equipment downtime, resulting in higher production, whilst also lowering the overall cost of wear protection.

Furthermore, in applications where material 'hang-up' or 'carry-

back' are also a significant cause of lost production, such as sticky materials that do not discharge freely from truck trays, buckets and chutes, Arcoplate's unique characteristic of polishing to a very low friction factor has the potential to

virtually eliminate these problems, whilst simultaneously providing enhanced equipment wear life.

Source: Yahoo Finance

INDIA



Coronavirus Outbreak and Lockdown Impact Weighs on Steel Industry

Tata Steel is closing down its downstream standalone units in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh in line with guidance from respective states

The outbreak of COVID-19 and a lockdown to prevent the spread are threatening to impact production of steel companies.

Tata Steel is closing down its downstream standalone units in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh in line with guidance from respective states. The main sites at Jamshedpur, Kaliganagar and Angul, however, are operational, as they are process plants and hence have permission from local authorities, said sources.

One of India's largest steel makers, Tata Steel's consolidated crude steel production capacity is at 19.6 million tonnes, with manufacturing facilities in Jamshedpur in Jharkhand, Kalinganagar and Dhenkanal in Odisha, Sahibabad in Uttar Pradesh and Khopoli in Maharashtra.

Apart from curbs on manufacturing units, the clampdown on logistics was taking a toll on operations.

A spokesperson for ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) said production was impacted because of COVID-19 issue, lower demand and curtailed logistics.

AM/NS India's main plant is at Hazira and has a downstream facility in Pune. AM/NS India has an achievable capacity of 8.5 million tonnes.

Jindal Steel & Power Managing Director V R Sharma said JSPL plants were all currently operational, however, if the situation

continued for more than a week then it might impact production. JSPL is expecting to end 2020-2021 with a production of around 8.5 million tonnes.

One of the main issues that has cropped up from the lockdown is that 80-85 per cent of trucks are not moving which is impacting despatches.

Sharma explained that on the incoming side, while raw materials like iron ore, coking coal were moved to the plant by goods trains, smaller items like consumables and spare parts, etc. were moved by trucks. Finished goods could be transported by trains but the problem is that from the train to user industry, it would have to use trucks, he added.

"We are, therefore, requesting the government to allow movement of trucks for the industry. Trucks are a part and parcel of industry. Otherwise, we could head for a major slowdown," said Sharma. "Industry is the backbone of the country. It must work," he said. Sharma suggested that the working hours could be regulated and plants could operate with 50 per cent workforce and adequate precautions.

Regulating hours, however, would mean an impact on production. "But at least minimum break-even will be achieved," Sharma said.

At one end, steel companies were facing logistics issues, at the other, demand was lower as most of the user industries were reeling from the impact of the lockdown. Many automakers had suspended production indefinitely in the wake of the virus outbreak. Construction, too, had come to a standstill, said an industry source.

Auto accounts for 15-16 per cent of steel usage while construction and infrastructure around 60 per cent.

Source: Business Standard

CANADA



Canada Opens Probe on Import of Corrosion-Resistant Steel from Turkey, UAE and Vietnam



The Canadian International Trade Tribunal has initiated an inquiry to determine whether the dumping and subsidizing of corrosion-resistant steel sheet, originating in or exported from the Republic of Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, have caused injury or retardation or are threatening to cause injury. This final injury inquiry was initiated further to a notice received from the Canada Border Services Agency stating that a preliminary determination had been made respecting the dumping and subsidizing of the above-mentioned goods.

On July 17, 2020, the Tribunal will determine whether the dumping and subsidizing have caused injury or retardation or are threatening to cause injury to the domestic industry.

Source: Steel Guru





INAUGURAL BRICS MANUFACTURING CONFERENCE TO TAKE PLACE IN MAY

An inaugural, one-day BRICS Manufacturing Conference is scheduled to take place in Johannesburg on 21 May.

Kaizer Nyatumba, Chairman of the Manufacturing Working Group of the SA Chapter of the BRICS Business Council (BBC), said the conference is born out of the need to help embattled South African manufacturers to make better use of the country's existing relations with its BRICS counterparts.

The conference – which is expected to be attended by captains of industry, policy makers and public sector representatives, amongst many other stakeholders – also aims to assist South African manufacturers take better advantage of the opportunities presented by BRICS amidst the economic slump that the economy in general and domestic manufacturers in particular currently find themselves in.

“The manufacturing industry’s contribution to the economy has been declining over the past two decades as a result of cheap imports from Asian economies, lacklustre domestic demand, rising operational and input costs and, most recently, frequent power shortages.

“It goes without saying, therefore, that domestic manufacturers should look beyond the South African borders if they are to survive and grow. It is against this backdrop that we decided to host the conference that will seek to investigate how manufacturers can leverage the BBC manufacturing working group (MWG) and discuss, among others, progress on MWG Projects and how they will advance the course of manufacturing in the country,” Mr Nyatumba said.

He said that Trade and Industry Minister Ebrahim Patel is expected to deliver the Conference's opening address, while Aspen Pharmacare Group Senior Executive and BBC SA member Stavros Nicolaou, Manufacturing Circle CEO Phillipa Rodseth, NAAMSA CEO Michael Mabasa, IDC CEO and BBC Financial Working Group Chairman TP Nchocho, Department of Trade and Industry Deputy Director-General Ilse Karg and IBM SA Chief Operations Officer Ziaad Suleman will take part in plenary sessions.

Some of the topics that will be discussed at the conference include “South African Manufacturers and the BRICS Business Council: The Manufacturing Working Group – Does It Matter? Progress Report on Priority MWG Projects”, “A Focus on Some of the Planned New Special Economic Zones”, and “How South African Business Can Leverage BRICS Membership Better”.

Mr Nyatumba encouraged manufacturing industry stakeholders to attend the conference in order to make a contribution towards hammering out the necessary solutions that will reverse the fortunes of the industry and ultimately see it out of the doldrums. ■



THE EVOLUTION OF RECRUITMENT PRACTICES IN THE WORKPLACE



The hiring process seems to have evolved significantly over the years. A quote by Herb Kelleher “Hire for attitude, train for skill” has sent a true and meaningful message that resonates with many.

This holds true in so many ways, with a perpetually changing environment, from legislative changes, to technological advancements, one needs to have the right attitude to keep abreast and the rest can be learnt.

The fourth industrial revolution (4IR), characterised by digitisation and automation, is currently occurring and impending change in the world of work, which impacts on the skills we recruit for in the steel and engineering industry

(Hirschi, 2018). Hirschi (2018) mentions that this technological revolution has a greater impact than just replacing employees with machinery; it seems to think for employees, deeming some organisational functions, at least functions that require the presence of an employee, as obsolete. A notable consequence that comes with this technological prominence within the world of work, is the division between high-skilled, low-skilled and middle-skilled jobs. (Hirschi, 2018). This division, for example, may be due to the fact that middle-skilled jobs (working with

complex machinery) can be automated and such tasks tend to follow precise and predictable procedures (Hirschi, 2018). The high-skilled and low-skilled jobs, on the other hand, are more challenging for machinery to imitate, tending to require distinctive human elements involving creative thinking and nurturing, respectively. The metals industry as categorized by Rasool (2020) has been grouped into the following top three occupation categories: Skilled craft & trades (24%), Elementary occupations (19%), and Plant and machine operators & assemblers (18%). Hirschi (2018) cautions that employers need to progressively and heedfully review and prepare future career development approaches and relook at their recruitment criteria for employees that will thrive in the 4IR times.



The metals industry as categorized by Rasool (2020) has been grouped into the following top three occupation categories: Skilled craft & trades (24%), Elementary occupations (19%), and Plant and machine operators & assemblers (18%)

There is a multitude of career theories concerned with conceptualising general person-to-organisation fits, giving guidelines to what type of individual will function more effectively in certain types of occupation. The trait-and-factor paradigm of career development are of the view that individuals have certain attributes or traits that can then be paired with a respective occupation with similar requirements that is more aligned to the individual's traits (Vondracek et al., 2019). Trait theorists, therefore, are of the view that individuals employed in organisations who align their personalities, interests and general attributes to those of individuals, are likely to perform better in their jobs (Vondracek et al., 2019).

Furthermore, there is an ongoing debate considering the role of innate traits and the influence of the external environment in portraying individual attributes. Hirschi (2018) and Vondracek et al. (2019) note that as organisations transition into the 4IR, both employers and employees need to consider, as many as possible, resources provided from automation and digitisation, which can further aid in assessing and synchronising the nature of a new world of work. Such convergence could then go a long way in helping employers and job seekers explain traits, give explanations regarding where they come from and how they

operate (Hirschi, 2018 & Vondracek et al., 2019). Rasool(2020) highlights that there is currently a mismatch between the skills that job applicants possess as opposed to the skills that are demanded by employees and, therefore, when re-skilling one must look at the need and the relevance within our metals industry.

When considering the relevant knowledge and research conducted on the trait-and-factor paradigm, it is clear that both organisations and individual employees are affected by the 4IR skills that are required to remain current, adaptable and agile. As organisations transition into the 4IR, resources acquired should be used effectively to synchronise a new world of work with a world of work that is phasing out quicker than anticipated. Convergence of organisations' and individuals' unique characteristics or traits can assist in the transition process as it will point out how objectives can be achieved more successfully. It is imperative that organisations understand their unique employees and vice versa in order to achieve organisational and personal goals.

The 4IR is causing distortion in many domains of human life and is aimed at substituting intellectual work and the human worker through its technological revolution. Nevertheless, career theories have progressed, and it is anticipated that such will assist to align individual qualities more with work environments to have appropriate person-job fit within Organisations. Employers are mandated to change and adjust accordingly, therefore needing to employ person-environment approaches to achieve goals and greater success in future. This should further unfold opportunities for individual who are inclined for and interested in occupations that are of a technological nature. The 4IR is expected to bring about predictable transferences in influence, affluence and intelligence, however, the demand of an individual to correspond with their work environment will remain unchanged.

To conclude, no matter what the changes or distortions brought about by the 4IR, the trait-and factor paradigm is regarded imperative and cornerstone to the correspondence of unique individuals in unique work environments. Rasool (2020) mentions that the survival of the metal industry is dependent on the metal industry's ability to adapt and the employees' ability to reskill themselves with skills of the future.

The workplace will also require a human touch no matter how technologically advanced the larger society is growing. There are tasks that a machine or computer driven device simply will not be able to perform and, therefore, unique traits of individuals must always be investigated and applied effectively to ensure that work environments are equipped with the appropriate and best suited candidates to perform the required job tasks. The workforce will always require physically, emotionally and intellectually equipped individuals to withstand any challenges brought by the times to come. ■



PREPARING THE M&E SECTOR FOR COVID 19: A QUICK GUIDE

Due to its inability to have vast work from home options, the metals and engineering (M&E) sector faces a number of complexities, in comparison to other sectors, in its business continuity plan when preparing for COVID 19.

The diverse M&E sector requires specific intentional actions to keep its workforce safe, in particular, vulnerable employees.

With the majority of our workforce making use of the public transport system to commute to work, the social distancing request becomes taboo, especially given the fact that the majority of staff in the industry would rather be at work than face unpaid leave, which would have a negative impact on a desperately needed income.

Business leaders in the sector are equally concerned about the continuity of their businesses as the COVID 19 cases are increasing exponentially.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act imposes a duty on the employer to ensure a safe working environment and for employees to ensure that they take care of their health and not put those around them at risk.

Here is a breakdown of implementable solutions for employers to ensure a safe disease-free environment where reasonably possible.

Leadership

Leadership needs to be resilient giving direction and ensuring transparency and constant communication during this uncertain time

Awareness

Employers should ensure transparency through education and training and/or daily campaigns (toolbox talks) to ensure their staff are trained on the current state of the COVID 19 and its implications; the stringent hygiene requirements to keep safe as well as what to do in an emergency and to ultimately eradicate the element of fear, carelessness and ignorance.

WHO offers free online courses on COVID 19. Encourage your staff to participate in the training.

Working schedule options

Our sector should consider work from home options where possible, splitting the staff in two shifts. Meetings should take place via telecomms, Skype etc and must be planned ahead.

Wash stations

Make wash/hygiene stations available across the working areas where employees can access cleaning material to clean their work stations before and after working. Sanitizers should also be made available to ensure regular cleaning of hands.

Canteen

The virus is spread through droplets through the nose, mouth and eyes area. The virus can live up to 72 hours on surfaces. Canteen should make use of disposable cutlery and crockery where possible and such waste should be carefully disposed.

Declaration Forms

Make Declaration forms available to staff to declare their possible risk exposure as well meetings with visitors. Reports should be drafted by the HR Division and reported to leadership.

The Declaration form should indicate if a person has travelled, if a person had been exposed to someone that showed

symptoms or who has COVID 19. If the individual has any symptoms, the HR division to keep the leadership team aware of possible decisions to be made pertaining to the declarations and consolidate the forms to ascertain any high risk staff or visitors.

- Livingstone Hospital in the Free State
- Tygerberg Hospital in the Western Cape

Policy- Disaster Plan

Appoint a disaster management team responsible for contingency plans as well as answering question that staff may have.

Steps to follow for Isolation

Your policy should include how an emergency will be treated, should someone show signs the individual should be isolated. Does the company have an isolation room? Exits in such an emergency should be discussed with the building / facilities manager. How will the disinfection of such an environment be handled? How will such an individual be evacuated and transported to a GP.

Medical Aid/No Medical Aid

What does the medical aid your staff is subscribed to, cover? HR to find out and communicate to staff.

Steps to follow in case of emergency

Should someone show symptoms they should be taken to a hospital's casualty or the employees personal GP. The doctor will do an assessment and write a referral to a laboratory. The test will be done at the laboratory and the employee will self-quarantine till s/he receive the results. If positive the Laboratory will advise the NICD. If the employee's case is severe s/he will be accommodated at a hospital. If the case is mild the employee will have to self-quarantine.

Hospitals

Private Hospitals are equipped and ready to deal with severe cases. The following Hospitals have been set up per province for employees that do not have healthcare insurance:

- Charlotte Maxeke, Steve Biko and Tembisa Hospitals in Gauteng
- Grey's Hospital in KwaZulu Natal
- Klerksdorp Hospital in the North-West
- Kimberley Hospital in the Northern Cape
- Pelonomi Hospital in the Free State

Breathalyzers

Use disposable breathalyzers – and dispose in line with medical waste requirements. Do random breathalyzer tests in cases where intoxicating substance use is suspected.

Biometrics

Contact your Biometrics provider to enquire about using non-tap cards for access and not fingers or hands. If not possible. Ensure sanitizers are used before and after clocking.

Thermal Scanners

Use Thermal scanners to scan for individuals with high temperatures, get them tested if higher than (37,3 degrees)- Thermal scanners cannot detect people who are infected, but not yet sick (asymptomatic between 2-10 days)

Fake News

Not all news is real and at this time we are inundated with fake and sensational news. It is advisable for your committee handling the process to ensure they filter the information and only use information directly from WHO, NICD, the official South Africa Health Department and Department of Employment and Labour.

Contact Numbers

National Institute for Communicable Diseases
011 386 6400
Health Department Coronavirus Support
060 012 3456

Organizations have an obligation to allay fears to keep staff informed and panic and irrational behavior at bay.

Contracts - Insurance

Businesses should review the current terms of their insurance policies to check if the impact of the coronavirus is covered, particularly around business interruption and the force majeure clause. Does the coronavirus trigger the majeure clause, if performance in a commercial contract have become impossible? Also check travel cancellation insurance.

2020 WAGE NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

The format and structure of the negotiations on the 2020 Main Agreement wages and conditions of employment has begun to take shape. Following nominations submitted by the various Associations, the SEIFSA Council has elected a Main Agreement Negotiating (MAN) Team.



The Team, which comprises 30 senior employer representatives, have been nominated by the SEIFSA affiliated Associations. It will receive its mandate from the SEIFSA Council and is duty-bound to report back on progress to the Council as the negotiating process unfolds.

Commenting on the MAN Team, SEIFSA Operations Director and Chief Negotiator Lucio Trentini said the Team members, who are all nominated by Associations, boast many years' experience within the wage negotiations arena and will, without doubt, be a tremendous asset and will add enormous value to the process.

Mr Trentini said a concept paper has also been prepared and circulated to member Associations for input. This will, ultimately be returned to the SEIFSA Council for formal mandating. At the appropriate time, Mr Trentini says the Main Agreement Negotiating Team will nominate a smaller negotiating team to close the deal.

At the time of the interview, Mr Trentini expected the MAN Team to start informal engagements with key trade union parties and other interested and willing employer bodies outside of the broad SEIFSA constituency; as well as to approach the MEIBC

to suggest that it requests the CCMA to avail a team of, at least, two Senior Commissioners to facilitate the negotiation process from commencement to eventual settlement.

In addition, SEIFSA is in the process of hosting a series of free workshops around the country for members to be addressed on the state of the industry as well as what is to be expected during this year's negotiations. The workshops are open to both SEIFSA members and non-members. Regrettably due to the coronavirus, travelling has become a challenge and whilst a series of workshops have to date successfully been held in Gauteng, workshops in KZN, Cape Town and the Eastern Cape have had to be cancelled.

Based on previous wage negotiation experience, Mr Trentini expect the following going forward.

MARCH:

- Deepen and broaden the engagement process with all key players;
- Working with the Main Agreement Negotiating Team, formulate the broad Framework informed by key business

drivers against which all trade union demands will be considered;

- Associations to finalize their tentative mandated positions.

APRIL:

- Continue with on-going engagements with interested stakeholders;
- Receive mandated inputs from the Associations for incorporation into a draft Employer Position;
- Finalize the document with a view to it being mandated by the SEIFSA Council at a Special SEIFSA Council sitting in April; and
- Once mandated, submit the document for the attention of the MEIBC, copying all the Parties and thereby formally opening the negotiation process between the Parties.

MAY:

- At the May MEIBC MANCO Meeting, agree on the deadline date for the receipt of the various trade unions' demands and schedule the first series of Main Agreement Negotiation meeting dates to be facilitated by the CCMA.

SET ASIDE MAY AND JUNE AND AIM TO CONCLUDE NEGOTIATIONS BY 30 JUNE 2020

- From April to the end of June 2020, the SEIFSA Council will convene at least twice per month;
- Anticipate a number of additional off-line working group meetings taking place between the parties as the process unfolds;
- Anticipate, plan and be prepared for possible industrial action;
- Ensure that the Negotiating Team is properly mandated throughout the process;
- Keep the SEIFSA Council, Associations, affiliated member companies and the broader industry apprised and updated on all developments throughout the process.

In conclusion, Mr Trentini said we have every intention of working hard to ensure that this year's negotiations result in a realistic settlement that is informed by the current state of our economy and our sector, preferably without us first having to go through a round of industrial action. However, since negotiations are not a one-sided process, the final outcome of the process will depend on the mandate given to us and the position of our labour partners. ■



6 Steps to apply for 'business operating' exemptions during lockdown period

Several categories of business are able to remain open during the lockdown period, in order to provide crucial and essential products and services to South Africans.

This is how business-owners and management can apply for exemptions, and remain operational during the lock down.

1. Please send your e-mail/letter to Dr. Umeesha Naidoo – Acting Chief Director of Primary Minerals Processing (UNaidoo@thedti.gov.za).
2. Reason for the Request
3. Products Produced
4. Number of People required
5. Measures to be put in place (eg. Transport)
6. Location of the plant

Contact Acting Chief Director of Primary Minerals Processing:

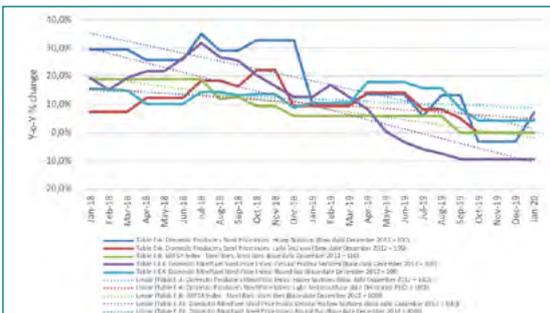
UNaidoo@thedti.gov.za

REVIEW OF PRICES OF STEEL, CONSTRUCTION AND ELECTRICAL CABLE MANUFACTURING MATERIALS

The year 2019 was really tough for businesses and the same pattern is set to continue into 2020, as business struggle to remain sustainable due to – amongst other factors – rising input prices.

Figures 1A and 1B below capture the general movement in the prices of selected steel products over a 25-month period between January 2018 and January 2020. The selected prices of steel variables analysed in figure 1A are heavy sections, light sections, steel bars, circular hollow sections and round bar.

Figure 1A: Analysis of selected domestic steel prices



The figure above shows that overall, the selling price of all five selected steel components (heavy sections, light sections,

steel bars, circular hollow sections and round bar) exhibited a volatile and generally downward sloping trend between January 2018 and January 2020. Circular hollow sections were the worst performing component over the selected timeframe, decreasing from 19.4 percent year-on-year in January 2018 to -9.4 percent in January 2020.

Alternatively, the graph below captures the general movement in the prices of selected speciality steel alloy products over a 25-month period between January 2018 and January 2020.

Figure 1B: Analysis of selected speciality steel prices

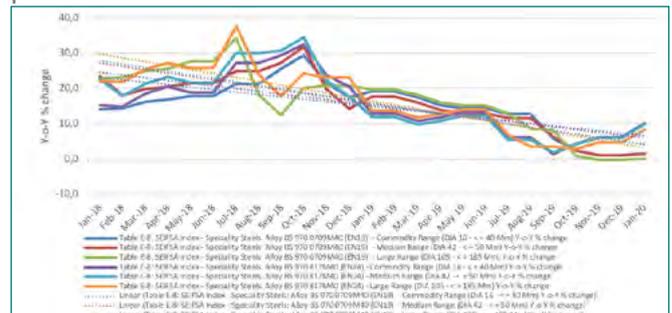




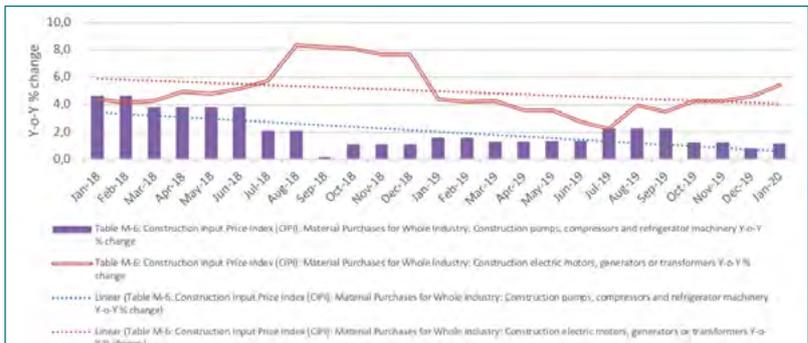
Figure 2A: Analysis of selected construction inputs prices



The figure illustrates that the overall input costs of bars and rods of iron and steel was the best performing index, decreasing to -1,3 percent in January 2020 from 10.9 percent in January 2018. Input prices of construction plastic pipes, tubes and fittings exhibited an increasing trend and was the worst performing construction input increasing from -7.2 percent from January 2018 to 2.4 percent in January 2020.

Alternatively, Figure 2B below captures the general movement in the selected input prices of construction pumps, compressors and refrigerator machinery and construction electric motors, generators or transformers.

Figure 2B: Additional analysis of selected construction inputs prices



The figure illustrates that, while the overall input costs of both construction pumps, compressors and refrigerator machinery and construction electric motors, generators or transformers, generally trended downward between January 2018 and January 2020, the prices of the two components generally moved in opposite directions, from July 2019.

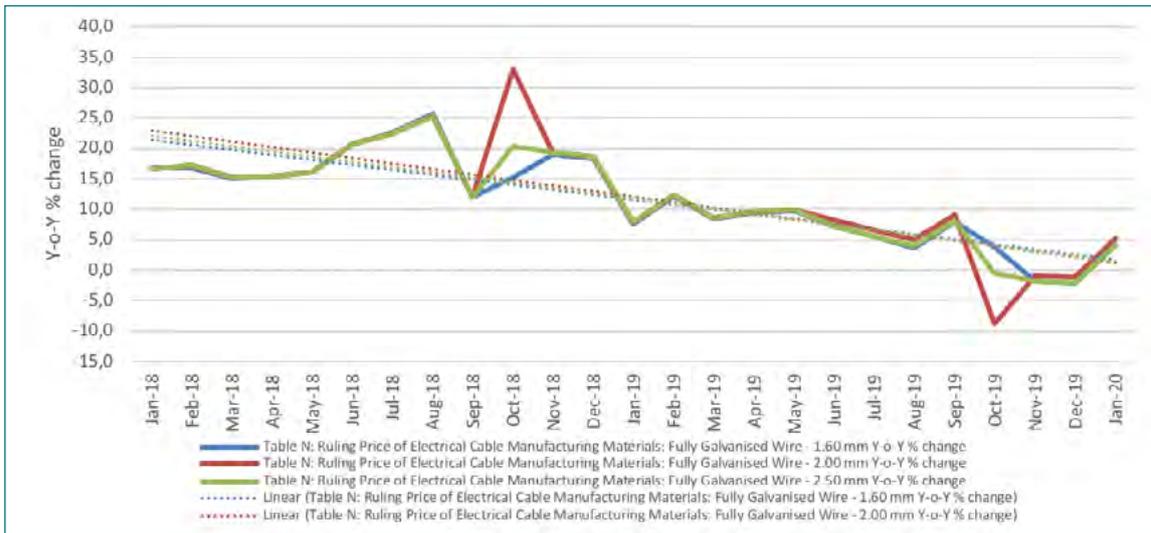
Figure 3 below captures the general movement in the prices of selected electrical cable manufacturing inputs over a 25-month period between January 2018 and January 2020. The selected prices of electrical cable manufacturing inputs variables analysed are fully Galvanised Wire – 1.60 mm, 2.00 mm and 2.50mm.

The figure shows that overall, the selling price of all six speciality steel components (EN 19 and EN24 – Commodity, Medium and Large ranges) exhibited a volatile and generally downward sloping trend between January 2018 and January 2020. Specifically, the EN24 Large range index decreased from 22.1 percent year-on-year in January 2018 to 8.2 percent in January 2020.

Figure 2A and 2B captures the general movements in the prices of selected construction inputs over a 25-month period between January 2018 and January 2020. The selected prices of construction inputs variables analysed are construction pipes, tubes and fittings, construction plastic pipes, tubes and fittings, bars and rods of iron or steel, wire of iron or steel, electrical cable, construction pumps, compressors and refrigerator machinery, construction electric motors, generators or transformers.

Figure 3: Analysis of selected electrical cable manufacturing inputs prices

importing companies, invariably leading to a decrease in prices. However, the price of imported intermediary inputs increased with a generally weaker exchange rate, thereby also increasing



The figure above illustrates a volatile and generally downward sloping trend for all three components (fully galvanised wire 1.60mm, 2.00mm and 2.50mm) during the period under observation. Moreover, the volatility in the selling price inflation of fully galvanised wire 2.00 was more pronounced in October 2018 (32.9 percent) and in October 2019 (-8.9 percent).

the price of a specific input or material.

Generally, the falling international steel prices generally placed a downward drag on domestic steel prices. This was exacerbated by the slowdown in construction projects.

The unpredictability in domestic steel prices and in various construction and electrical cable manufacturing prices can, to a large extent, be ascribed to the volatility in the exchange rate. A generally stronger exchange rate contributes towards a decrease in the cost of imported intermediary inputs of net

The volatile movements in the prices of domestic steel prices, construction and electrical cable manufacturing inputs together with higher trending input costs underpinned by increasing electricity costs and fuel prices, affected the bottom line of companies who were forced to sell at increasing costs and diminishing returns. ■



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Theory and Calculation of Contract Price Adjustment

Benefits of using SEIFSA PIPS in a Contract Price Adjustment

By using SEIFSA PIPS, a buyer in a contract can be certain that market-related increases are paid out to suppliers (as determined by a Contract Price Adjustment calculation), ensuring the sustainability or improvement of organisation profitability.

Companies/trading partners can maximise potential benefits from their existing or new contracts by using the SEIFSA PIPS.

Municipalities, SOEs and government departments in South Africa have done exactly that – i.e. make use of SEIFSA PIPS in their CPA. Contact us for a fair quote.

With SEIFSA by your side, you will never walk alone.

About SEIFSA

The Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of Southern Africa (SEIFSA), a national employer federation in the metals and engineering sector, is an expert in monitoring domestic price movements and selected international prices. We develop, track and update over 240 price indices on a regular basis.

Inflation, exchange rate volatility and unpredictable input cost fluctuations have the potential of eroding or reducing margin/gains from existing contracts signed by one party with another. It is, therefore, important to safeguard against project costs overruns by periodically reviewing and adjusting your contracts by using the SEIFSA price indices.

NOTE: The Theory and Calculation of Contract Price Adjustment is now offered digitally. Embracing the 4th Industrial Revolution.



CONTACT:
Natalie Fourie : natalie@seifsa.co.za
0861 SEIFSA



IMPENDING ECONOMIC CHALLENGES FROM THE CORONAVIRUS TO CONSTRICT AFRICA'S GROWTH BY AT LEAST ONE PERCENTAGE



We have all been following, with keen interest, the latest developments around the coronavirus which was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on 11 March 2020. According to the WHO, a pandemic is defined as the “worldwide spread” of a new disease. Whereas, an outbreak is the occurrence of disease cases in excess of what’s normally expected and an epidemic is more than a normal number of cases of an illness, specific health-related behavior or other health-related events in a community or region.

Most of us have watched and read how the virus has found a foothold on every continent except for Antarctica, causing deaths to thousands. Most of us have also monitored the slow, then quick rate of coronavirus spread across Africa over the last fortnight, generally causing panic amongst Africans. The concerns about the potential outside impact of a viral outbreak simultaneously hitting multiple African countries are completely justified.

Even the best prepared African countries - several have had recent experience with viral outbreaks including Ebola - may still struggle because of what the WHO identifies as "fragile health systems" and weak infrastructure. Moreover, the continent is still struggling to grapple with pressing issues such as unemployment, poverty and inequality

As this edition of SEIFSA News went to press, well over a 1,000 people had been infected with the virus across nearly 40 African countries. The best we can hope for is that the spread does not wreak the type of havoc already seen in countries like China, Italy, Germany, France, the US or the UK.



The same concerns are applicable to South Africa including its Metals and Engineering sector, which depends a lot on the Chinese market for exports of Iron and Steel products or articles of Iron and Steel.

MAJOR ECONOMIC SHOCK ON AFRICA, INCLUDING THE METALS AND ENGINEERING SECTOR

However, even if Africa somehow avoided the worst of the human toll, it is going to be near impossible to avoid a major economic shock. Not only are African countries fully integrated into the global economy but many states are often playing a weak hand as exporters of commodities whose prices have been rapidly falling. For African countries importing goods, their currencies are also rapidly devaluating against the dollar in an uncertain global economy, as investors re-channel their investments to deal with problems at home. Worryingly, several African countries have both the challenge of dealing with the virus and facing declining investments, as international investors - faced by widely imposed travel bans - start to turn away from Africa to worry about the problems at home.

According to the Brookings Institution's Africa Growth Initiative, "the pullback from African markets as well as a projected decline in export revenues has led to depreciations of local currencies." The institution further argues that the exchange rate depreciations will push up local inflation and trigger monetary policy and financial tightening, further rendering the repayments on the rising dollar debts of most African countries even more difficult to cover.

The same concerns are applicable to South Africa including its metals and engineering sector, which depends a lot on the Chinese market for exports of Iron and Steel products or articles of Iron and Steel. Although it is too soon to effectively quantify the negative impact of the coronavirus, preliminary export data shows that the virus has evidently impacted negatively on business activity, existing contracts and demand for the intermediate manufactured goods of the metals and engineering cluster of industries, with exports under HS code 72 and 73, significantly decreasing by 100 000 tons from November 2019 to January 2020.

The impending economic downturn has also led to the UN Economic Commission for Africa revising the continent's growth forecast downward to 1.8% from a previous estimate of 3.2% due to, among other things, the disruption of global supply chains and a crash in oil prices - from ongoing price war - that will cost up to \$65 billion in export revenues.

Brookings Institute also lowered its forecast for Sub-Saharan Africa's GDP growth in 2020 to between 1.5% and 2.5% from its previous forecast of 3.6% or the World Bank's forecast of 2.9%. The concern is that even if African governments are quick to contain the spread of the virus and the volatility in global conditions stabilise, the best-case-scenario will see Africa's growth declining by, at least, one percentage point, while the worst-case-scenario - of long-lasting pandemic and slow global economic recovery - will see a decline of at least two percentage points. ■

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Our training ensures that people become technically skilled individuals with the ability to create products of high quality for the industry.



1 April

29 June

21 Sept

2020
Intake
Dates

The training offered encompasses not only apprentice training but also training and development for the following training interventions:

- Leaverships
- Skills programmes
- Short courses
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Trade proficiency assessment services
- Trade testing
- Assessments
- ATRAMI (Artisan Training and Recognition Agreement for the Metal Industry)
- Continuous upskilling of artisans



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HR, MANAGERS AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROS HAVE A **DUTY TO COMPEL COMPANIES TO UPSKIL WORKERS**

“It’s not the product – but the Intellectual Property (IP) that provides the long-term value.”

That is the message recently shared by Economist Martyn Davies at a recent SEIFSA event where he was a Guest Speaker. Dr Davies used the Apple i-Phone to demonstrate that “Designed in California” is much more powerful than “Made in China” – as he quoted a study that confirms that for every “i-Phone” made, only US\$3.50 stays in China, after manufacturing – the rest flows to parent company Apple in the United States.

The real “China” lesson is not the dollar value of China manufacturing the i-phone, nor the street-level employment capability it creates, but the lesson is the retention and leveraging of knowledge by companies such as Foxconn, which ends up building companies such as Huawei. Manufacturing is always Stage 1; Integration is Stage 2, and Entrepreneurship and Industrialization are Stage 3. Manufacturing, therefore, is always the catalyst. As Dr Davies pointed out, there is nothing like manufacturing that gives an economy a long-term and wide-reaching impact within a country trying to free itself from the chains of poverty and unemployment.

Just as the phrase “it’s the economy, stupid” became part of the lexicon in the nineties, the phrase “it’s the IP, stupid” should also become part of strategy, both at policy level and company level, in preparation for the fourth industrial revolution (4IR).

IP build skills, businesses and entrepreneurs, which ultimately results in jobs creation because IP is “baked in” to the product itself. The process of Intellectual Property being “baked” into the economy starts with those charged with directing skills at companies. Continuing a training regime is a decision – made by people. Leaders must be persuaded, even though that decision may not be popular at the time. It requires Human Resources Directors to speak “truth to power”.

The truth: the context and history are clear – companies that curtail training in times of difficulty find it difficult to retain their competitive advantage. In industry, the lack of training, in difficult times, will haunt companies when the economic landscape changes for the better. Decisions to delay or defer training erode the training eco-system itself. Many private

training companies feel the strain and eventually close their doors. This capability takes time to rebuild.

For years, Human Resources was tarred with the “un-strategic” tag and consequently the reputation as being a “nice-to-have” or a “compliance” position. As the 4IR makes its presence felt, this can simple no longer be the case. HR leaders must act with courage and claim their space around the Boardroom table – especially on the subject of skills development.

SEIFSA encourages companies which are members of its 21 affiliated employer Associations, as well as the HR Directors and those responsible for skills development, to “take the lead” and “become the heroes” on the skills development arena. The facts are clear: statistics show that South Africa has a shortfall of about 40 000 qualified artisans when measured against the annual production rate of 13 000 qualified artisans. According to the 2014 Development Indicators Report, artisans completing vocational training reached an average of 18 000. The skills shortage is a key obstacle to economic growth, job creation and business expansion. The SEIFSA Training Centre is but one of the Artisan Training Centres in South Africa that will help solve this crisis.

SEIFSA calls on its affiliated Associations and members companies to become the heroes of the National Skills Accord by aligning their business practices to the goals set out by government, namely:

1. Expanding the level of training, using existing facilities to capacity
2. (The SEIFSA Training Centre can accommodate 250 students daily);
3. Making internships and placement opportunities available in workplaces;
4. Setting guidelines of ratios of trainees to artisans, across technical vocations, in order to improve the level of training, as outlined in the relevant merSETA Policy;
5. Improving the funding of training and the use of funds available for training and incentives to companies to train;
6. Setting annual targets for training in state-owned enterprises;
7. Improving SETA governance and financial management, as well as stakeholder involvement;
8. Aligning training to the New Growth Path, the New Development Plan and improving Sector Skill Plans; and
9. Improving the role and performance of Further Education and Training (FET) colleges.





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Become an Artisan



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UNDERSTANDING CORONAVIRUS – AND SAFETY AWARENESS

Business executives, business owners, the workforce, parents and governments all over the world are all unseated and concerned about the recent outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID – 19).

The epicentre of the virus has been on lockdown, countries have quarantined people for 14 days, games have been played in empty stadiums, events have been postponed due to fears of spreading the virus. All health organisations in the world are putting their heads together to hammer out solutions that would fight and ultimately eradicate the COVID – 19.

We are all anxious and have questions about how contagious the virus is and whether children and the workforce are at risk. This has led to misinformation cropping up across the internet and spreading myths about the virus.

Health experts from China; Europe; America and Africa including UNICEF experts have provided facts about the virus and the best ways to manage it while creating awareness.

SIX THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

1. The Coronavirus is spread THROUGH Direct Contact

The virus is transmitted through direct contact with respiratory droplets from an infected person and by touching surfaces that are contaminated.

People must maintain at least a meter of distance between themselves and people who are coughing, sneezing and have a fever.

2. The Symptoms

Symptoms of coronavirus can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia or breathing difficulties. More rarely. The disease can be fatal but that's mainly among older people with pre – existing conditions

3. Precautions YOU CAN TAKE

- Wash your hands frequently using soap and water or an alcohol based hand rub.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Use your elbow or use a tissue then throw it in the bin immediately after – “use of Handkerchief is not encouraged”

4. Do Masks Prevent Coronavirus?

Masks do not really prevent it. If you don't have any symptoms, there is no need to wear a mask.

Handwashing is actually more important. if you are coughing or sneezing, it is advised that you wear a medical mask to help protect others.

5. Can Pregnant women pass on the virus?

For now , there isn't enough evidence to support whether the virus is transmitted from a mother to her baby during pregnancy or what impact this might have on the baby

6. Are there MEDICINES to treat the virus?

To date , there is no specific medicine to prevent or treat the new coronavirus.

THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO: PRACTICE BASIC HYGIENE

As we leave in a Global Village and where we do business in every corner of the Globe. For companies and organisations to execute and drive their business they are propelled to travel wide, all personnel who travel on business take note :

- While abroad, you may have come in contact with the novel coronavirus. For the next 14 days, the Public Health Agency of Canada asks that you:

- monitor your health for fever, cough and difficulty breathing; and,
- avoid places where you cannot easily separate yourself from others if you become ill.
- To further protect those around you, wash your hands often and cover your mouth and nose with your arm when coughing or sneezing.

care professional or the public health authority in the province or territory where you are located. Describe your symptoms and travel history. They will provide advice on what you should do.

“COVER YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE WHEN COUGHING OR SNEEZING PREFERABLY WITH A TISSUE. DISPOSE IT RIGHT AWAY AND WASH YOUR HANDS TO PREVENT SPREAD OF THE VIRUS”

If you start having symptoms of COVID-19, isolate yourself from others as quickly as possible. Immediately call a health

HOW ISO 9001 BENEFITS OUR BUSINESSES



Businesses revolve, look at the Life Cycle of a butterfly, it is truly amazing.

BUTTERFLIES HAVE FOUR LIFE STAGES:

- The egg
- The larva (caterpillar)
- The pupa (chrysalis)
- The adult butterfly

Each of the four stages are very unique to individual species of the butterflies. So, companies also evolve like butterflies and for them to reach the adult stage or maintain that status, they need ISO certification and finally reach that core status.

A certified Quality Management System (QMS) promotes good business. By embracing ISO 9001, your organization -

- minimizes risk,
- locks in a culture of assessment and improvement,
- drives profitability.

Diverse ranges of organizations have gained significant benefits from ISO 9001, ranging from higher customer satisfaction and retention to better quality products and improved productivity.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) first published ISO 9001 in 1987. The current version of ISO 9001, ISO 9001:2015, was released in September 2015 in response to dramatic changes in technology, business diversity, and global commerce.

ISO 9001 sets out quality management standards for business to ensure they operate correctly, safely and efficiently. These standards are internationally recognized, and the process

to become ISO 9001 compliant is complex, but well worth the effort.

WHAT IS A QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (QMS)?

ASQ defines a quality management system as “a formalized system that documents processes, procedures, and responsibilities for achieving quality policies and objectives. A QMS helps coordinate and direct an organization’s activities to meet customer and regulatory requirements and improve its effectiveness and efficiency on a continuous basis.”

ISO 9001 is built on the idea of continual improvement. It is flexible enough for use by many different types of organization, so does not specify what the objectives relating to quality or meeting customer needs should be. Instead, it requires organizations to define these objectives themselves and continually improve their processes in order to reach them.

A good quality management system can bring benefits to organizations of all sizes and all sectors, from the small manufacturer of bicycle parts to a hospital employing 5 000 people.

According to the ISO publication entitled Reaping the benefits of ISO 9001, Implementing a quality management system will help you:

- Assess the overall context of your organization to define who is affected by your work and what they expect from you. This will enable you to clearly state your objectives and identify new business opportunities.
- Put your customers first, making sure you consistently meet their needs and enhance their satisfaction. This can lead to repeat custom, new clients and increased business for your organization.
- Work in a more efficient way as all your processes will be aligned and understood by everyone in the business or organization. This increases productivity and efficiency, bringing internal costs down.
- Meet the necessary statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Expand into new markets, as some sectors and clients require ISO 9001 before doing business. Identify and address the risks associated with your organization.

Achieving ISO 9001 Compliance

ISO 9001 compliance ensures that our business can run according to the highest level of efficiency, safety, and productivity. Systems are generally set in place that will help you to manage procedures within the business and to ensure best practice methodology. The advantages of meeting with the standards and requirements of ISO 9001 include:

- Senior managers are able to manage the business more effectively.
- Responsibility areas across the organization are set out and can be tracked.
- Committing to international quality standards communicates to employees that quality is non-negotiable, and fosters a culture of quality within the organization.
- Saving time on various daily tasks, making the business more efficient.
- Highlighting deficiencies within the business so that action can be taken.
- Easily conduct ongoing assessment and reporting on systems and processes.
- Correct quality assurance will ensure fewer products will be returned.
- Independent and ongoing audits can ensure that your business is operating at its best at all times. This can also assist with customers feeling more confident about investing in your products.

Conclusion

Business excellence is a market differentiator. Offering unbeaten quality gives you a competitive edge, and leads to better, more profitable business. Many industries impose various standards and expectations on manufacturers and producers and for good reason – it streamlines the best and ensures that product quality becomes a necessity and not something that can fall by the wayside. By investing in an ISO 9001 quality management system we can ensure that our company consistently operates at its highest potential.

THE BENEFITS OF GOOD QUALITY

- Increased customer value
- Increased customer satisfaction
- Increased customer loyalty
- Enhanced repeat business
- Enhanced reputation of the organization
- Expanded customer base
- Increased revenue and market share

LEADING THE WAY IN OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES AND DISEASES

Our clients work in one of the most important industries that drive the country's economy while ensuring that many families who depend on it can eat and afford basic needs. We are also aware of how much they love and care for their work and how they go out of their way to perform with the highest standard of safety to avoid injuries. However, accidents can happen even where all the precautions have been adhered to. So, what will happen should a worker get injuries that are detrimental to their ability to do their job and earn further income? What happens to their families?

That is where we come in. Rand Mutual (RMA) is the administrator of choice for injury on duty claims in South Africa for the mining, iron, steel, metal and related industries. For the past 124 years, we have made sure that any worker who gets injured while at work can receive payments to cover medical costs, disabilities, pensions and ongoing income in case of death.

This is in terms of the compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA) 130 of 1993 as amended under license from the Minister of Labour.

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