

MINISTRY OF TOURISM

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY:**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY:**

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 **Mr J Vos (DA) to ask the Minister of Tourism:**

Whether SA Tourism has conducted any studies to determine why the accommodation industry, especially hotels, are cancelling their membership to the specified entity’s grading schemes; if not, why not; if so, what (a) are the relevant details and (b) steps are being taken to curb this trend? NW2214E

**Reply**

No, SA Tourism has not conducted any studies to determine why the accommodation industry. The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) will be conducting formal research in quarter three of 2016/17, to determine the perceptions of grading in the sector which will provide insight into the reasons for cancellations.

1. The results of this research study will assist the TGCSA greatly in its strategy development and implementation.
2. In order the address the cancellations, the TGCSA is currently implementing the following

 measures and actions:

1. TGCSA is working closely with NDT to address the cost of grading through the Grading Support Programme offered by the Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP).
2. TGCSA’s Basket of Benefits continues to be developed and updated to ensure the business support services and discounts available on the platform are relevant to all categories. Registration of establishments on the Basket of Benefits platform continues to grow.
3. TGCSA has opted to implement Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Provincial Consumer Protection Authorities directly. The basis of these memoranda is to partner with and enlist the services and support of the provincial bodies to eradicate the illegal usage of stars in the provinces through consumer and trade education initiatives. MOUs have either been concluded or are in the final stages of conclusion between TGCSA and the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Gauteng and Kwazulu-Natal authorities. The remaining provinces are currently at consultation phase. TGCSA has also presented the consumer impact of the illegal usage of stars at the National Consumer Forum.
4. TGCSA has provided input to Treasury on the amendments to the National Travel Policy. This policy and pending revisions have been closely linked to star grading and will encourage grading amongst establishments as well as direct government procurement of travel services.