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Media Release

The South African National Standard for Drinking water quality has been revised and is open for public comment

The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) together with its Technical Committee 147- Water (SABS/TC 147) has been working to revise and update the requirements of the national standard for drinking water in South Africa. The draft seventh edition of the national standard, SANS 241 – Drinking Water Quality, is now open for public comment. The public enquiry phase ends on 29 June 2022.

The draft SANS 241 document combines the technical requirements from the previous Part 1 and Part 2 of SANS 241: 2015 and also stipulates the revised framework for drinking water quality risk management and specifications for drinking water quality in South Africa. All water that complies with the requirements of SANS 241 is deemed to be safe for human consumption.

“Drinking water that is of a quality for human consumption is a basic human need. While there are existing national standards to guide the quality of drinking water in South Africa, it is essential that these standards are reviewed and updated to reflect the latest knowledge and research – to ensure that quality drinking water reaches our communities. The requirements for the drinking water include the technical specifications, monitoring, and evaluation and risk management. Microbiological, physical, aesthetic and the chemical determinands of water have been revised according to the latest research and the framework has been updated to incorporate risk management as well as monitoring and evaluation,” says Jodi Scholtz, Lead Administrator of SABS.

SANS 241 is referenced in the Water Services Act (Act No. 108 of 1997) and in the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act (Act No.117 of 1998). All individuals and organisations involved in the process of delivering quality drinking water to communities will need to ensure that they are familiar with the changes contained in the draft standard - SANS 241 Ed7 DSS.

When the draft national standard (SANS 241 Ed7 DSS) is published it will replace the current South African National Standard (SANS) SANS 241:2015, all parts. This draft national standard (DSS) is undergoing the public enquiry process of consultation and will be published once due process has been concluded including responding to the comments submitted by the public. The duration of the

process will depend on the nature of the public comments which may include further stakeholder engagements in the standards development process.

The draft standard is available for free on the SABS website (<https://www.sabs.co.za/Standards-Development/draft/drafts.asp>) during the public enquiry process. Using the search criteria 241 will bring up the request form for DSS SANS241ed7. Once the form is complete the DSS will be emailed within minutes. The front page of the draft standard contains a link to the commenting template, a guideline of how to comment and the contact details to send comments to.

Ends.

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Notes to the editor:

1. 'Determinand/determinands' is generally accepted term/s used in the industry to describe the different properties of water, that is microbial or aesthetic. The drinking-water standards for New Zealand 2005 (DWSNZ) defines determinand as: A constituent or property of the water that is determined, or estimated, in a sample, for example: microbial determinand: total coliforms"
2. All South African National Standards (SANS) are developed and published through SABS technical committees. Technical Committees are represented by various stakeholder groupings including Industry, government, academia, and other groups that have an interest in the scope of work of the committees. The principles of developing standards are aligned to international best practice which includes openness, transparency, consensus, coherence and relevance. Participants participate in Technical Committees on a voluntary basis. Any individual or organisation that wants to participate can email info@sabs.co.za or interact via the SABS website.
3. The SABS is the national standardisation body in South Africa, established and mandated by the Standards Act (Act No. 8 of 2008). The SABS is mandated to develop, promote and maintain SABS; promote quality in connection to commodities, products and services; and render conformity assessment services and matters connected therewith.