

Charlene Louw appointed as new CEO of Beer Association of South Africa

The Beer Association of South Africa (Basa) has appointed Charlene Louw as its new chief executive officer. She will be leading the industry association that champions the vital role the beer industry plays in South Africa's economy, culture and heritage.



Charlene Louw, new CEO of the Beer Association of South Africa. Image supplied

Louw has extensive experience in commercial and corporate law that spans over 20 years. After practising as an attorney, she moved on to senior roles in the energy and private security sector. She has also held leadership positions in public-facing entities such as the Road Accident Fund and Pikitup.

Her successful track record in complex stakeholder engagements, regulatory environments and driving sustainable growth positions her as a knowledgeable and passionate advocate for the beer industry.

The beer industry is a significant contributor and a key pillar of the economy. The industry supports over R70bn gross value added (GVA) to the country's GDP, representing R1 in every R79 of South Africa's GDP.

Additionally, it supports the livelihoods of nearly a quarter of a million people.

Louw responded to her appointment by saying, "It is an honour to help shape this vital industry's goals and priorities, and continue to showcase the economic value of beer. As a drink of choice for South Africans, beer holds a unique place in our culture, heritage and traditions. It is a beverage that brings people together."

She highlighted that part of her vision for Basa is a renewed focus on establishing a culture of responsible drinking.

"Beer should be enjoyed mindfully. It's already a low-alcohol option compared to other alcoholic beverages," she added.

Stimulating the beer economy through Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise (SMME) development in the craft beer sector is also a priority to her.

Patricia Pillay, who recently stepped down as CEO, expressed full confidence in the new leadership.

"Charlene brings with her a new energy to BASA. She understands how important reaching out to members and key stakeholders is to ensure the best outcome for the beer industry. Her experience and background will also bring a fresh perspective to the beer industry."

Louw said her deep interest in policy and legislative matters is underpinned by a belief in cooperation.

"With so many role-players and stakeholders up and down the beer industry's value chain, it is essential to invest time and effort in relationships. We are all in this together. We must work toward a regulatory and legislative environment that unlocks the industry's true potential in terms of job creation and economic growth. Beer's success is a success for the entire South African economy."

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