

# Tourism Breaking News

## SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

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### Tourism Grading Council Ups the Ante at its INDABA 2013 Stakeholder Update

The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa's (TGCSA) annual Stakeholder Update was a highly sought-after event at INDABA 2013 in the Durban International Conventional Centre, with more than 300 stakeholders securing their seats to hear first-hand of the key activities the TGCSA has undertaken in delivering benefits to start graded establishments.

The first Stakeholder Function was held at INDABA 2011 as a platform to engage stakeholders on changes introduced by the then new Grading Criteria and Minimum Requirements that were implemented in October 2010. Just on 200 stakeholders attended that event, including hotel group CEOs, government entities, industry associates and journalists.

Says Mr Graham Wood, Chairman of the Awards Committee: "This event has grown by leaps and bounds in the last three years. It is encouraging to note growing stakeholder interest. It is testament that we all subscribe to quality assurance. This can only bode well for the industry."

Says South African Tourism Chief Executive Officer, Mr Thulani Nzima: "We are determined to make star grading as accessible as possible and we are just as determined to encourage every single establishment out there to join the quality star graded fold. INDABA gives us a brilliant opportunity to do so as it is the one event a year where the larger industry gathers to network, to seek partnerships and to plan for growth and profitability. With current phenomenal growth in arrivals numbers, it goes without saying that our quality assurance system plays a pivotal role ensuring return visitors to our shores."

Delegates at the INDABA 2013 update heard from TGCSA Chief Quality Assurance Officer, Ms Thembi Kunene on work that Grading Council has done in the past year to ensure that the country's only official quality assurance system maintains its credibility and relevance to travellers. They also learned more about how TGCSA is aligning itself to other international quality assurance bodies and systems.

The 2013 Stakeholder update focussed on:

- Feedback on the three year review of the Grading Criteria that were implemented in September 2012
- Introduction of the newly appointed TGCSA Awards Committee
- Update on marketing initiatives and benefits of grading that TGCSA delivers to the industry
- Update on new game lodge grading criteria

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