

South Africa is bloodied, not bowed - Pick n Pay CEO

South Africa is reeling from the devastation caused by the violent riots this past week, but Pieter Boone, who [succeeded Richard Brasher](#) as Pick n Pay's group CEO in April this year, has reassured affected communities that relief is on the way.



Pieter Boone, Pick n Pay CEO. Source: Supplied

"Like everyone across the country, we were shocked and saddened by the violence and destruction which afflicted so many communities, businesses and institutions earlier this week. In common with other retailers, some Pick n Pay and Boxer stores have been affected by the damage and disorder in KwaZulu-Natal and parts of Gauteng.

"However, we are greatly heartened to see so many individuals and communities upholding what is right and good, and helping to bring an end to violence," Boone said.



Pick n Pay trucks prepare to leave Gauteng to provide relief in KZN. Source: Supplied

He continued, "We also know that many people in many areas – particularly in KwaZulu-Natal – are suffering from the damage to essential infrastructure, and are finding it difficult to obtain essential food and groceries.

"The situation remains fragile. But we want to assure customers and communities that our Pick n Pay and Boxer teams are working flat out to bring essential supplies from Gauteng and the Western Cape into the affected areas. Key to this is N3 highway between Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, which has just reopened. This enables us to begin the task of transporting large volumes of essential products to the communities that most need them."

Boone mentioned that as the unrest has eased, many Pick n Pay and Boxer stores have reopened in KZN and the affected parts of Gauteng. More stores are set to reopen their doors over the coming days, as long as the safety of employees and customers can be prioritised.



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Relief is coming

"Our message to the affected communities is this. The relief effort has begun. The relief is coming.

"We want to reassure customers in the rest of South Africa that the manufacturing and distribution capacity to supply your needs remains in place. We are in constant dialogue with our valued suppliers of fresh meat and produce, frozen, canned and packaged foods, and groceries. Some have been damaged and disrupted by the violence. But, like us, they are getting back on their feet," said Boone.

"Together we will do what we do best – supply our customers with what you need and want," he added.



Stock being prepared to load into Pick n Pay and Boxer trucks in Gauteng to provide relief in KZN. Source: Supplied

Avoid panic buying

Boone said the retail group has experienced elevated demand for some products in recent days, however this demand is nowhere near the levels experienced at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We thank all our customers for shopping normally at this critical time. This is the best way you can help us to maintain a steady supply of what you need. And it is the best way you can help the communities in greatest need in the affected areas.



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"Pick n Pay and Boxer already has a very active Feed the Nation programme in place to assist communities in need during the Covid-19 crisis. We are expanding this work to assist the humanitarian effort. Please look out for ways that you can help in our stores and through social media," he said.

"South Africa is bloodied but not bowed. By working together we will get through this," Boone concluded.

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