

ER24 improves response times with what3words

It is often difficult to communicate exact locations to emergency response teams in South Africa's informal settlements and rural areas and on farms and beaches without any addresses or points of reference nearby.



In a medical emergency, ambulance response times are critical to saving lives. But too often, emergency services are forced to waste precious time and resources trying to locate the person in need of help. At best, this can be frustrating, and at worst waste crucial minutes that are the difference between life and death.

What3words is an app that has divided the world into three metre squares and given each one a unique address using three words. For example, [///rally.latches.steams](#) will take you to a precise spot in at the Johannesburg Botanical Gardens.

Now, medical care provider, ER24, has adopted the app to locate patients in hard-to-find places. “Some of the informal settlements we get called out to do not have street names. Usually, someone will meet us at a particular landmark and show us how to get from there. But, having an application that will be able to take us to the exact spot will curb having to drive up and down a road in search of the scene. It will make a change to our response times and make our jobs a little easier too,” says Jaco Kaalsen of ER24 Bloemfontein.

What3words began operations in South Africa in 2017, and is now accepted across a number of platforms including the iStore, and is also used by the Automobile Association of South Africa to help locate its members needing roadside assistance. Zulzi now allows customers to get groceries delivered within one hour to their what3words address and The

Platter's Wine Guide has listed the address for over 700 wineries in its 2019 guide.

The app is free to download for both iOS and Android, or by browser, and works offline – making it ideal for use in areas with an unreliable data connection. The what3words address format is also consistent anywhere in the world, and available in 36 languages including isiZulu, Afrikaans and isiXhosa.

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