



CONTENTS

SAFI NEWS

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

INDUSTRY NEWS

COMPETITIVENESS IMPROVEMENTS



MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

Dear Members,

Since the first announcement from President Cyril Ramaphosa on a nation-wide lockdown for 21 days with effect from midnight on Thursday 26th March 2020, it's been a long uphill battle on a daily basis for our economy to revive. It was a bold decision that was needed to "flatten the curve" in order to save lives. We now find ourselves in Level 2 of the South African Risk Adjusted Strategy and we have to rebuild our lives aligned to our new environment.

Thus, this newsletter is dedicated to how SAFI has been supporting the Furniture Industry during this period, and also share some hope for our Furniture Industry's future. In summary, we have continued with our communication and support through engagement with the Industry on UIF TERS enquiries; a Workplace Readiness Toolkit under Level 4; Webinars on Labour Relations: Short time and Retrenchments; Skills Development updates from the FP&M SETA; Free online COVID-19 H&S Training and Social Media updates on legislation, free COVID-19 webinars, funding information, general stakeholder updates, etc. We have been in constant engagement with National and Provincial Government to support the Furniture Industry to unblock lockdown challenges for economic recovery. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Industry for playing their part through participating in vital surveys that we distributed, in order to gather the information that Government so greatly needed to make key decisions, ensuring that the Furniture Industry has a voice.

We will continue to support the Industry as best we can, and are excited to announce some new beginnings that we hope will have a positive impact on the sustenance and growth of the South African Furniture Sector. All SAFI staff are still working from home with full access to our e-mails and landline (011) 888-0655, so there will be no interruption in communications. More contact details are on our website <http://furnitureza.org.za/contact.php>. Please visit our website at <http://furnitureza.org.za/articles.php> for more information on SAFI activities.

We trust that you, your staff and families will keep safe during this challenging time. Let us work together and overcome this situation and may God be with us all.

Warm regards

Bernadette Isaacs



FURNITURE INDUSTRY MASTER PLAN (FIMP) READY FOR TAKEOFF....



We are excited to advise that we have reached the final stages of the Furniture Industry Master Plan research journey. The draft Master Plan, Implementation Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Plan are in the process of being reviewed by the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) for final sign-off.

Once we reach final sign-off then the ball is back in the Industry's court. SAFI in partnership with the DTIC will host FIMP bilateral engagements in the form of meetings, webinars, etc. to gather commitment and support from the Industry and advise immediate next steps for us to move on the 'quick wins' to sustain our Industry. Look out for our Furniture Sector Forum in October 2020, where you will get the latest update on the FIMP amongst other great topics.

The success of the FIMP is solely based on collaboration and commitment from Industry, the Private and Public sector. For the FIMP timeline click here: <http://furnitureza.org.za/master-plan.php>.



Image: Fechtlers

PUTTING SOUTH AFRICAN FURNITURE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

SAFI Furniture Directory!

During these hard times, we have heeded the call of the Industry and are continuously looking for Market Access opportunities for you. We thus eagerly call on all compliant businesses to visit our new Furniture Directory that is aimed at showcasing local South African furniture for domestic and international buyers.

Don't miss out on the many benefits when registering and completing a listing on the SAFI Directory. Participants can pick one of three packages, ranging from a FREE basic entry to the one-year partnership package that includes media exposure so that you can share your company story with the world.

Details on the various benefits for each package are available here: <https://safidirect.co.za/index.php/register>



HAS
DEDICATED ITS
RESOURCES
TO THE
FOLLOWING
TO SUPPORT
THE
FURNITURE
INDUSTRY
DURING AND
POST COVID-19
LOCKDOWN:

Lobbying - Our main aim was to provide a voice for the Furniture Industry in order for the lockdown restrictions to be relaxed for the Industry. We have done this through a proposal to the President as well as the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) and Provincial Governments to allow the Furniture Industry to open production, albeit in a limited capacity, in order to generate some income during Level 3 lockdown. We also undertook to highlight the plight of the Furniture Industry in the media, read more here:

<http://furniture.org.za/articles/002%2012-05-2020%20The%20South%20African%20Furniture%20Manufacturing%20Initiative.pdf>

COVID-19 Furniture Diversification - We have also provided proven examples of manufacturers who have diversified their

product range/s to be able to supply the needs of Government and individuals to garner support from Government to back the Furniture Industry through the procurement of essential products that we can offer, i.e. hospital beds, isolation and testing furniture components, face masks, etc.

Read more here:

<http://furniture.org.za/articles/003%2011-06-2020%20SAFI%20-%20Medical%20FurnitureFin.pdf>

COVID-19 Furniture Industry Workplace Safety Plan - We finalised a Workplace Safety Plan as a preventative measure to ensure our industry's safety and reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus, as is required by Government from each sector before consideration for reopening. Access it from our website: <http://furniture.org.za/index.php>



SAFI are extremely pleased to announce that the long wait for the Furniture Design qualification was not in vain, and that in May 2020 the qualification was formally registered with SAQA as a NQF (National Qualifications Framework) 7 qualification. SAFI is currently engaging with the FP&M Seta to finalise the Community of Expert Practitioners to commence with the learning material development for the Furniture Design qualification.

As part of our objective to highlight the significance of Furniture Design for South Africa, we have partnered with the African Institute of Interior Design Professionals (IID) to promote South Africa's rich interior, furniture and product design industries.

The two organisations signed a Memorandum of Understanding at the end of May, which commits them to promote all aspects of interior and product design and furniture design and manufacturing, to the benefit of both industries.

"We are very excited to bring together the creative and production aspects of these vibrant industries. South Africa has a rich vein of creative individuals and organisations and by sharing information, contact details and capabilities we can nurture and grow the sector," says Bernadette Isaacs, Managing Director of SAFI.

Isaacs signed the agreement on behalf of SAFI, while Professor Des Laubser, CEO of Greenside Centre College of Design and the Chairman of the Board of the IID, signed on behalf of the IID.

As part of this agreement, SAFI and the IID will open their respective networks and marketing channels to promote the businesses that form part of each organisation and the expertise that their members have.

The new Memorandum of Understanding is part of a wide range of initiatives in which organisations such as SAFI and the IID hope to grow the larger furniture and interior design sector and encourage organisations, both private and public, to look to local suppliers first.

This will in turn be supported by proposed Government procurement policies and other pro-business rules that will support these creative industries.

"We started with the Buy Local pledge at last year's Furniture Sector Forum in Johannesburg and extended the work to include new Government policies, a Furniture Design qualification and a forthcoming Industry Master Plan, which will soon be promulgated. All of these efforts are aimed at supporting a very vibrant, but also very vulnerable, industry," says Isaacs.

The Memorandum of Understanding takes effect immediately and the first collaboration will be the partnership for the SAFI Furniture Sector Forum 2020 taking place in October 2020. **Watch this space for more information!**



FURNITURE DESIGN, THE WAY OF THE FUTURE

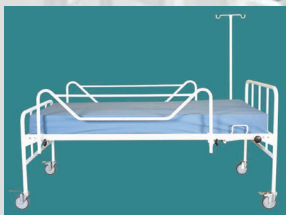
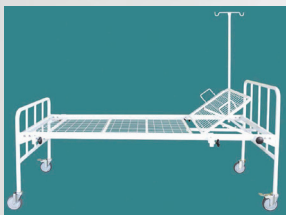
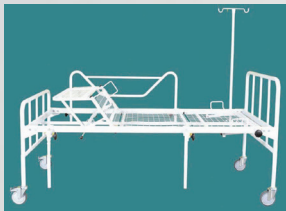
IID and SAFI join hands to support design and manufacturing industries

THE WEBINAR WAY OF LIFE.

As part of adapting to the COVID-19 environment, SAFI has taken up the challenge to move with technology. We are continuously looking for all platforms to fight the good fight for the Furniture Industry, and our new go-to platform are Webinars! The Webinar platform ensures that we abide safely to the Health and Safety protocols currently in place for South Africa while engaging with a far wider audience. Some of the Webinars that SAFI has partnered with Industry stakeholders to address the Furniture Industry's current prominent needs can be accessed here:

- ◆ SAFI Webinar with Cape Furniture Manufacturers' Association and the Garden Route Employers' Association | Labour Relations: <https://youtu.be/xwsBIXbvHZU>.
- ◆ PG Bison and Proudly SA: How being part of the buy local movement can benefit the furniture sector: <https://youtu.be/DV3VJqQloOQ>.
- ◆ eThekweni Furniture Cluster (ECF), SAFI and the African Institute of Interior Design Professions (IID): Unpacking the furniture market outlook over the next 12 months: <https://youtu.be/oaWXxEkyuqk>

Watch our social media platforms for future Webinars and feel free to send us suggestions for Webinar topics!



The Greek Philosopher, Plato, said that necessity is the mother of invention, while the American scientist, Jonathan Schattke, added that invention's father is creativity and knowledge the midwife. For many people these are mere quotes with which to impress or motivate colleagues, but for Neil Curtis, director of the newly formed City Group, it proved to be a mantra for immediate change in a world fighting a virus.

"The COVID-19 pandemic and the accompanying lockdown had a devastating effect on many of us in the furniture industry," says Curtis. "However, if there is one thing that I can add to what Plato and Schattke said, it is that you need to break old habits and act on opportunities immediately if you want to make a success of your invention."

City Group is the brainchild of Curtis and George dos Ramos, owner of well-known South African furniture factory and supplier, City Office. According to Curtis he was watching international news one evening back in March, when he realised that South Africa is going to have a serious shortage of medical furniture, specifically affordable hospital beds for field and temporary hospitals. He immediately called Dos Ramos who needed no convincing to turn the idea into reality, while at the same time supporting the call of President Cyril Ramaphosa to help the government and all communities in fighting the pandemic.

To read the full article, click here: <http://furniture.org.za/articles/004%2023-07-2020%20SAFI%20-%20Not%20all%20doom%20and%20gloom%20for%20furniture%20industry.pdf>

**NOT ALL DOOM AND GLOOM
FOR FURNITURE INDUSTRY**

NEVER GIVE UP ON CHASING YOUR DREAMS



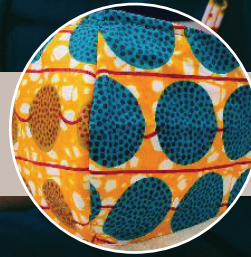
Starting a business with a pen and a piece of paper takes guts and self-belief. Opening a furniture manufacturing and upholstery business in an empty warehouse without a nail- or staple gun, borders on the ludicrous. But, if you are a die-hard entrepreneur with an MBA degree against your name, it is just another day in the life of Amet Furnishings Managing Director, Ketshegofetse Mathibela.

As a self-funded business, Amet Furnishings quickly had to grow into a one-stop-shop providing most interior decorating and design elements, including curtaining, refurbishment, and multi-purpose furnishings. According to Mathibela, the challenges she experienced since the business started in 2018, are too numerous to count. But she is a go-getter with a never say die attitude. "I believe that agility is a core element of a business and by embracing change, we have a much better chance to stay in business," says Mathibela.

To add to the challenges, the furnishing industry is not exactly known for the multitude of women fighting for market share. "I suppose it is a bit of a boys' club, with most of the women filling administrative positions," she says. "However, it is up to strong female leaders to take the lead and show the young women entrepreneurs it is possible to be a successful owner in the furnishing industry." According to Mathibela, one of the possible reasons why women do not pursue a career in the furniture industry is because the job is extremely time consuming, and women need a strong family support structure to be able to succeed.

To read the full article, click here:

<http://furniture.org.za/articles/005%2014-08-2020%20SAFI%20-%20Never%20give%20up%20on%20chasing%20your%20dreams.pdf>



WORLD CLASS
STANDARDS

SABS QUALITY
STANDARDS

FREE SANS & ISO STANDARDS

sign up today

SABS



As South African Furniture Makers are struggling to sustain themselves, the relationship they have with their clients are vital. In order to ensure that they meet overall client satisfaction and meet various safety, efficiency and reliability needs, they can adopt the quality standards developed by the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS). A key recent updated standard is the SANS 660:2020 (ED. 4.00) School Furniture standard that covers the requirements for the materials, construction, finish and performance of tables, teachers' desks, chairs and stools for the use in classrooms. You can buy this standard on the SABS Webstore (<https://store.sabs.co.za/sans-660-ed-4-00-1>).

On order to assist with the global effort of dealing with the COVID-19 crisis, the SABS has decided to make specific standards available free of charge. For standards like SANS 521, Hospital beds and cots and more, click here: <https://store.sabs.co.za/free-downloads>.



South African
Furniture Initiative



www.furnitureza.org.za

Our mailing address is:

Western Cape

South African Furniture Initiative
50 Long Street
Cape Town, Western Cape 8000
South Africa

Gauteng

Physical: 1st Floor, Unit 4,
39 Empire Road,
Johannesburg, 2193
Postal: P O Box 1529, Sanlamhof 7532