**ANNUAL SARFFG/SWFDP TRAINING WORKSHOP OF 24 OCTOBER TO 4 NOVEMBER 2016**

**GENERAL INFORMATION FOR MEETING PARTICIPANTS**

**South African Weather Service**

**ACCOMODATION**

Accommodation is reserved for all participants at the Schoongezich Guesthouse at 369 Schoongezich Street, Erasmusrand, Pretoria exactly 1 km within walking distance from the Headquarters of the South African Weather Service (SAWS). All participants have to stay there.

[**http://www.schoongezich.co.za/contact-us.html**](http://www.schoongezich.co.za/contact-us.html)

ADDRESS: 369 Schoongezicht Str, Erasmusrand, Pta

EMAIL: guesthouse@schoongezich.co.za TEL: +27 (0)12 347 2233

Please ensure to pay your account either beforehand or when booking out. They accept both Visa and Master cards.

**TRANSPORT TO/FROM JOHANNESBURG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

Shuttles between the airport and Schoongezich Guesthouse are arranged for participants by the organizers upon receipt of their flight information – please make sure your flight information is sent to the WMO and SAWS (met.training@weathersa.co.za) as soon as possible.

The shuttle driver will meet you at the international airport exit or in the Arrivals Hall with a name board. If you are not met at the airport, please contact Schoongezich Guesthouse for information at Tel: +27 (0)12 347 2233

**NB:** You will be required by Schoongezich Guesthouse to refund the Guesthouse for the shuttle fees upon checking in. Fares vary between R500 to R600 for a single fare to Schoongezich Guesthouse, Erasmusrand, Pretoria.

**VENUE**

* Week 1 (24-29 Oct): The training venue for both the SARFFG session (24-26 Oct) and the GDPFS session (27-29 Oct) will be held in the facilities of the Regional Training Centre Pretoria at the headquarters of the South African Weather Service.
* Week 2 (31 Oct – 4 Nov): The training venue for the PWS training from 31 Oct – 4 November will be at the Schoongezich Guesthouse, with a special arrangement for Friday 4 November.

The workshop will start at 08h30 in the morning at the respective venues.

The Headquarters of the South African Weather Service (SAWS) is called Bolepi house situated in the southern suburbs of Pretoria:

Street Address: 442 Rigel Avenue South, Erasmusrand, Pretoria

[**https://www.google.com/maps/place/South+African+Weather+Service/@-25.8111555,28.2612601,15z/data=!4m2!3m1!1s0x0:0x33bff70c98ea40e9**](https://www.google.com/maps/place/South%2BAfrican%2BWeather%2BService/%40-25.8111555%2C28.2612601%2C15z/data%3D%214m2%213m1%211s0x0%3A0x33bff70c98ea40e9)

The Regional Training Centre is in the headquarters on the ground floor.

Contact details:

[www.weathersa.co.za](http://www.weathersa.co.za)

met.training@weathersa.co.za

Tel: +27 (0)12 367 6000

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**VISAS**

Most passport holders need visas to enter South Africa. Check with your local travel agent or nearest SA representative to determine if you need one. Visas must be obtained before leaving your home country as they will not be issued on arrival in South Africa. If you need a visa invitation letter please contact met.training@weathersa.co.za. A multiple entry visa is needed if you intend to travel in and out of South Africa during the period for which the visa is valid. Upon arrival you must be able to provide proof that you have enough money to support yourself during your stay. You must also have a valid return ticket.

Visa inquiries can be directed to South African diplomatic representatives abroad or to the Department of Home Affairs. <http://www.home-affairs.gov.za/index.php/applying-for-sa-visa>

Tel: +27-12-314-8911 Fax: +27-12-326-8328

**HEALTH AND IMMUNISATION**

Generally visitors to South Africa do not need immunisation. However, if you have recently travelled through the Yellow Fever zone in Africa, vaccination against Yellow Fever is required before arriving in South Africa. A certificate of proof of this vaccination must be produced on arrival. Malaria is endemic in certain parts of the country and it is vital that necessary precautions be taken if you are intending to enter a malaria zone.

If you’re travelling to neighbouring countries i.e. Zimbabwe, Mozambique or Botswana, anti-malaria tablets are also crucial. Consult a doctor of pharmacist as to which prophylactics are the most suitable. Some need only be taken 24 hours prior to entry into the malaria zones while others must be taken at least a week beforehand. Prophylactics must continue to be taken for at least 4 - 6 weeks after leaving the area.

For more information on immunisation you can contact the British Airways Travel Clinic website on the internet - <http://www.travelclinic.co.za>

There is no immunisation against Bilharzia - a microscopic organism that is found in rivers, streams, pools and dams (both stagnant and flowing) in the northern and eastern areas of the country. You must not drink, wash, paddle or swim in this water - regardless of how inviting it might appear. In major cities and towns, as well as most game reserves, tap water in purified and 100% safe to drink.

There is no national health scheme and patients are responsible for their own medical bills. It is thus advisable to obtain travel insurance to cover such costs.

**MONEY**

The unit of currency is the Rand. There are 100 cents (c) in one Rand (R). Traveller’s cheques and foreign bank notes of all major currencies can be exchanged at all commercial banks. Most hotels, shops and businesses also accept traveller’s cheques and foreign currency, although commission on exchanging these does vary. International credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Diner’s Club are widely accepted and preferred.

**NB**: You are strongly advised to change foreign money to Rand at the airport upon arrival. There are a number of money exchange / Bureau de Change facilities in the arrivals hall. There will NOT be any arrangements made during the workshop for participants to visit banks.

**VAT (VALUE ADDED TAX**)

A value added tax of 14% is levied on most services/goods purchased. All marked prices include VAT and a VAT refund can be obtained on items taken out of the country upon departure at Johannesburg International Airport provided the value exceeds R250,00.

Enquiries: (011) 970-9963

**ELECTRICITY**

220AC are available. SA uses a 3 round pin plug. Converters to 2 pin plugs and European 3 pin plugs are freely available at supermarkets. The plugs looks like this:

.

**TIPPING**

A 10% tip is customary, but this depends on the standard of service you’ve received. Restaurants do not usually include a service charge in the bill, but some do, so please read your bill.

**WEATHER**

The workshop will be held during early summer, with the average temperature ranging between 15° and 35°C, the weather sunny to partly cloudy with afternoon thundershowers can occur. The South African sun is strong, with a high ultraviolet rating, so screening products with SPF (Sun Protection Factor) 15 and over are highly recommended.

**SECURITY**

Passports, money, cameras, and other valuable should be locked in the safe of your hotel. When walking in the cities, your valuables should be carried discreetly and securely. Do not involve yourself in pavement games or gambling as they are operated by well organised gangs and money can be stolen while you’re distracted. Gold, diamonds and other expensive items offered for sale by street vendors are likely to be fakes or stolen property.

Ensure that your visit to South Africa is both safe and enjoyable by taking the following simple precautions.

Use only the main entrance of your hotel and plan your journey before you leave your hotel. If you intend travelling off the beaten track, ask hotel staff at the reception desk to check your intended route with local community liaison officers. Ensure that the hotel room door is securely locked when you are in the room and whenever you leave it. Never leave your property unattended in any public place - even if you are on a guided tour.

Although limited in comparison to the UK or Europe, public transport is available in South Africa. If driving, do not pick up hitchhikers and ensure that your car doors are locked at all times. Avoid deserted areas after dark and stay in well lit, populated areas.

The South African Police are easy to recognise in their blue uniforms and yellow patrol vehicles. They are contactable 24 hours a day and larger cities have Tourist Assistance units.

Pretoria Central Police Tel (012) 353-4233.

In case of emergency (24-hour number) Tel 10111.

**TRANSPORT**

**Bus service**

Pretoria has its own commuter bus service, though its service near SAWS headquarters is limited. Time tables and fares are available from the Bus Information Office on Church Square.

Municipal City Bus Times Tel No. (012)308-0839/0840

**Taxis in Pretoria**

Information will be available at the front desk of Schoongezich Guesthouse.

City Bug (012)663-6316

City Taxis (012)21-5742/3/4

Rixi Taxis (012)325-8072/3/4

Transcab (012)324-5051

**Car Rental**

Avis Tel: (012)325-1490 Toll Free: 0800 02 1111

Budget Rent a Car Tel: (012)341-4650/4/7 Toll Free: 0800-016622

Imperial Tel: (012)323-3259 Toll Free: 0800 13 1000

Tempest Car Hire Tel: (012)324-5007 Toll Free: 0800-031666

**Driving in South Africa**

Driving is on the left hand side of the road and speed limits vary from 60 km/h in built up areas to 120 km/h on highways. These are strictly enforced and drunken driving is a serious offence. Drivers must be in possession of an international driving permit or valid driving licence. Seatbelts must be worn by the driver and all passengers.

**SHOPPING CENTRES**

A small shopping centre including a Pick n Pay general shop and a small restaurant Café 41 is situated across the street from the SAWS headquarters. Food can be bought at this centre.

Others: Menlyn, Waterkloofridge, Castle Walk is the closest but will require transport to be reached.