

Media Release
Actuarial Society of South Africa
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Leadership of international actuarial body to return to South Africa

Leadership of the International Actuarial Association (IAA) will return to South Africa in 2022, when healthcare actuary Roseanne Harris takes over as President. The IAA represents professional actuarial associations worldwide with a combined membership of around 70 000 actuaries in more than 115 countries.

Harris, a past President of the Actuarial Society of South Africa, was announced by the IAA as the only nomination for the position of President-elect at the conclusion of its first Council meeting of 2020 in May this year. The nomination was ratified by the IAA Council last night, which means that Harris will serve as President-elect of the IAA in 2021 and as President in 2022.

Lusani Mulaudzi, President of the Actuarial Society of South Africa, points out that this will be only the second time in the 125-year history of the IAA that a candidate from Africa assumes this top leadership position. In 2012, South African actuary Desmond Smith held the position of IAA President. The appointment of Harris will also mean that the IAA falls under female leadership for only the fourth time in its history.

Mulaudzi, also a healthcare actuary, says the role of the healthcare actuary has been thrust into the limelight as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. "Decision makers in government and across private sector industries are relying on the modelling and risk assessment skills of actuaries specializing in healthcare to assist in scenario planning. The impact of COVID-19 is busy shaping a new world with many unknowns and I believe Roseanne has the actuarial skills and the leadership ability to guide our global profession through these uncharted waters."

Mulaudzi adds that the nomination of a South African actuary also sends a very strong message to the rest of the world that South African actuaries have a valuable contribution to make when it comes to global issues.

"Our profession is often at the forefront of actuarial innovation and this is recognized internationally," says Mulaudzi.

Harris, who is the Health Policy Actuary at Discovery Health and also adjunct professor in the School of Statistics and Actuarial Science at Wits University, held the position of President of the Actuarial Society of South Africa in 2016 and 2017.

During her tenure, her key focus was on accelerating meaningful transformation of the profession. According to Harris, transformation is not just about changing demographics: "Transformation is about fairness and inclusion and feeling welcome and inspired."

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The Actuarial Society of South Africa is the professional organisation for actuaries and actuarial students in South Africa. The vision of the Actuarial Society is an actuarial profession of substance and stature, serving, and valued by, our communities as a primary source of authoritative advice and thought leadership in the understanding, modelling and management of financial and other measurable risks.