



August 4th, 2020

## Volkswagen helps South Africa in the battle against Covid-19

- Volkswagen Group South Africa hands over protective equipment for employees in clinics
- Further support in increasing Covid-19 test capacities in South Africa

**South Africa Port Elizabeth / Wolfsburg - Volkswagen Group South Africa (VWSA) has donated protective equipment to clinic employees to the provincial health ministry to better equip health care facilities in Nelson Mandela Bay to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the company and the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS) set up a laboratory for molecular virology within 18 days and optimized the processes there to increase test capacities.**



**The Port Elizabeth Virology Molecular Laboratory will increase Covid-19 test capacities in South Africa.**

Protective equipment for healthcare workers handed over today includes 50,000 N95 masks, 65,000 disposable gowns, 2 million disposable gloves, and 1,000 visors. There are also 200 digital infrared thermometers and 190 devices for monitoring the oxygen content in the blood and the pulse of Covid-19 patients. Volkswagen had procured the protective equipment as part of its ongoing aid initiatives in the country. The protective equipment was financed by the German

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The organisation Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) coordinated the project. As the main initiative of the Volkswagen Group South Africa in the fight against Covid-19, the former plant in Port Elizabeth - also with financial support from the BMZ - was converted into a hospital where patients have been treated since June 23.

Together with the BMZ, Volkswagen Group South Africa is committed to increasing Covid-19 test capacities in the country, including in the branch of the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS) in Port Elizabeth. The Port Elizabeth Virology Molecular Laboratory is responsible for the majority of the Covid-19 tests in the region and currently has a test capacity of around 1,500 tests per day. Volkswagen Group South Africa supported the NHLS by performing extensive renovations to turn an open office space into a fully-fledged molecular virology laboratory in the space of 18 days. Volkswagen also analyzed and recommended improvements to the NHLS test processes to increase efficiency. With full staffing in the renovated rooms, the current test capacities could be more than doubled and thus increased to over 3,000 tests per day. A crucial step in combating the further spread of Covid-19 in the country.

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