

COVID-19 Announcement to Stakeholders

Valued Stakeholder,

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in many countries across the world, and positive cases in South Africa, the chairman of The Ombudsman of Short-term Insurance, the Ombudsman and management of OSTI would like to share our response on the impact of COVID-19 on our business and plans ahead.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, we have been monitoring developments from all perspectives and will continue to do so in the best interests of our business and staff. As part of our legislated obligations towards the health & safety of our staff, and business continuity, we have introduced certain COVID-19 precautionary measures to ensure that operations will not be affected. We remain dedicated to preserving the health and safety of our staff, and all external stakeholders.

As a responsible business, we strive to work with our stakeholders, staff and regulatory bodies – in an ethical, fair and just manner. We recognise that sustainability stretches across economic environments and social spheres. Our framework for ethical business conduct ensures that we are fully compliant with all Government guidelines and regulations. We will mitigate any risk, and institute all government directed procedures to ensure we remain compliant.

We want to inform you of the steps that we are taking that may have an impact on the manner in which we deliver our services during this period of crisis.

First and foremost, we are working to ensure the health and well-being of all our employees. We have requested our staff to keep abreast of all developments around this pandemic and follow all guidelines and protocols, including those published by the World Health Organisation. Notices are issued to our staff on a regular basis and the more important notices are posted on the notice board to which our staff have access.

OSTI has a board meeting on 31 March 2020. We are hoping to establish a COVID-19 Response Committee that will meet regularly and report to the board on the impact of the crisis on the business activities of OSTI. That being said, the chairman of the board is already in regular contact with management to assess the position, taking into account the fluidity of the crisis and the fast-moving parts that require regular assessment, direction and action.

This communication is intended to share with you some of the actions already implemented to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 across the business operations of OSTI:



Work-from-home Strategy: We have implemented the necessary processes to enable our staff to work from home to minimise individual contact and possibilities of cross-contamination.

During the coming weeks and for an unknown period at this stage, most of our staff will have commenced working from home rather than from our offices. We have invested a great deal in technology that should allow us to ensure operational business continuity with minimal disruption and inconvenience to our complainants and stakeholders.

Electronic Meetings and Communications: We have cancelled all planned physical meetings with all stakeholders until further notice. Meetings will be held telephonically or via Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp Video or other video-enabled meeting software.

In order to minimise costs, and ensure that cost savings are applied toward enabling our staff to be safe and healthy, and work remotely, we have cancelled all functions and other engagements planned over the next 3 to 4 months.

Should you not know how to set up such meetings, our staff will be able to set up the meetings for you, so that all that you will need to do (provided you have internet connectivity at the time) is click on a link to access the video meeting. In-person meetings will only be held by exception and at the discretion of our staff member. We ask for your patience and understanding should any requests for in-person meetings not be agreed to.

Reception: Our main reception area will continue to be attended (only by a receptionist) for urgent deliveries and phone calls, but we do ask that everyone respect the decision to limit personal contact and only visit the building as a last resort.

All telephone numbers will continue to work and we will be able to transfer calls to all our staff members at their respective homes as if they were internal call transfers.

We urge everyone to keep, and stay healthy during this period, and take every, and necessary, precaution and stay safe.

If you have any questions or feedback regarding our operations or business query during this period, please contact Edite Teixeira-Mckinon on Edite@osti.co.za.

Updates on the operations of OSTI will be issued as and when necessary.

All the best,

Haroon, Ron and Edite

