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PRESS RELEASE

TOURISM SAFETY INITIATIVE GAINS MOMENTUM

Pretoria, South Africa, 12 August 2015: The Tourism Safety Initiative (“TSI”) is rapidly gaining momentum as the industry’s primary platform for the coordination, promotion and provision of safety support to tourists and the tourism and travel trade.

TSI is travel and tourism private sector safety support initiative, managed and driven by the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA). The Council recently appointed a dedicated project manager for TSI, Mr. Ian Janse van Vuuren, who has a long history of working within the intelligence and security environments. Furthermore, the TSI now boasts a simpler, newly-revamped online incident reporting portal.

The initiative operates on two legs:

1. Proactive risk management, which involves encouraging tourism businesses to report criminal incidents against tourists through the TSI portal. Based on *inter alia* these incident reports, the TSI will produce weekly, bi-weekly, monthly and quarterly research reports for select client groupings in this space. Incident reporting is encouraged, even in situations where the case has been opened with the South African Police Services.
2. Reactive incident management, which will see TSI in collaboration with other partners, offer emergency support to the affected businesses or individual tourists.

Whilst the proactive risk management aspect of the project is already active, work is currently underway to finalise finer details of a TSI reactive incident management system which will see the industry tap into a central resource for access to emergency tourist support where required.

TBCSA Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Mmatšatši Ramawela said TSI was an important project for the industry and that she was pleased with the renewed energy with which the project is being pursued. “A lot of work still lies ahead for us, but overall we are pleased with the progress that has been achieved thus far”. She highlighted the alignment of TSI to regional and provincial tourism safety initiatives, the finalisation of the TSI emergency support model, agreement on messaging and the conclusion of Private-Public-Partnerships with relevant role-players as some of the major goals the initiative still has to reach.

On the issue of collaboration, Janse van Vuuren, echoed Ramawela’s view, saying: “By our own admission we cannot do this by ourselves with the limited resources at our disposal”. He underlined the importance of better collaboration within the industry, as well as with the authorities in order to address the issue of crimes targeted at tourists. “Remember, crime is the core business of criminals, but fighting crime is not the core business of the travel and tourism industry. This is fundamental paradox that will continue to favour criminals and their modus operandi until Private-Public

Partnerships allows a better flow of information sharing and collaboration”.

Ramawela moved to assure the travel trade and tourists that all information reported through the system was confidential and would be handled with care.

“From its formative years within the Southern Africa Tourism Services Association (SATSA), the project’s focus was on collecting and collating data on criminal incidents against tourists in the country to better understand the nature of these incidents and the extent of the problem. So far we have made some headway but in order for us to map out a full picture of how crime is affecting our industry, we require the full support of the business and tourists to report these incidents. We understand business concerns about reputational risk and can give the assurance that all information received is handled with care and sensitivity”.

All incidents can be logged on the TSI website portal www.tourismsafety.co.za or sent via email on info@tourismsafety.co.za .

For more information about the Tourism Safety Initiative, contact Mr. Ian Janse van Vuuren via email on tsi@tbcsa.travel or phone +27(0) 12 664 0120. Ends

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Editor’s Notes

ABOUT THE TOURISM SAFETY INITIATIVE

The Tourism Safety Initiative (“TSI”) is a travel and tourism private sector safety support initiative managed under the auspices of the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (“TBCSA”). TSI was established in 2008 with the aim of coordinating, promoting and providing safety support to tourists and the local travel trade. The initiative has rapidly become the vehicle through which business in the industry can make a substantial contribution towards addressing safety and security challenges affecting tourists in South Africa, as well as change perceptions about South Africa being an “unsafe” destination.

ABOUT TBCSA

Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) is a member-based organisation, made up of Tourism Associations as well as leading businesses operating in the Travel and Tourism sector. The Council seeks to ensure that the industry is unified and speaks with **one** voice when engaging relevant stakeholders on macro-economic issues affecting the sector.

Sector associations affiliated to the TBCSA are as follows:

1. AHI – Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut
2. AASA – Airlines Association of Southern Africa
3. ASATA – Association of Southern African Travel Agents
4. BARSAA – Board of Airline Representatives of South Africa
5. EXSA – Exhibition & Event Association of Southern Africa
6. FGASA – Field Guides Association of Southern Africa
7. FEDHASA – Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa
8. NAA – SA - National Accommodation Association of South Africa
9. PHASA – Professional Hunters Association of South Africa
10. SACA – South African Chefs Association
11. SAACI – Southern African Association for the Conference Industry
12. SABOA – Southern African Bus Operators’ Association
13. SATSA – Southern Africa Tourism Services Association
14. SAVRALA – Southern African Vehicle Rental Association
15. SAYTC - South African Youth Travel Confederation
16. VOASA - Vacation Ownership Association of South Africa