

Andrew Widegger takes over from Clifford Ross at the helm of the City Lodge Hotel Group

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After more than 30 years at the City Lodge Hotel Group, the last 15 years as Chief Executive Officer, Clifford Ross is stepping down from his role at the end of June due to ill health.



Changing of the guard at the City Lodge Hotel Group – Andrew Widegger (left) to succeed Clifford Ross (right) as Chief Executive Officer from 1 July, 2018.

He will be succeeded as Chief Executive Officer on 1 July by Andrew Widegger who has been the group's Financial Director since 1994. Alastair Dooley, a chartered accountant and the group's Divisional Director: Finance since 2009, will succeed Widegger as Chief Financial Officer. A new position has also been created in the group – that of Chief Operating Officer. This will be filled by Lindiwe Sangweni-Siddo, who joined the group as a Divisional Director: Operations in 2015.

Ross, 61, has been an icon in the local hospitality industry. He joined Hans Enderle in 1987 as the General Manager of City Lodge Randburg (the group's original hotel) and was promoted to Operations Director in 1991, Managing Director in 1994 and finally to the position of Chief Executive Officer of the group in 2003. During his tenure as CEO, he oversaw the growth of the group to 61 hotels, operating in six countries on the African continent.

The Chairman and Board of Directors express their sincere appreciation to Ross for his dedicated leadership, commitment and valued contribution and wish him well for the future.

Ross made the following comments in respect of his departure from the group:

“My journey with City Lodge has been a fantastic one, and for thirty one years I have been extremely fortunate to work for, and to help shape, an organisation that shares my values and that has made a meaningful impact on the tourism and hospitality sector in South Africa. I will miss directing, guiding and interacting with the group of people who run a great business for the benefit of so many, but I am extremely confident that the structures and personnel I have left in place, and the new CEO, Andrew Widegger, who will take over from me, will continue to innovate, nurture and grow the City Lodge Hotel Group to an exciting and formidable presence in its chosen markets.”

Apart from being the group's Financial Director for many years, Widegger has also had overall responsibility for the

group's Property and Development Division. His experience and exposure to the business and the industry over the years stand him in good stead to lead the group going forward.

Widegger made the following comments in respect of his promotion to the position of CEO:

"I am truly excited by the challenge that I am facing in leading the City Lodge Hotel Group into the future. I am also most grateful for the excellent foundation that has been provided to me by the former leaders of the group, Hans Enderle and Clifford Ross. I have no doubt, that with our fantastic products and especially the excellent, kind and caring people, that we will continue to expand and grow the group and its brands in the same well-managed and sustainable manner in which it has always been run."

Both Dooley and Sangweni-Siddo will join the board of directors in their new roles. Dooley has a wealth of experience and insight into the business that will ensure continuity in the financial function going forward. As part of his portfolio, he will also have oversight of the IT function in the group.

Sangweni-Siddo's newly created position of Chief Operating Officer will further bolster the management structure in the group and provide an extra dimension and depth to the organisation. She is a well-known and respected member of the hospitality industry. She joined the group from the Birchwood Hotel and OR Tambo Conference Centre where she was Chief Executive Officer of the Birchwood Management Company. Sangweni-Siddo has a Diploma in Hotel Management from the Swiss Hotel Association, Ecole Les Roches, Switzerland and a BSc Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management from Penn State University in the USA. She also serves as a board member on the Tourism BEE Charter Council.

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