

Sarb releases Mandela centenary banknote designs

The South African Reserve Bank (Sarb) has decided to release the designs of the Nelson Mandela centenary commemorative banknotes and coins ahead on the official launch on 13 July 2018, after the designs were leaked on social media.



The notes cover all denominations – R10, R20, R50, R100 and R200. The front will look the same as the existing notes, while the Big Five animals that usually adorn the back have been replaced with another portrait of Mandela as a young man in traditional dress. In addition, the South African Mint, a subsidiary of the Sarb, will also be issuing a

new commemorative circulation R5 coin.

As part of the preparations for the launch, test packs of the notes were made available to members of the broader cash industry to allow them to make adequate preparations in relation to issues such as adaptations of cash processing and cash dispensing machines, ticketing machines and so forth.

While these test packs were governed by strict confidentiality provisions, the central bank said in a statement that certain breaches have occurred, and as a result some of the designs have been circulating on social media. More detailed information about the commemorative features of the notes and additional security features will be made available at the time of the official launch.

The notes will be issued into circulation by 18 July 2018. They, along with the R5 coin, will co-circulate for a limited time, together with the current Mandela banknote series and the existing R5 coin, and both sets will remain legal tender.

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