

MEDIA STATEMENT

Attention: News Editors

For immediate release: 27 March 2020

RAILWAY SAFETY REGULATOR'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

The Railway Safety Regulator (RSR) closed its offices across the country in response to the 21-day lockdown pronounced by President Cyril Ramaphosa on 23 March 2020. The RSR is, however, providing continued support to operators who are operational during this period. Staff members of the Regulator are working remotely and are accessible through e-mail correspondence and mobile phones.

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Minister of Transport, Mr Fikile Mbalula, signed *The Railway COVID-19 Preventative Measures Directive* on 25 March, stipulating that all operators should develop and implement COVID-19 Management Plans and submit the same to the Regulator within 72 hours of the date of publication. This Directive has a particular emphasis on operators who will be operating during the lockdown and prohibits operations by all private operators, unless if classified as an essential service.

To date, the Regulator has received some Management Plans and will closely monitor the implementation of these plans. If deemed necessary, the Regulator will conduct onsite verifications for compliance with the requirements of the Directive. This Directive has a particular emphasis on operators who will be operating during the lockdown.

Railway operators functioning during the lockdown are expected to continue reporting railway safety occurrences to the Regulator as stipulated in Section 37 of the RSR Act. The Regulator's Contact Centre remains operational to receive such reports - all major occurrences must be reported immediately for the Regulator to dispatch its Inspectorate to occurrence sites where onsite investigations are required.

ENDS

HEAD OFFICE (MIDRAND): +27 10 495 5291, Building 4, Waterfall Point Office Park, Cnr Waterfall and Woodmead Drive, Waterfall City, Midrand, 1685, SOUTH AFRICA
CENTRAL REGION: +27 87 284 6591, Building 2, Waterfall Point Office Park, Cnr Waterfall and Woodmead Drive, Waterfall City, Midrand, 1685, SOUTH AFRICA
COASTAL REGION: +27 21 493 1718, Long Street Building, 2 Long Street 11th Floor, Cape Town, 8000, SOUTH AFRICA
EASTERN REGION: +31 492 7289, Embassy Building (22nd Floor), 199 Anton Lembede Street, Durban, 4000, SOUTH AFRICA

Dr Nomusa Zethu Qunta (Chairperson), Mr Boy Johannes Nobunga (Deputy Chairperson), Ms Tshepo Kgare (Acting CEO), Mr Christiaan Johan de Vos, Major-General Michael Monashi Motlhalala, Ms Hilda Thamaga Thopola, Major-General Willem Adriaan Venter, Ms Ntombizine Mbiza, Mr Andre Harrison, Mr Tibor Szana, Ms Irene Nthulane, Mr Jan-David de Villiers

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Madelein Williams, Executive Manager: Media and Communications

Mobile: 072 347 0190, Email: madeleinw@rsr.org.za

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Railway Safety Regulator (RSR) was established in terms of the National Railway Safety Regulator Act No 16 of 2002 (as amended) to oversee and promote safe railway operations through appropriate support, monitoring and enforcement, guided by an enabling regulatory framework. In the interest of rail safety, RSR also collects and disseminates information relating to safe railway operations to the public by means of rail safety awareness campaigns.

THE RSR'S MANDATE IS TO:

- Oversee safety in railway transport, while operators remain responsible for managing the safety of their operations.
- Develop an appropriate regulatory framework through the development of regulations and standards for safe railway operations.
- Monitor and ensure safety compliance by conducting audits, inspections and occurrence investigations.
- Collect and disseminate information relating to safe railway operations.
- Promote the harmonisation of the railway safety regime of South Africa with Southern African Development Community (SADC) railway operations.
- Promote improved safety performance in order to promote the use of rail.

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