Dear All,

Below is a short update on recent developments since the last APRAV Newsletter (11/2015):

**1.     HAWKS INVESTIGATION:**

Understandably, not much can be commented on, however, the investigation is progressing **positively**.

**2.    NEDLAC:**

           NEDLAC confirmed receipt of APRAV’s input, dated 27 November 2015 (a copy is available on the APRAV website).

           NEDLAC confirmed, in writing, that their report on the RABS will be available on 26 February 2016. Unfortunately said report is late and still awaited.

           Nevertheless, APRAV learnt on ‘good authority’ that ‘Business’ raised serious concerns about abolishing common law, the lack of funding clarity as well as further reduction in the public’s rights and benefits.

           In a nutshell, it seems as if the Minister of Transport and RAF CEO will not get the NEDLAC ‘rubber stamp’ that they were hoping for.

           We hope this forces the process (RABS and the required improvements to the industry) back to open consultation, proper research and joint planning between all key stakeholders.

           We will also continue to strongly advocate that the Chairlady of the Portfolio Committee of Transport requests a Regulatory Risk Assessment (RRA) to be conducted by an independently appointed organisation on the RABS Bill.  The purpose of such a review is to ensure that any new act complies with the Constitution and is aligned with other relevant legislation. The RABS Bill will in no way pass this test.

           Since NEDLAC did not want to consult with us, we are now consulting with key members of NEDLAC directly.

           When we receive the NEDLAC ‘report’ and if they present a one-sided view (only the RAF/RABS), we will contest their report with all remedies available to us.

**3.     CARTE BLANCE:**

           An insert will be aired on Sunday, 13 March 2016, on Carte Blanche (the RAF/RABS – APRAV and NPLSSA were interviewed for the programme).

           We hope this will awaken the mainly silent mainstream media on the massive RAF-RABS story unfolding without much notice for the past 2 years.

           APRAV’s interview focussed on the following:

1.             In a recent Radio 702 interview, the RAF representative repeated, several times, that the proposed RABS Bill is “more” equitable, accessible, affordable and sustainable.  These myths need to be exposed.

2.             The total lack of proper research, planning and the absence of a financial model (see attached APRAV NEDLAC submission (including international comparisons)).

3.             Inform the public how their rights and benefits will be reduced to a total dependency on bureaucrats, without any real means of support or address. “Why should South Africans Care?”

4.             Explain that the current poor state of RAF affairs is being engineered by the RAF leadership with a sinister and hidden agenda.

5.             Inform viewers on the widespread fraud and corruption going on from within the RAF, now being investigated by the HAWKS. This especially relates to soliciting direct claims and then allowing these to prescribe.

6.             Focus on the future, the way forward and the solutions for the medico-legal industry.

**4.     PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT & ANC STUDY GROUP:**

           We remain in contact with the Chairlady of the Portfolio Committee on Transport (Hon MP Magadzi) and the Chairman of the ANC Study Group (Hon MP Sibande).

           APRAV has a standing invitation to “come and fully explain all concerns” to the Committee and Study Group - whenever the RABS Bill is on any of their agendas.

           We are also keeping all other members on the Committee informed regarding unfolding developments (as in this update).

           APRAV remains vigilant on the ‘route’ that the RABS Bill will have to ‘travel’ to progress any further.

**5.     RABS FUNDING:**

           It is clear that the Department of Transport (RAF) has no intention to consult with the public or industry on the funding model for RABS.

           This was proven by the Minister of Finance’s reference to the fuel levy increase – the 2nd year in a row.

           For the 2nd year in a row, APRAV maintains that the Treasury is being misled by the Department and the RAF on the ‘true’ status of the RABS Bill’s legislative progress (mostly the lack of progress that is).

           Despite comments by the Minister of Finance on funding for RABS, the RABS Bill is as bogged down in the legislative process as was the case last year at the same time.

           In order to ensure that the Minister of Finance and his Department are better informed on all relevant financial RABS issues, a meeting is being arranged with the relevant Director-General.

           APRAV will also table a detailed briefing on all funding-related issues and concerns, together with proposals on such.

**6.     SOLUTIONS TASK TEAM PROGRESS:**

           In the last APRAV Newsletter, dated November 2015, various ‘Solutions’ Committees were introduced under the guidance of Prof Hennie Klopper, Head of the APRAV Solutions Task Team.

           The Medical Committee was the 1st to be introduced.

           They have progressed well and to the point that the Legal, Finance and Inter-Governmental Committees now need to commence with their work, on contributing to sustainable, affordable and implementable solutions for the current RAF-related challenges.

           A separate briefing will follow on the 1st draft report of the Medical Committee and the commencement of these additional 3 ‘Solution’ Committees – their terms of reference, initial members and how to get involved.

**7.     PROVINCIAL WORKSHOPS ON THE SOLUTIONS AND GOING FORWARD TO IMPROVE THE INDUSTRY:**

           APRAV aims to coordinate regional workshops to discuss possible solutions as proposed by the various APRAV Solutions Task Team Committees.

           We need volunteers to facilitate the ‘local’ organisation of the workshops.  Please email me directly on pieter.deb@mweb.co.za if you wish to become involved in assisting to organise the workshop in your province.

           We hope to be able to hold such workshops in each province.

           A briefing pack will be provided before the workshops commence and the intention is to have 2 sessions, back-to-back – for the public and industry respectively.

Regards

Pieter de Bruyn

Chairman