

Media Release
Actuarial Society of South Africa
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Actuaries call on underprivileged schools to sign up their learners for free access to online learning resources

The Actuarial Society of South Africa, in partnership with Paper Video, has embarked on an ambitious drive to assist learners in Grade 8 to 12 across South Africa who do not have the resources to participate in remote learning. Learners from underprivileged schools that have already signed up with Paper Video are receiving free access to some 13 000 video lessons delivered by experienced teachers across five subjects via their mobile phones. The free access is co-funded by the Actuarial Society's Educational Trust from donations received from the Society, individual actuaries and corporate sponsors as well as Paper Video.

Paper Video's distribution model caters for schools and learners whether they have access to an internet connection or not, with their offline resources making it possible for learners without an internet connection or data to benefit from their resources.

Mike McDougall, CEO of the Actuarial Society, says disruption of the 2020 school year due to Covid-19 has highlighted the extreme disparities within the South African education system. "The reality is that when schools are closed, only the privileged are able to continue via remote learning, because both teachers and learners have access to resources such as the internet, electricity and electronic devices. The thousands of learners who attend the country's poorest school are instantly cut off from all learning when their schools close."

McDougall says without intervention, a large number of learners will not pass their current grades and risk being left behind to eventually join South Africa's growing unemployment ranks.

"The year 2020 could go down in history as the year that broke the South African education system if nothing is done to save it. When the schooling system fails, thousands of children are left with a lifelong disadvantage. This is a national crisis requiring urgent and immediate solutions."

McDougall says the Educational Trust of the Actuarial Society of South Africa has been supporting Paper Video since 2015, because the uniquely South African solution specifically addresses the challenges faced by thousands of learners. Paper Video is a social enterprise consisting of a team of experienced South African teachers who use innovation and technology to make available their lessons to as many learners as possible.

Paper Video's application of technology to removing learning barriers for South Africa's poorest learners resulted in the social enterprise winning the Cape Town leg of EdTechXAfrica last year. According to Daniel Sacchelli, Global Events Director at EdTechXGlobal, Paper Video emerged as the winner because the offering provides a

solution to multiple critical problems such as delivering content in areas of limited or no connectivity.

Paper Video concept architect, Chris Mills, says: “By making our resources available free of charge to those learners who need them the most, we are not just plugging a gap, we are averting a crisis.”

Mills explains that the Paper Video resources are available to all learners who need them via www.papervideo.co.za. Learners who come from privileged backgrounds will have to pay a small fee, but learners who cannot afford the resources are given free access via their schools.

Mills explains that learners should request their school to set up a Paper Video school dashboard. The learner then signs up for a free account and the school’s teachers are able to provide full access for them via the school dashboard.

Paper Video teaching videos are available via microSD cards, which work on Android devices and Windows computers, and require no internet connection or data. The video lessons cover the following subjects:

- Mathematics Grade 8 – 12
- Physical Sciences Grade 10 – 12
- Life Sciences Grade 10 – 12
- Accounting Grade 8 – 12
- Natural Sciences Grade 8 – 9

If you represent an underprivileged school and would like to make these resources available to your learners, please send your request to contact@papervideo.co.za. More information can be found here: www.papervideo.co.za.

If you would like to donate towards this project, please contact wels@actuarialsociety.org.za.

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Issued on behalf of:

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CEO of the Actuarial Society of South Africa

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.