



**SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM**

**SPEAKER NOTES : DEPUTY MINISTER OF TOURISM, MAGGIE SOTYU**  
**EVENT DATE : 05 FEBRUARY 2025**

**SUBJECT : ROAD TO G20 – TGCSA FREE FEBRUARY**

**VENT: : Launch of the TGCSA free grading promotion**

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### **Introduction**

- Good morning, esteemed guests and stakeholders.
- I am honoured to be here today to discuss GRADING – a vital component for the continued Quality Assurance of South Africa's tourism sector, through the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa or TGCSA.

### **About the TGCSA**

- The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) is the official quality assurance body for tourism products in South Africa. Through the TGCSA we work with the greater industry in ensuring that South Africa's tourism offerings meet high-quality standards, thereby enhancing the overall visitor experience and promoting the country as a premier travel destination.
- As a business unit of South African Tourism, the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa is recognised for implementing a globally benchmarked system of quality assurance for various types of accommodation and venues, including hotels, guest houses, and facilities for meetings, exhibitions, and special events.
- Through the work that the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa does, we ensure that establishments can meet the high expectations of the travellers .
- These establishments can then display the TGCSA grading insignia and star grading, which signifies quality and gives tourists and patrons confidence in the standards of the places they visit.
- We do this with the help of our qualified assessors whose role it is to evaluate establishments annually across nine provinces.
- We are here to thank all the establishments that have opted to be graded and more importantly we are here to encourage those establishments that are not yet graded to take up the FREE FEBRUARY offer that the TGCSA is offering for this month.
- This will go a long way in influencing the quality of experience that travellers have when staying at our establishments.
- Globally, up to 91% of consumers believe hotel star ratings are important in selecting a travel destination
- Those travellers, who travel for business events (Meetings Incentives Conference and Exhibitions (MICE) purposes sector look for quality assured accommodation, personal

safety, health safety, good air connectivity and political stability are among key considerations for Meetings and Incentives decision-makers. These are the delegates that usually come into groups to attend meetings and events.

## **G20 Preparation**

- South Africa's presidency of the G20, from 1 December 2024 to 30 November 2025, represents a significant opportunity for both the nation and the African continent.
- South Africa has established three core themes for its G20 presidency; **Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainable Development**. These themes are designed to foster inclusive growth and address inequalities both within and between nations.
- This leadership role allows South Africa to advocate for the interests of developing countries, particularly those in Africa, within a global framework that influences economic policies and governance.
- The G20 Summit presents a unique global opportunity for our Tourism Sector as thousands of international leaders, delegates and media will congregate in the country, putting a spotlight on our accommodation establishments and infrastructure.
- To successfully maintain our global high-quality graded status, it is imperative that we increase our portfolio of internationally recognised graded establishments and ensure a world-class experience for all visitors.
- Quality assurance through our grading system is essential for building trust with international travellers and G20 participants. Grading is not only critical for the immediate success of the tourism sector but also in preparation for the G20 Summit in November 2025.
- That's why the TGCSA is launching the 'Free February' campaign, which is why we are here today.
- The 'Free February' campaign is designed to encourage, empower and enable tourism establishments that are new to grading, or have not been graded in the last three years to get graded for free this February.

## **Universal Accessibility and Sustainability**

- Among many other criteria within the grading process, I think its important that we highlight Universal Accessibility and Sustainability.
- Universal Accessibility refers to the ability of all people to have equal opportunity and access to a service or product regardless of their social class, ethnicity, ancestry or physical disability or impairment.
- Through the Grading Council, South Africa is adapting by ensuring universal accessibility to this important sector of the market.
- In South Africa, this remains largely an untapped revenue stream in our sector, and by increasing the number of Universal Accessibility graded properties – or UA – we will no doubt increase our revenue from this market.



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- Sustainability is increasingly recognised as an essential consideration for ensuring that the industry can thrive without compromising the environment, local cultures, and communities.
- As global travel becomes more accessible, the need for sustainable practices has become urgent due to the significant impacts of tourism on natural resources and local economies.
- The Green Tourism Incentive Programme is a collaboration with the Department of Tourism and the Industrial Development Corporation, through which tourism enterprises are encouraged to adopt cleaner renewable energy sources.
- It's important to highlight the need for the entire industry to keep Universal Accessibility and Sustainability in the back of their minds in their everyday operations.
- Not only are these considerations important in adding to our country's appeal for the international traveller, they also ensure that we are an inclusive destination that is morally conscious and forward thinking.

### **Closing**

- In conclusion, I encourage all establishments, to reach out to the TGCSA and start the grading process if not already graded.
- 2025 is an historic year that will echo into the future. Our job is to make sure that the echoes are positive and the industry shines even brighter.

Thank you.