

# New freight pipeline initiative launched

The South African Association of Freight Forwarders (SAAFF), through tvg&associates, has launched a new initiative, Operation WarHorse to develop a freight pipeline to bring vital medical supplies to South Africa via special airfreight charters.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

The initiative will be facilitated through an all-inclusive shared-space air charter solution that is underpinned by a compliant and transparent independent administration process.

In addition, the initiative is designed to secure a number of all-important socio-economic factors in South Africa during the national State of Disaster.

"Collaboration between all parties is essential in the current circumstances and the intention is to ensure a stable and inclusive supply chain facilitated by a channel that offers the highest levels of impartiality, good governance and a seamless interaction with agents in addition to opening the way for smaller businesses to benefit from the initiative," says Teresita van Gaalen, CEO of tvg&associates (TVG).

Operation WarHorse will centralise and coordinate activities through its [website](#) allowing equal participation by all potential players. "The initiative has been structured in such a way that apart from sharing the airfreight space, it will be business as usual for each agent."

## Stabilising the flow of emergency essential goods

The single online platform will coordinate enquiries for critical medical goods and activate the emergency supply chain solution to enable a sustainable supply of airfreight within its Charter to South Africa.

"South Africa is in urgent need of essential medicines and medical equipment demanded by the Covid-19 outbreak as well as for treatment of chronic diseases.

"There is a huge demand in the international space in this sector. We are competing with the rest of the world for these products and the costly freight space to carry them. It is crucial that we ease the way for importers to get the cargo to South Africa in a timely and cost-effective way," says Van Gaalen.

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Airline freight specialist, Fred du Plessis and operations manager for WarHorse says that with most airlines grounded and priority given to Europe and America by those operating, there are few direct freighter aircraft operating into South Africa carrying essential goods.

"The WarHorse Project aims to facilitate the consolidation of crucial industry volumes and obtain the best utilisation of an aircraft to assist in reducing the cost to market while stabilising the flow of emergency essential goods. The creation of a reliable frequency based on uptake will also open the way for smaller businesses to benefit from the initiative," he explains.

"The WarHorse team will procure charter aircraft including the payment of the costs and then rebill back to the agents on a cost basis dependant on percentage utilisation where required.

"Each agent will be responsible for their own billing to their clients in the same manner that is currently followed when utilising commercial airlines. The cargo sanitisation will follow the current standards and requirements of government regulation and is under the control of the airline handling agent in South Africa."

## **Securing airfreight, forwarding agents**

CEO of SAAFF, David Logan says that as a joint effort in this sector of business, the association will assist in facilitating the project by providing information and expertise via the association's portal through the links which have been established.

Van Gaalen says it is also important not to lose sight of the fact that the initiative is a contribution to alleviating some of the difficulties encountered through the Covid-19 pandemic and an inclusive avenue for players to assist in achieving this.

"Presently, the main focus of the Warhorse team, bolstered by industry professionals, is to secure cargo space and discussions are ongoing with various airlines, airfreight consolidators and some forwarding agents locally and abroad."