LIBRARY AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA
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LIASA SUPPORTS THE SALE OF ALL BOOKS DURING LOCKDOWN STAGE 4

The Library and Information Association of South African (LIASA), the Professional Body for Library and Information Services (LIS) in South Africa, remains in full support our South African government and the efforts to address the worldwide SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. We actively appeal to our members and the wider Library and Information Services sector to adhere to the current regulations and guidelines well knowing the impact on the sector and on its ability to continue providing information and reading services to communities. LIASA continues to assert the intrinsic value of reading and so this is a loss to us all.

We note that in the easing of the national lockdown to level 4 that "educational" books only will become available for trade. LIASA supports the call to Government to extend this definition to **all** books to be considered educational. Libraries and Information Services play a crucial role in the development of our country and without a vibrant and sustainable book trade in South Africa, the ability of our libraries to provide a range of books and information to our citizen will be compromised. We applaud the stance of Government to develop and to strengthen the reading culture in our country. However, for libraries and the book trade to continue supporting this position, all types of books are required to be available as core tools in our contribution to the advancement of a literate society.

In South Africa, the book trade is vulnerable and the role libraries play in sustaining this industry cannot be underestimated. Libraries and Information Services are conduits, providing access to books and reading materials in a country where these generally are seen as a luxury. We have seen the growing support for indigenous language publishing and for the underpinning of South African and African literature. We cannot lose momentum in these areas as might be the case with the ringfencing of certain books.

Literacy requires access not only to "educational" books, but also to literature that fuels the imagination, builds word skills and provides a stimulus to future writers. In order for libraries to continue playing a role with other stakeholders in this arena we need a robust book trade and call upon government to reconsider its stance in relation to allowing the trade of **all** books.

ALL Books are essential!

ABOUT LIASA

LIASA is the SAQA recognised Professional Body for the Library and Information Services (LIS) sector according to the NQF Act 67 of 2008 and a voluntary association that represents persons engaged or interested in LIS and millions of users and potential users of libraries in South Africa. LIASA aims to unite, develop and empower all people in the library and information field. It represents the interests of and promotes the development and image of library and information services in South Africa.

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