

## CPA SETS THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON NEW COVID-19 VARIANT IN SOUTH AFRICA

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The Commercial Producers Association of South Africa (CPA) takes this opportunity to set the record straight regarding the new variant of Covid-19, named 501.V2, which was first identified here in December 2020.

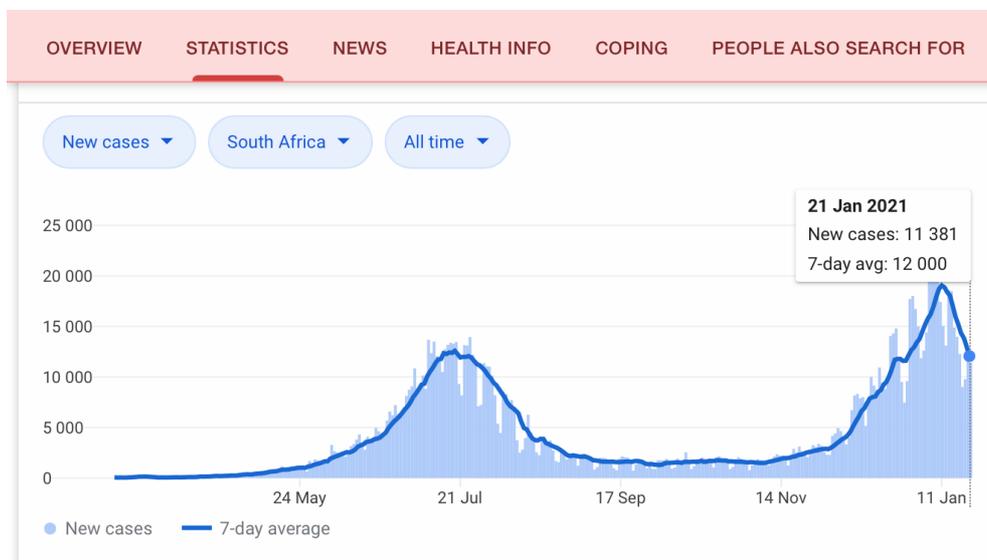
Unfortunately, some politicians and members of the press have portrayed 501.V2 in a very negative light despite not having any scientific facts on which to base their reporting. As a result, many of our international clients have been led to believe that production in South Africa has stopped as case numbers continue to rise in unprecedented numbers.

We wish to reassure you that South Africa remains very much open for business. Our borders are open and we are producing commercials under the same strict conditions as our international counterparts.

Earlier this week, the team of scientists who sequenced 501.V2's genome and have been studying it since, revealed the following facts about 501.V2:

1. 501.V2 is more transmissible which means it spreads faster than the original virus. This is why South Africa's "second wave" has come on more quickly and a greater number of people have been infected in a shorter space of time.
2. Although 501.V2 is more transmissible, it is not more virulent. This means that the illness caused by this variant is NOT more severe or dangerous than that caused by the first
3. The data suggests an immune response to the first variant does not necessarily protect you from 501.V2. If you have previously contracted Covid-19, you may not have immunity to 501.V2
4. There is currently no concern that PCR tests and isolation and quarantine guidelines are affected by changes in variants and, as such, new protocols are not required for 501.V2
5. Research is on-going as to the efficacy of the available vaccines on 501.V2. As viruses are expected to mutate, companies that have developed the vaccines have already taken this factor into consideration.

The good news is that, despite the increased rate of transmission of 501.V2, cases appear to have peaked at 21,832 new cases on 6 January 2021. In the two weeks since, the number of new cases have steadily been declining and the 7-day average over the last week was 12,000 cases per day. This appears to indicate that South Africa (and to a greater extent, the City of Cape Town) has now passed the peak of the second wave.



The CPA has confidence in its membership's ability to make commercials safely, as has been demonstrated in the work successfully produced for international clients since the pandemic began. We recently released an updated "Covid-19 Protocol" to assist our members and international clients to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 wherever possible.

The arrival of the 501.V2 variant has been challenging however it appears to be very much a part of the new global reality. We encourage clients to positively consider South Africa for your next project in the knowledge that 501.V2 should not be a deterrent.

Issued by:

Bobby Amm

Commercial Producers Association of South Africa

Tel: +27 82 683 0575 / Mail: [bobby@cpasa.tv](mailto:bobby@cpasa.tv) / Website: [www.cpasa.tv](http://www.cpasa.tv)