

31 March 2026

South African Weather Service Bids Chief Executive Officer, Mr Ishaam Abader, Farewell

The South African Weather Service (SAWS) wishes Mr Ishaam Abader well for the future as his five-year, fixed-term contract as the entity's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) comes to an end today.

Mr Abader joined the SAWS at the beginning of April 2021. He saw it through challenging times, including the devastation to the entity's revenue-generating activities at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. He also steered the ship through catastrophic weather events, including the KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape floods in April 2022 and June 2025, respectively.

Probably the most challenging time during his notable term of office was during the January 2025 cyberattack. The attack shook the entity's Information and Communication Technology systems, which are central to the processing and dissemination of critical weather services and challenged the organisation's resilience and his leadership.

The cyberattack coupled with difficult labour matters notwithstanding, under Mr Abader's leadership, the SAWS performed extremely well, achieving, among other things, back-to-back clean audits, until the cyberattack temporarily disrupted this momentum.

Mr Abader was also very active in international matters and represented South Africa regionally, continentally and internationally in various fora. Notably, he was the country's Permanent Representative (PR) to the United Nations' World Meteorological Organisation (WMO). He sat on the Executive Committee and the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), as well as on the Elections and Appointments Committee of this august body.

Upon his departure, the Executive for Weather and Climate Services, Dr Jonas Mphepya, will take over as interim CEO on 1 April 2026, pending the selection and recruitment processes to fill the void.

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Board Members: Ms Sandika Daya (Chairperson), Prof. Sylvester Mpandeli (Deputy Chairperson), Dr Lesley Luthuli, Ms Mpho Mogodi, Dr Phumudzo Tharaga, Prof. Thando Ndarana, Ms Balebetje Zondi, Adv. Ikaneng Mokgosi, Ms Ané Bruwer, Dr Pritish Dala, Mr Maesela Kekana, Mr Ishaam Abader (CEO).

Acting Company Secretary: Ms Karabo Moreroa

Speaking on Mr Abader's last day in office, SAWS Board Chairperson Ms Sandika Daya moved to assure the public, all other stakeholders, partners and clients, both domestic and abroad, that due care is being taken to ensure that there will be no disruptions of meteorological and other products and services during the transition.

"During his tenure, Mr Abader led the SAWS through significant operational challenges such as infrastructure constraints, the impact of loadshedding, post-COVID revenue pressures and most recently the restoration of critical forecasting systems following a major cyberattack," Ms Daya said.

"Through all of that, the legislated mandate has always been met and mostly exceeded. Weather services, aviation and marine services continued. He also saw the organisation improve its performance and audit outcomes, something that never happens 'by accident'."

She wished Mr Abader well in his future endeavours, while assuring Dr Mphepya of the Board's full support.

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