



tourism

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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The National Department of Tourism and its stakeholders embark on a campaign to raise awareness on service excellence

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The recent announcement of the tourist arrival statistics by Tourism Minister Mr Marthinus van Schalkwyk indicates that ours is a country preferred by those seeking new experiences. In order to ensure that South Africa maintains its international competitiveness as a top tourism destination, a culture of service excellence needs to be entrenched amongst those in the tourism value chain.

The **“Power of One Sessions”** hosted by the National Department of Tourism (NDT) in partnership with South African Tourism (SAT), Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA), and Tourism Marketing Levy of South Africa (TOMSA) seeks to drive the Service excellence message through its country wide roadshows. The KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) leg of the road-show kicked off with more than 100 delegates attending. The session focused on the importance of Market Research; the Grading of Establishments; Tourism Market Levies and most importantly the concept of Service Excellence.

The Marketing Research presentation by South African Tourism (SAT) provided delegates valuable information about the prospective local and international visitors for the KZN province. Domestically, the total tourist spend went up from R9,2 billion in 2011 to an estimated R10,2 billion in 2012. This was due to an increase in average spend per trip. The growth of visitors from emerging markets such as China, Brazil and India necessitates the need for understanding those markets.

Tourism Grading Council's Thekiso Rakolojane gave a detailed presentation on the importance grading for tourism establishments. “Grading ensures that the country keeps up with international standards” said Rakolojane. Mr Rakolojane highlighted that there was an increase in the number of establishments that were using fraudulent methods to increase their grading. The Tourism Grading Council assured delegates that they would be taking harsh measures to deal with illegally graded establishments.

Tourism Marketing Levy South Africa (TOMSA) reported on the role of the organisation and the value of collecting a marketing levy from tourism establishments. The levies collected by TOMSA are utilised to fund campaigns aimed at marketing South Africa globally.

The Service Excellence Campaign stems from the Tourism Department's National Service Excellence Strategy which was drafted after inconsistent service levels in the tourism value chain were identified. One such inconsistency was the lack of Customer and guest relation skills. The road-show seeks to address these inconsistencies and to capacitate current and emerging tourism SMME's with service

excellence skills that will give them a competitive edge within the sector. The road – shows will roll on to the following provinces: Gauteng, Mpumalanga and the Free State.

ENDS

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