

**TBCSA Offices**

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TBCSA - 2008/011486/08

**TBCSA**  
TOURISM BUSINESS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**Press Release****TBCSA PRESENTS CALCULATED, DRIVEN AND GRADUAL RE-OPENING  
OF TOURISM TO PARLIAMENT'S TOURISM PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE**

**JOHANNESBURG, 10 JUNE 2020** –The Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) successfully presented the Tourism Recovery Strategy to Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Tourism yesterday.

The data-driven Tourism Recovery Strategy advocates unequivocally for an earlier phased reopening of international tourism to South Africa as soon as September 2020.

While one of the comments raised by the Tourism Portfolio Committee was that the proposed September timing may be impacted by the predicted peak in COVID-19 infections experts estimate could happen around September, the TBCSA highlighted that the reopening would be dependent on the development and roll out of stringent and practical health-focused protocols by the travel and tourism value-chain to safeguard staff, travelers and guests.

The presentation to the Tourism Portfolio Committee was an important step in the "shoulder-to-shoulder" collaboration that private and public sector stakeholders have agreed is needed for tourism to reopen and contribute to South Africa's economic and job creation prospects.

"We acknowledge the good work being done by Government to get tourism back on track. Tourism is a vital sector to South Africa's economy and accounts for 1.5 million jobs, many of those employed are young people. By nature of tourism's value chain, there are also significant benefits to other parts of the economy when tourism reopens. We are committed to doing this safely," says Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa, TBCSA CEO.

The TBCSA's proposed Tourism Recovery Strategy acknowledges that a phased approach will be required for the responsible reopening of international tourism to South Africa. A "calculated, driven, aggressive and gradual" re-entry of tourism into the economy is essential if South Africa is to save 1.2 million jobs, many of which are in rural areas, directly and indirectly linked to tourism, as well as the wider communities reliant on the tourism sector for their survival.

With the introduction of Level 3 lockdown, and with it the limited opening of business travel in South Africa, there is an opportunity to showcase the efforts and commitment that all aspects of the tourism value chain have made in developing and implementing protocols to instill confidence in the industry's ability to deliver a safe environment within which tourism activities can take place.

"As we see elsewhere in the world, the opening of domestic tourism is the first phase in ensuring that tourism starts to open slowly and leads the way in launching the various components in the

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tourism value chain. Business travel is the largest component in the formal travel industry. Its reopening provides us with an opportunity to see how we can further open domestic leisure within the context of the protocols in the very near future,” explains Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa, CEO of TBCSA.

The TBCSA’s proposed phased Tourism Recovery Strategy provides for an initial 6-8-week Preparation Phase, followed by a Phase 1 trial where safe source markets with similar risk profiles and stages of pandemic would be allowed to travel to South Africa. These travelers would be vetted, all stringent safety protocols would be in place and the focus would be on low-contact product and low-risk areas.

In Phase 2, South Africa would further open key markets, expand the experiences on offer, until in Phase 3 air access is opened fully and the destination can restart its longer-term growth strategy.

Whilst the presentation focused on the recovery, various members of the committee also raised the very real issue of transformation in the sector. It was agreed that there would be an interaction on this matter in the future. Overall, the presentation was well received with many committee members acknowledging the role of tourism as well as the importance of reopening safely.

“We receive calls every day from tourism companies which are on the brink of having to retrench staff or close down. We have many, many jobs to protect in tourism. If we do not protect the value chain, it’s going to be very difficult to reinstate it. And, if we do not do something soon, there are too many companies that will be beyond the point of no return,” explains Tshivhengwa.

“We are committed to a safe and responsible plan to reopening our tourism sector. We know that the public sector, and our private-sector tourism stakeholders are all equally as committed to this goal. This is our sector,” concludes Tshivhengwa.

**\*\*\*Ends\*\*\***

## **ABOUT TBCSA**

The Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) is the umbrella organisation representing the unified voice of business in the travel and tourism sector.

The TBCSA was established in February 1996 by leading tourism businesses and associations to form a unified platform to engage with the South African government around the development of the sector.

It is a not-for-profit, member-centric organisation mandated with the task of:

- Lobbying the public sector on behalf of its members;

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- Facilitating key industry programmes aimed at driving growth and development in the sector;
- Monitoring and influencing macro-economic developments which impact the sector;
- Serving to unite and influence the diverse travel and tourism sector to contribute to a competitive, responsible, and inclusive tourism economy. The work of the organisation and its strategy is guided by the following priority areas:
  - o Providing organised business in the sector a route to Government;
  - o Focusing on legislative issues and policies impacting on the travel and tourism sector.
  - o Managing and growing TOMSA.
  - o Member engagement and communication.
  - o Influencing the marketing of destination South Africa.
  - o Research – commissioning, collating, and communicating.

Issued by Vuma Reputation Management on behalf of the Tourism Business Council of South Africa. For media queries, please contact:

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