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MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE OFFICE OF MR MARTHINUS VAN SCHALKWYK, MINISTER OF TOURISM, SOUTH AFRICA

Minister of Tourism appoints the new Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) Awards Committee

South Africa's Minister of Tourism, Mr Marthinus van Schalkwyk, has announced the appointment of the new Awards Committee of the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA). The committee is responsible for overseeing the implementation and management of the TGCSA's grading system, South Africa's only officially recognised system for the star grading of accommodation establishments.

The three-year term of the new Awards Committee ends on 31 May 2015.

The new committee is chaired by Graham Wood, Managing Director of gaming, hotel and entertainment group, Tsogo Sun. Wood, a chartered accountant, has 15 years' experience in the hospitality industry and is joined on the new committee by 11 highly experienced individuals, who bring with them an enormous wealth of knowledge of the tourism industry in South Africa.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank the previous Awards Committee, under the leadership of Peter Bacon, for their hard work and commitment to quality assurance in South Africa. Thanks to their hard work and commitment, we now have a credible, globally benchmarked system of quality assurance for accommodation in South Africa, which can be relied upon by visitors when making their choice of establishment," said Minister van Schalkwyk.

"I would like to congratulate the New Awards Committee on their appointment. I look forward to seeing the impact they will have on the Tourism Grading Council, and as a result the standard of South Africa's tourism industry, over their three-year tenure. Ensuring that South Africa's tourism industry is on par with the best in the world is vital if we want to continue to see this sector, which is vital to the growth and development of this country, succeed and flourish in the future," said Minister van Schalkwyk.

The members of the new TGCSA Awards Committee are:

- Mr. Yusuf Patel, Director at Black Moon Design Studio, who brings his extensive décor and design expertise to the committee.
- Ms. Amor Malan, from the QuadPara Association Gauteng and a former South African Tourism board member, who is well versed on Universal Accessibility matters.

- Ms. Nina Freysen-Pretorius, current chairperson of the Southern African Association of Conferencing Institutions (SAACI). Nina and her team assisted the TGCSA with the review and finalisation of the current Grading Criteria for the Meetings, Exhibitions and Special Events sector.
- Mr. Julie Joe Madala, current owner of several catering and decor enterprises, who has experience in the décor and catering industries.
- Ms. Caroline Ungesbock, National President of the National Accommodation Association of South Africa (NAA-SA), and an establishment owner. Caroline has vast experience in the guest accommodation sector which includes B&B's, Guest Houses and County Houses.
- Mr. Alan Romburgh, Director at the Cape Town Hotel School and a former chairman of the Awards Committee as well as having served on the outgoing awards committee. Alan provides much needed continuity on the committee.
- Mr. Jegie Padmanathan, group hotel operations and development Director at Peermont, commences his second term on the awards committee; His extensive experience in the hospitality industry bodes well for the TGCSA.
- Mr. Tony Hazel, Chief Operations Officer at the Go Touch Down Resorts. Tony served on the previous awards committee where his experience in the timeshare industry was instrumental in the finalisation of the self-catering grading criteria.
- Ms Nonhlanhla Tshabalala, Owner of TMLB Architects is an architect by profession bringing her extensive experience in this sector to the awards committee.
- Mr Mark Goveia is the owner of Hospitality Grading and a current Accredited Grading Assessor with the TGCSA. Mark has worked with the Caravan and Camping as well as the Backpackers and Hostelling sectors for many years.
- Ms Nyeleti Mushwana is the owner of the NMN Grand Hotel and Karibu Lodge in Tzaneen and a former winner of the Emerging Tourism Entrepreneur of the Year Award. Her entrepreneurial flair as well as understanding of small business dynamics is a benefit for the committee.

For more information on the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa please visit www.tourismgrading.co.za

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