

Ports of entry ready for travellers returning to SA

Government has outlined plans for operations at the ports of entry until 14 January that have been approved by the National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure (NatJoints).



Clusteringcoefficient via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

During this period, traveller volumes are expected to be above normal because of people returning to South Africa.

"The Department of Home Affairs will deploy an additional 160 officials at six busiest land ports of entry to process returning travellers until 14 January 2021," said Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi.

These include the Beitbridge Border Post with Zimbabwe; Lebombo Border Post with Mozambique; Oshoek Border Post with Kingdom of Eswatini; Maseru Bridge with Lesotho; Ficksburg with Lesotho, and Kopfontein with Botswana.

The Minister was on Wednesday in Pretoria briefing members of the media on immigration matters and border law enforcement under the adjusted Covid-19 alert level 3.

"Another 60 additional immigration law enforcement officers will be deployed to support the SA National Defence Force

(SANDF) at identified high-risk areas along the borderline where people have a tendency to cross illegally into SA.

"The immigration officers and the soldiers are not there to stop people from coming into South Africa. They are there to insist that anybody wishing to visit South Africa must use the official gates of entry and produce all the requisite documentation otherwise, they won't be allowed in," Motsoaledi said.

The Department of Health, via its Port Health unit, will deploy additional Port Health officials to all ports of entry to ensure that only travellers with valid Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests are allowed into the country.

"Alternatively, those without a PCR test will be subjected to a rapid anti-gen test at the port of entry at their own cost. South Africa will not allow any traveller into the country without a valid PCR test or the anti-gen test for Covid-19," the Minister said.

As announced last week by the Director-General of the Department of Health, only truck drivers are exempted from this test requirements, as it was the case at the beginning of the lockdown.

More than 259 Port Health officials will be deployed to all ports of entry.

In addition, 278 community service personnel on contract will be deployed.

"The National Health Laboratory Services (NHLS) will enlist private laboratories to provide additional support for testing. South African Military Health Services has been requested to provide 73 additional military health personnel to help in the testing," the Minister said.

The Provincial Joints (ProvJoints) have been activated for policing and will conduct roadblocks and vehicle control points within the border law enforcement area.

Provincial authorities will also conduct roadblocks mainly in Limpopo, Free State, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal.

"We wish to take this opportunity to announce that the Kosibay Border Post between KwaZulu-Natal and Mozambique, which has been closed since the beginning of the lockdown in March this year, will be opened from 1 January 2021.

"The Cross Border Road Transport Agency will also deploy inspectors at Beitbridge, Lebombo, Maseru Bridge and Ficksburg for the same duration. That means until 14 January 2021," the Minister said.

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