

Monthly news clips from the South African Library for the Blind

SALB OPERATIONS DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN RESTRICTIONS

Due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, the Library is currently not fully operational. This is because we are not listed as an essential service provider in the Regulations to the Disaster Management Act. Certain staff are back on duty to fulfill Compliance reporting to National Treasury and the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture and preparation work for the annual audit. Under the guidance of senior management, the staff are testing out a combination of work from home and a rotational shift work schedule from the office to minimize potential exposure to the Corona Virus. Despite SALB not considered to be an essential service according to current Government Regulations, we are aware of the importance of providing reading material in alternative formats and staff are working actively behind the scenes in this respect. We are aware of the inconveniences caused by the lockdown but SALB stands in solidarity with the measures imposed by the President to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SALB MINI LIBRARY UPDATE

All Mini Libraries remain closed and all our mini library members will be informed in due course on the opening of public libraries as directed by Government. SALB continues to engage provinces on the readiness to reopen in due time once the lockdown levels are lowered and it is safe to do so.

UPDATE ON CIRCULATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL

Due to the national level 4 lockdown restrictions currently in place, the library is unable to circulate or receive any library materials until further notice.

PRODUCTION SECTION ACTIVE BEHIND THE SCENE

Production staff and volunteers are working from home during the lockdown period to ensure that new books in their alternative formats are added to the catalogue. We take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers for their continued and selfless contribution to the provision of reading material in audio and braille formats. For any urgent production queries please contact: Pumla.mahanjana@salb.org.za

SALB WEBSITE UPDATE

The newly designed website is almost complete and is currently in its testing phase. Compliance testing was done via the daisy consortium accessibility testing platform and using the services of Vision Australia during the design phase. SALB Management and some pilot members were requested to test the website for their accessibility and user experience and to date positive results have been obtained. The website boasts new features such as streaming and downloading of books online, as well as a refreshed member experience for reserving and loaning of books. Current members will also be able to update their details online as well as new potential members being able to register online as well. The website is set to be launched by end of June 2020, should no unexpected delays occur.

STAFF NEWS

During March 2020, the Director Mr Francois Hendrikz confirmed to the board that he will not return to work on account of his medical condition. Mr Yasheen Ramcharan our Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is presently serving as Acting Director until such time as a new Director is appointed for the SALB. The responsibility of CFO is shared by Mr Neels de Lange and Mr Malibongwe Nquma in the interim. The advert for the position of Director is being finalised by the Board and will be circulated in due course. The board and management of SALB wishes Mr Hendrikz well and thanks him for his services provided during his tenure at the Library.

QUOTE INSPIRATION

‘Spread laughs while you quarantine at home, not fear. ‘Home is where love resides, memories are created, friends always belong, and laughter never ends.’ — Unknown