

Press release from Business for South Africa Public Health Workgroup  
30 March 2020

## **URGENT CALL FOR BUSINESSES TO DIVERT PPE INVENTORIES TO NATIONAL HEALTHCARE SECTOR**

**Business for SA's Public Health Workgroup is calling on all companies, especially those in lockdown, to urgently divert their stocks of personal protective equipment (PPE) for use in the national healthcare sector. The PPE is critically needed to protect frontline doctors and healthcare workers, and to keep them healthy in their fight against the pandemic.**

**Contact:** [Covid19supplies@businessresponsecovid19.co.za](mailto:Covid19supplies@businessresponsecovid19.co.za)

### **List of PPE required:**

- Masks (N95 Grade)
- Surgical masks
- Latex-free gloves (do not need to be sterile); preferably nitrile
- Plastic aprons
- Visors and goggles for eye protection
- Gowns and suits
- Overshoes

Stavros Nicolaou, who leads the Public Health Workgroup for Business for South Africa says: "As we head deeper into the COVID-19 crisis, we are going to need all the masks, gloves and protective equipment we can source to ensure the healthcare sector has a ready and ongoing supply. We appeal to all South African businesses, whether large or small, to unlock their stocks in the best national interest.

"Critical to turning the tide against the COVID-19 pandemic is ensuring that our frontline doctors and healthcare workers are protected from the virus, to ensure South Africa's most effective response. This effort will go a long way in keeping them productive in the clinical setting."

Since January, stocks of PPE have been severely impacted by a global need for products to address the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been exacerbated by export restrictions, disruptions of logistics systems and escalating costs.

The Business for South Africa Public Health Workgroup is working closely with Government's PPE Division to consolidate all national health requirements in respect of PPE. Besides this urgent call to companies, the workgroup is driving efforts to boost local manufacturing and production where possible, and also expanding the sourcing from global suppliers. Securing stocks from companies that already have these available, especially those that are not currently using them, will provide much needed immediate assistance.

Throughout South Africa, there are storerooms of PPE that could be used as part of the emergency response. This includes stocks that are held by companies in the manufacturing, forestry and agriculture, construction, mills, spray painting, mining and signwriting industries, amongst others.

"In almost every sector, there are companies that have stocks of protective gear that they issue to employees to protect them in the workplace. These are the stocks that are urgently required to be fed into the national health efforts to combat and manage the spread of COVID-19," says Nicolaou.

We urge all company owners, store keepers, supervisors, operators, and especially occupational health and HSE managers, who have access to PPE stocks, to contact us with the following information:

- What stocks do you have?
- How many units of each?
- Which manufacturer's brand?
- Where are they (i.e. where in SA)?
- Are they sterile or non-sterile? (we will sterilise).

Please send the information to the following contact: [Covid19supplies@businessresponsecovid19.co.za](mailto:Covid19supplies@businessresponsecovid19.co.za)

Once we receive your critical information, we will revert back to you with the necessary logistical arrangements.

Ends

For more information / interviews:

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#### **About Business for South Africa:**

**SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESS COLLABORATES TO REDUCE COVID-19 RISKS AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS**  
As the Coronavirus continues to impact South African businesses, various bodies and organisations have mobilised and built a capability that is driving a coordinated, proactive approach to limit the economic, social and health impacts of COVID-19 on South Africa. This capability is being provided by various institutions, including Business Unity South Africa (BUSA), and its representative organisations and corporate members, as well as the Black Business Council, and other companies and business bodies.

#### **About Business for South Africa Public Health Workgroup:**

The Business for SA Public Health Workgroup's core mandate is to support the national response, including Government and the private sector's public health efforts, in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. The workstream is chaired by Stavros Nicolaou and involves a large number of leaders from the healthcare and broader business sectors, many of whom are working full time on this issue.

Its key priorities include: assisting in scaling up COVID-19 testing; ensuring the security of medicine supplies, including the availability of chronic medication; the identification and availability of ancillary hospitals and isolation facilities; addressing challenges related to the supply of critical equipment, devices and personal protection equipment (PPE); the development of critical data and analytics; providing project and other support to critical institutions including the NICD, NHLS and and coordination between healthcare requests and the newly launched Solidarity Fund. They are also working on the development of a common database providing visibility of resources across private and public sectors and geo-mapping of available ICU facilities.