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ALL EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Dear Customs and Excise client

## **INTRODUCTION OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE CHATBOT CONTENT**

The South African Revenue Service (SARS) has introduced Customs and Excise content to its ChatBot, which is currently available on eFiling and the SARS Mobi App.

The ChatBot is a text-messaging tool, which enables users to text their questions directly to a SARS agent online. As the ChatBot uses artificial intelligence to handle interactions in a way that blends with live support, it can simultaneously have conversations with thousands of users 24/7, thus helping to lower waiting times and increase efficiency.

The SARS Chatbot was launched in July 2019 and is called Lwazi, named after the word for “Knowledge” in Zulu and Xhosa. Until now, the SARS Chatbot has been used primarily to acquire tax-related information, with over 1,979,500 interactions handled without human intervention since its inception.

However, SARS recently added Customs and Excise content to the Chatbot, specifically related to the following:

- Customs Operations e.g. Imports & Exports, Deferments, Declarations/Processing, Refunds.
- Excise Operations e.g. Registration, Accounts Payments, Audits, Declarations, Refunds.
- Customs Registration, Licencing and Accreditation (RLA).

You can access the Chatbot on eFiling and the Mobiapp without having to log in with your user details (look for the “Ask a Question” icon). If the ChatBot cannot answer your question, it will be escalated to a subject matter expert and the answer will be added to the ChatBot.

We trust that this additional tool for query resolution will assist our Customs and Excise clients to make it easier for them to comply with their obligations.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LP', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

**LEON POTGIETER**  
**EXECUTIVE: OPERATIONS ENABLING AND PRODUCTION PLANNING**  
**DATE: 05 March 2021**