

## TRANSPORT AND TOURS

- Provide accessible tour buses with safe tie down facilities, sensitized drivers and adequate line of sight for viewing;
- Provide hydraulic lift to larger buses (e.g Quantum);
- Place monitors in train, bus stations and airports;
- Provide information about the tours in Braille, audio and large print during the tour;
- Audible announcement at each destination.



*“Tourism activities should promote human rights, particularly the rights of the most vulnerable groups”*

UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

Useful information to facilitate **Universal Accessibility** can be obtained from the following organisations:

South African Disability Alliance(SADA)

Tel: (012) 452 3811

Department of Women, Children and People with Disability (Presidency)

Tel: (012) 300 5488 / 5483

Tourism Grading Council of South Africa:

Tel: (011) 895 3000

[www.tourismgrading.co.za](http://www.tourismgrading.co.za)

For further information on **Universal Accessibility** in Tourism Contact:

National Department of Tourism

Private Bag x 424, Pretoria, 0001

Tel: (+27 12) 310 3911

Fax: (+ 27 12) 322 2682

Call Centre Number: + 27 86 111 2468

[www.tourism.gov.za](http://www.tourism.gov.za)

## UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY IN TOURISM



**tourism**

Department:  
Tourism  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY

Universal access refers to the ability of all people to have equal opportunity and access to a service or product from which they can benefit, regardless of their social class, ethnicity, ancestry or physical disabilities.

On the international front, Universal Accessibility has taken the centre stage. South Africa has followed suit and the tourism industry is slowly but surely adapting to the international trend by ensuring Universal Accessibility to this important sector of the market. In order to conform to Universal Accessibility standards, travelling packages and tourism products should be designed to meet and exceed the needs of people with disabilities, senior citizens and families travelling with children.

## WHY IS ACCESSIBILITY IMPORTANT

Tourism products are designed with the sole purpose of being enjoyed by all tourists i.e. young, elderly and people with disabilities. Statistics from the United Nations Social and Economic Council (UNESCAP) indicate that the potential global market for Universal Accessible Tourism (UAT) is 650 million people with differing disabilities and 600 million elderly people. According to UNESCAP, revenue generated by this market is a staggering \$13.6 billion in the United States alone.

Many elderly people, families and people with disabilities are keen to travel, but wide variation in the level of access within destinations, combined with poor information and negative experiences, discourage potential customers. In South Africa, the potential market for Universal Accessible tourism represent around 30% of the population and a portion of the 30% has adequate disposable income to travel which represent an untapped segment of the market.

The demand for Universal Accessible tourism products needs to be addressed urgently. It would be prudent for the tourism service providers to consider the merits of accelerating measures to address the needs of this sector of the market, based on the predicted demand which far exceeds the current availability of Universal Accessible accommodation, services and facilities. Improved accessibility will not only result in economic benefit to the tourism industry but will also assist in overall social integration.

## CRITICAL TOURIST TOUCH POINTS FOR UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY

As the National Department of Tourism we believe that Universal Accessibility would be greatly enhanced by up-scaling service delivery in all the critical touch points such as the following:

### ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- Develop in-house programs to raise awareness, sensitivity and skills levels to provide more appropriate services for people with disabilities, the elderly and young children;
- Ensure that staff members are trained to inform and advise people with physical disabilities about accessible services and attractions;
- Communicate more to people with disabilities and their organizations to exchange accurate and reliable information for strengthening tourism services to better meet diverse consumer needs;
- Make websites accessible to all people with disabilities;

- Introduce Braille signage and voice-aided facilities in lifts and at all information points and encourage the installation of loop induction systems;
- Involve people with disabilities in the Tourism Grading process

## ACCOMMODATION

- Provide information about the accessibility of accommodation facilities to all categories of tourist with disabilities;
- Ensure universal design principles are adopted in the design and operation of accommodation facilities;
- Provide a safe and accessible evacuation route and plan;
- Provide vibrating pads for guests with hearing impairments. These should be connected to a fire alarm or smoke alarm;
- Fire alarms should make both visual and audio warnings;
- Ensure availability of wireless telephone with text messaging service.

