

Media release

24 April 2020

South Africa receives significant PPE order for frontline health care workers

- *PPE procurement order book at almost R1 billion*

South Africa has received a significant order of personal protective equipment (PPE), which includes 2 million surgical masks and 216 000 KN95 respirators. This critical stock is intended for the sole use of frontline doctors, nurses and community health care workers, to protect them in their fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.



On Thursday 24 April, the B4SA PPE procurement team received a significant order of 2 million surgical masks, and 216 000 KN95's. A further order of surgical masks is arriving in the country on Sunday 26 April. Credit: GCIS/Elmond Jiyane

This order, which arrived on Thursday night, will be bolstered by a further 784 000 KN95 respirators and 550 000 surgical masks which will arrive in the country on Sunday night.

The order forms part of a government-led centralised PPE procurement strategy that serves both the public and private health care sectors. This is led by the National Department of Health (NDoH) and the National Treasury's Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, working in partnership with Business for South Africa (B4SA), which is an alliance of volunteer resources from across SA business bodies, organisations and companies.

In support of Government's central procurement strategy, B4SA has developed a national PPE demand and supplier dashboard, and is driving the procurement, transport, and logistics of PPE. The procurement strategy is underpinned by a robust governance process that qualifies and vets both suppliers and their products against approved quality guidelines. All stocks that are landing in South Africa, or being collected from local suppliers and donors, are being delivered to the Provinces in accordance with the allocations determined by NDoH.



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The centralisation of the country's PPE procurement function is critical as global competition for PPE continues to rise. Over 180 countries are competing for global PPE stocks so by consolidating its total procurement, South Africa is able to scale orders, manage price escalations and alleviate pressure on the country's internal competition for PPE. In addition to global sourcing, South Africa is also working to capacitate, scale up and strengthen its local PPE supply and production capability.

To date, close to R1 billion has been spent on procuring PPE for South Africa, which is underpinned by funding from the Solidarity Fund, Motsepe Foundation, FirstRand's SPIRE Fund and Naspers.

Stock already procured includes:

- **N95 masks:** 13.5 million
- **Surgical masks for healthcare workers:** 11.25 million
- **Surgical masks for patients:** 19.5 million
- **Sterile gloves:** 900 000
- **Face shields:** 20 000
- **Gowns:** 100 000
- **Sanitiser (950ml bottles):** 345 000
- **Ventilators:** 200

Stavros Nicolaou, chair of Business for South Africa's Health Workgroup says: "As Business for South Africa, we are deeply humbled to be able to serve our country in its time of need. The leadership displayed by our President, and Minister of Health has been exemplary and has galvanised Business into action to support our Government's efforts to combat and mitigate the impact of the pandemic. Protecting our frontline doctors, nurses and community health care workers, by ensuring they have access to the PPE required to keep them safe is profoundly important, as they are our only true line of defence against the virus."

The central procurement strategy is aimed at securing PPE stocks for South Africa for the next 6-8 weeks, and monthly thereafter.

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