

Reduced cost of grading will encourage small enterprises to get graded

Through the integration of the Tourism Grading Support Programme under the broader Tourism Incentive Programme of the Department of Tourism into the systems and processes of the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA), tourism establishments will be able to save up to 90% on the cost of grading starting February 2017.



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This will alleviate some of the cost burden on small enterprises and ensure a single point for enterprises to access all the benefits of being star graded.

This decision came as a result of discussions between the department and the TGCSA to increase the programme benefits and to simplify the application process. Initially launched in 2015 the objective of the Tourism Grading Support Programme was to encourage more accommodation establishments and venues to get graded and stay graded under the star grading system of the TGCSA.

The pilot phase offered graded establishments rebates of between 30% and 60% on assessment fees retroactively. The programme has, however, now been integrated into the improved online application process of the [TGCSA](#) with an increased benefit through upfront discounts of up to 90% on assessment fees.

“The Department is confident that the simplified process, together with greater benefits offered, will encourage significantly

greater numbers of enterprises to get graded and conform to recognised quality standards, which in turn contributes to the overall destination competitiveness of South Africa”, said Victor Tharage, director-general of the Department of Tourism.

The improvement and transfer of the programme, which went live on 10 February 2017 will both assist in reducing the cost of grading and streamline the grading processes. "We welcome this important implementation role entrusted on by the department, which will further help remove barriers – chiefly, cost – that may be preventing particularly smaller businesses from becoming graded," said Sisa Ntshona, CEO of South African Tourism.

For further information and frequently asked questions (FAQs) please visit the websites of either the [TGCSA](#) or the [Department of Tourism](#) or contact Nelisiwe Yengwa at the TGCSA (Tel. 011 895 3027 and email nelisiwe@tourismgrading.co.za) or Mputle Seloane at the Department of Tourism (Tel. 012 444 6429 and email mseloane@tourism.gov.za).

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