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**Media Release:**

**INDUSTRY CHANGES PUSH PLAYER SEVERANCE.**

Due to the changes in the Rugby Industry whereby the decision to reduce professional players has been instigated the Lions Rugby Company (Pty) Ltd. has been involuntarily required to offer mutual severance packages to contracted players.

The Company has been in communication with SAREO, The South African Rugby Players' Association (SARPA), and various CEO's of the different Rugby Franchises over the past year in order to determine the most appropriate way forward, change in competitions structures, the changes of the Industry as well as the increasing financial pressures.

The Lions Rugby Company (Pty) Ltd. began engaging with various players whereby a mutual separation and exiting agreements could be concluded with the support of SA Rugby and SARPA.

Mandisi Tshonti, General Manager of Player Affairs at SARPA, believes that it's within the best interest of the players and The Lions Rugby Company.

"With unions experiencing ongoing stress determined by factors within the industry, we can expect more of these processes to follow in the future. This process is not something new in the industry and as representatives of the players we were informed of planned consultations with the players. From past experiences we have seen that if this process is followed correctly it will be beneficial for both parties but we will nonetheless stay close to the process and advise the players," said Tshonti.

"After numerous meetings with all relative parties the industry changes have forced a change in strategic planning. Processes have been forced to ensure sustainability and succession plans within the franchise. For Lions Rugby equality, transparency and future opportunity is of paramount importance whereby confidentiality is key to the sensitivity of the process." concludes Bart Schoeman: High Performance Manager of the Lions Rugby Company (Pty) Ltd.

**Bart Schoeman**  
High Performance Manager  
Lions Rugby Company (Pty) Ltd.

**Mandisi Tshonti**  
General Manager of Player Affairs  
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