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## **MEDIA RELEASE: 94% Liquor Licence renewal rate shows commitment to a safe industry**

23 February 2021

The rate of liquor licence renewals for 2021 currently stands at 94%. Licence holders have until the end of March to pay their renewal fees and ensure the validity of their licence.

Advocate Leatitia Petersen, acting CEO of the Western Cape Liquor Authority (WCLA), said, "We are pleased to see that the renewal rate is on track to match recent years (95.8% average for the last 3 years), despite the harsh economic realities of the Covid-19 pandemic. We appreciate the commitment shown to creating a responsible and safe liquor industry."

The Covid-19 related alcohol bans have demonstrated the significant role which alcohol plays in our high levels of violence and crime, with data showing declines in hospital trauma admissions during these periods. Alcohol abuse harms communities and places significant social, health and economic burdens on our society.

Regulation of liquor has continued throughout the lockdown and alcohol bans. From 27 March 2020 to 21 February 2021, the WCLA conducted 370 investigations into contraventions of the Disaster Management Regulations, over and above regular Compliance and Enforcement operations. These Covid-related investigations resulted in over 50 temporary suspensions, 4 revocations of licences and over 30 fines amounting to R2.8 million.

Advocate Petersen said, "The WCLA's mandate is to effectively regulate the sale and micro-manufacture of liquor in the public interest. The public interest includes all those people and communities who are hurt by interpersonal violence, crime, underage drinking, road traffic accidents and health problems like Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. Regulation of the liquor industry aims to reduce these harms and protect the most vulnerable in our Province."

A liquor licence is not just about securing permission to trade. It is about participating responsibly in a regulated environment and contributing to the reduction of alcohol-related harms.

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