



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X424, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa. Tel. (+27 12) 444 6780, Fax (+27 12) 444 7027
Private Bag X9154, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa. Tel. (+27 21) 469 5800, Fax: (+27 21) 465 3216

Minister Tokozile Xasa launches the National Tourism Monitors Programme in Gauteng

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“Tourism is not only an economic activity, but an essential vehicle that promotes mutual understanding between a tourist and a host community. The visitor experience is a key priority of the National Tourism Sector Strategy and specifically puts an emphasis on the enhancement of local destination sites, and this is why we saw the need to pilot the National Tourism Monitors Programme”, said the Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa during the launch of this programme in Soweto.

The National Tourism Monitors programme is aimed at enhancing the visitor experience as well as improve the safety of tourists. It will create employment for 200 unemployed youth, aged 18 to 35 years who will be trained, mentored and placed as monitors at various Gauteng tourist sites for a 36-month period. Each participant will receive a stipend and uniform in line with the Expanded Public Works Programme.

Recruitment started in June 2017 for youth with a matric, good communication skills, ability to speak English and two African Languages, and prepared to work shifts. The Monitors will receive accredited and non-accredited training, mentorship and will gain practical work experience. Their duties will include providing tourists information to visitors at tourist sites; patrolling within the identified areas; and reporting crime incidents to SAPS and other relevant enforcement agencies.

“The Tourism Monitors Programme is part of a long term strategy to enhance tourism destinations through safety and development of vibrant precincts and sites. In partnership with the Gauteng Economic Development and facilitated by the Gauteng Tourism Agency, the programme is part of government’s Expanded Public Works Programme”, highlighted the Minister.

In his welcoming address, the MEC for Economic Development Lebogang Maile said in ensuring that the destinations are safe, the National Tourism Monitors Programme will play a meaningful role in growing Gauteng and ensure that the province continues to make memorable experiences for tourists.

The launch was followed by a community engagement, where the Minister interacted with various tourism stakeholders of Orlando West. Key among the issues raised was the security of small businesses as well as that of tourists around all tourist sites. Following the fatal shooting of a manager of a popular restaurant Sakhumzi in Vilakazi Street, the Department of Tourism had a meeting with stakeholders within the Vilakazi precinct to address safety issue. The outcome of these engagements culminated into the conception of the National Tourism Monitors Programme.

Enquiries:

Mr Thamie Mthembu
Media Liaison Officer to the Minister
Department of Tourism
Telephone: +27 (0) 12 444 6772
Cellphone: +27 (0) 64 890 5592
Email: tmthembu@tourism.gov.za