

South African Game Lodges welcome the new quality standards

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Tonight, the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA), a business unit of South African Tourism launched the Grading Criteria and Minimum Requirements of Entry for Game Lodges following months of consultation and engagement with the Game Lodge industry, a process which included both one-on-one, personal engagements as well as an on-line based approach to ensure a broader reach.

Stakeholders had an opportunity to provide commentary on key areas of the Grading Criteria which included the accommodation part of the establishment, the Game, Game facilities as well as Services. More than 450 stakeholders provided feedback on the Criteria.

“The Game Lodge Grading Criteria have been a long time in the making. We are excited to finally have in place a grading system that will ensure our esteemed lodges are recognised globally and align with our mandate to make the stars a mark of excellence in accommodation across all of South Africa,” says Thulani Nzima, Chief Executive Officer of South Africa.

Game Lodges play a critical role towards South African Tourism's marketing initiatives through their collection of the TOMSA levy (1 percent levy charged to tourist visiting various tourist facilities). There are some 350 *Star Graded* lodges in South Africa, with more establishments joining monthly.

“South Africa is home to these niche establishments many of which are recognised, renowned and rewarded the world over for their top notch luxurious offerings. Indeed, the ‘Game Lodge’ is the quintessential and iconic experience that millions globally automatically associate with a South African holiday”, concludes Nzima.

The full Game Lodge Grading Criteria may be viewed on the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa's website, www.tourismgrading.co.za

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South African Tourism is the national tourism agency responsible for the marketing of South Africa as a preferred tourist destination. It is headed up by Chief Executive Officer Mr Thulani Nzima.