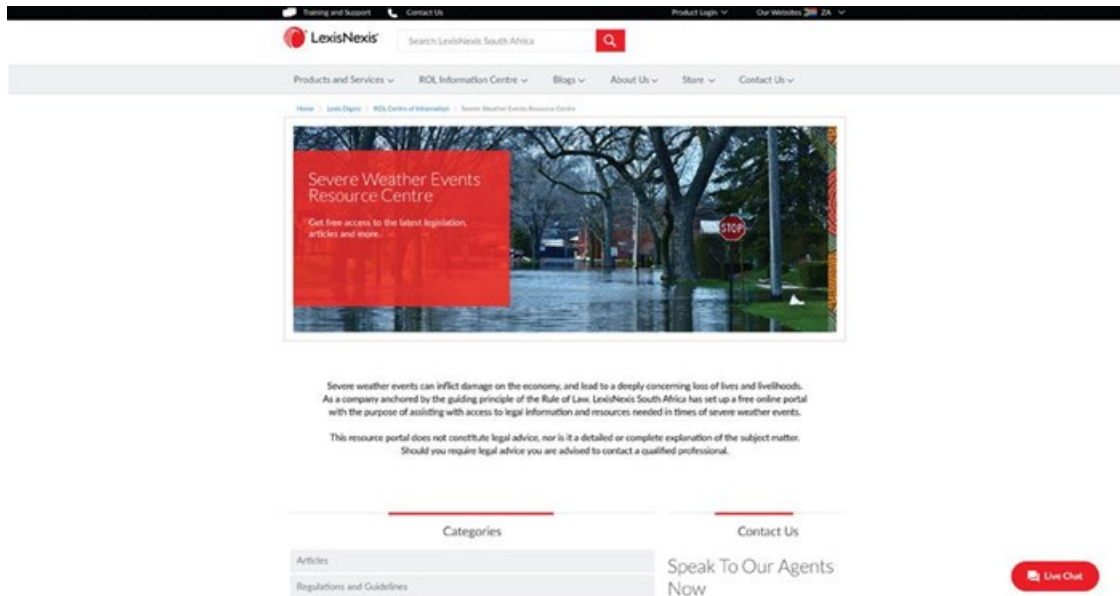


New severe weather online portal gives free access to legislation and resources following catastrophic floods

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Third public resource centre to be launched by LexisNexis South Africa



In the wake of the most devastating floods to hit KwaZulu-Natal in several decades, legal technology company [LexisNexis South Africa \(LNSA\)](#) has set up a free [online portal](#) providing easy access to critical legal information and resources for severe weather events.

The launch of the Severe Weather Events Resource Centre is in keeping with LNSA's focus on the [rule of law](#), and follows the launch of two other key online portals in the last few years, namely a [Covid-19 resource centre](#) and a [GBV resource centre](#).

The new severe weather events resource centre provides useful links to relevant regulations under the Disaster Management Act of 2002. It also offers information on disaster impact, how to access local and national assistance and aid, and a useful how-to-help list for those wanting to support government and NGO relief efforts. The portal is updated regularly with new and relevant information.

Last month's storm damage was initially classified as a provincial disaster before later being reclassified as a national disaster. Within a single 24-hour period, parts of the region were battered by more than 300mm of rainfall, a staggering third of the province's average annual rainfall. The storm left more 400 people dead and another 40,000 homeless. Infrastructure damage, including transportation, communication and electrical systems, was brutal. Roads, bridges, pipelines and power were damaged, and in many cases, completely destroyed. The busy Durban port as well as railway lines took a hammering, impacting KZN's already struggling economy. Repair and rebuilding will cost billions - R5.6 billion estimated for roads alone.

"Access to the law allows people impacted by a crisis like flooding to urgently obtain relief in a variety of ways," said LNSA CEO and chair of the board, Videsha Proothveerajh. "The new portal provides legal notices and regulations around severe weather events information, and practical help to identify local municipality ward councillors and help in accessing special Social Relief of Distress SASSA grants."

The Social Relief of Distress Grant offers food vouchers, cash for those with deceased relatives and money to replace school uniforms. People can make applications for assistance through their ward councillors.

Proothveerajh said sharing important information and guidance on applicable laws to communities impacted by crises was part of LNSA's commitment to the rule of law.

"The rule of law isn't only about practising, upholding and advancing it. It's as much about access to the law. From the ordinary person in the street to NGOs, public servants, academics and CEOs, the availability of key information, tools and resources to help support those affected is critical," she said.

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