



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

DA Additional Deputy Shadow Tourism

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Dear Minister Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane,

**URGENT CALL FOR A MEETING WITH PRIVATE CHARTER OPERATORS TO PREVENT THE
COLLAPSE OF THE PRIVATE CHARTER INDUSTRY:**

We urgently call on you to convene a meeting with private charter industry stakeholders, many of whom have written desperately for an audience with yourself and the department of tourism, to address the licencing crisis which threatens to collapse many private charter business in the tourism sector. The CoViD-19 pandemic regulations have created dire economic circumstances for many South Africans. For many whose livelihoods depend on tourism as is the case for private charter operators dependent on international tourism, an entire portion of the industry is under threat of collapse.

Many private charter operators, some who have paid into the hundreds of thousands for licensing fees just prior to the lockdown in March 2020-2021, have been grounded and unable to operate for going on almost a year. Despite private charter operators having paid their licenses in advance for the year 2020-2021 and not operating, they are now being compelled to pay license fees once again for the year 2021-2022. This is against a backdrop of uncertainty as to whether they will be able to operate at all in the coming year with global travel restrictions still very much intact. It is inconceivable that the Department of Transport would now force private charter operators to pay hundreds of thousands again for the year 2021-2022 in licence fees instead of transferring the unused fees to cover this year's licencing costs. To further compound the existing financial strain placed on operators, operators who cannot afford to once again pay their licensing costs upfront for 2021-2022 are being penalised with extra costs for licences that they can just not afford to pay. This is forcing some private charter operators into significant debt making it impossible for any sort of economic recovery. This disorganised and short-sighted treatment of business operating under tourism is destroying an entire portion of the sector.

In the wake of relaxed global travel restrictions, tourism will play an integral role in South Africa's economic recovery. However with a large portion of the private charter sector inoperable due to bankruptcy and insurmountable debt, the ability of the tourism sector to bounce back could be severely compromised minus a key supply chain component such as the services rendered by private charter operators.

Minister Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane, we request that the pleas of private charter operators that fall under the ambit of tourism are addressed and a plan to provide financial relief by addressing licensing fees be is urgently implemented to prevent further decimation of our fragile tourism economy.

Yours sincerely,

Hannah Shameema Winkler, MP.

Member of Portfolio Committee on Tourism

