



tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**REMARKS BY MR FISH MAHLALELA, DEPUTY MINISTER OF TOURISM AT THE
CERTIFICATION AWARDS FOR BQV PROGRAMME AT AFRICA TRAVEL INDABA
IN DURBAN ON 15 MAY 2024**

Programme Director

Ms Bronwen Auret

Chief Quality Assurer Officer

Mr Sibonelo Nzimande

Chief Director Tourism Development KZN

Mr Sibusiso Gumbi

Acting CEO Tourism KZN

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me extend my heartfelt gratitude for being part of this memorable event especially during the Africa Travel tradeshow, the largest tourism trade show on the African continent, bringing together travel industry professionals, exhibitors, and media from around the world to showcase the best of Africa's tourism offerings.

This ceremony today, is geared towards facilitating a recognition event for the awarding of the certificates to the qualified products.

Over the years, the Indaba has thoroughly evolved and has increasingly created opportunities for business development for emerging entrants and Smme's who may otherwise not have had the opportunity to participate in international trade shows.

At the same time, African Travel Indaba provides Smme's with opportunities for business skills development as well as capacity building through targeted seminars and workshops which are held alongside the trade shows.

As custodians of quality assurance and service excellence, Tourism Grading Council which is a business unit of South African Tourism rolled out the Basic Quality Verification Programme launched in KwaZulu-Natal.

This programme provides a structured approach that will build confidence in many accommodation products, especially those in rural areas.

This is to enable tourism products that do not meet the core requirements of grading to access trade with the tourism sectors support and provide access to funding opportunities to develop the offering to meet core requirement for formal grading over time.

This programme was piloted in Eastern Cape and successfully rolled out in KZN last year.

The vision is to ensure that all accommodation products including those in rural areas have formal quality assurance levels in place, thus highlighting the importance that South Africa places on excellence and providing experience to all tourists.

The Basic Qualification Verification (BQV) programme, implemented by the Tourism Grading Council of SA (TGCSA) focuses specifically on support for Homestays and other emerging tourism products in Villages, Town, Small Dorpies (VTSD).

The programme provides a structured development programme to enable tourism accommodation products who do not meet the core requirements of grading to access trade with the support of the tourism sector and provide access to funding opportunities within the sector.

This will ensure that the tourism accommodation products develop their offering to meet core requirements for formal grading over a period of time. The Programme allows products to participate in the Basic Quality Verification programme for a maximum duration of two (2) years, after which they would be encouraged to apply for a full star grading assessment.

The BQV programme was piloted in Eastern Cape between 01 October 2020 and 31 October 2021, following the pilot, the programme successfully rolled out in KwaZulu-Natal in 01 November 2022 concluding on 30 November 2023.

In 2023, the project rolled-out to KwaZulu-Natal province with 29 graduates trained to facilitate the assessment of the products.

Two products enrolled for formal grading, Comfort Zone BnB under bed and breakfast category at a 3 star level, unfortunately the grading lapsed and the property has not renewed it's grading. We have Midgley's Hotel graded under the hotel category at a 2 star.

The programme concluded with the project on 30 November 2023, a total of two hundred and ten (210) products were enrolled and assessed. The total number of products that

met the BQV criteria and will be receiving the certificate is one hundred and fifty-two (152), thirty (30) products were unsuccessful while twenty-eight (28) received an unsure outcome due to outstanding criteria requirements.

As the programme has successfully concluded for the province of KwaZulu-Natal, the TGCSA would like to recognize the products that qualified with a certificate.