

SANS xxxxx:2011
Edition x

ISBN 978-0-626-XXXXX-X

SANS xxxxx:2011
Edition x

SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL STANDARD

NATIONAL TOURISM SERVICE EXCELLENCE – REQUIREMENTS

Building a Service Excellence Culture in the Tourism sector and Value Chain

DRAFT

SANS 1197
Edition x

Table of changes

Change No.	Date	Scope

Foreword

This South African standard was approved by National Committee SABS xC xxx, XXXXXXXX – XXXXXXXX XXXXX XXXXXXX XXX XXXXXXX, in accordance with procedures of the SABS Standards Division, in compliance with annex 3 of the WTO/TBT agreement.

Reference is made to the The White Paper on Tourism Development and Promotion, 1996. It makes provision for the framework and guidelines for tourism development and promotion in South Africa.

Reference is made to the Tourism Act, 1993 (Act No 72 of 1993). It makes provision for the promotion of tourism to and in the Republic and for the further regulation and rationalisation of the tourism industry.

Reference is made to the Tourism Act, 1993 (Act No 72 of 1993), Regulation. Regulations in respect of Tourist Guides, gazette August 2001, provides for regulation of registration, code of conduct and ethics for tourist guides as well as related penalties.

Reference is made to the National Tourism Sector Strategy. The Sector Strategy advocates for the improvement of service levels. It emphasises the importance of developing standards, systems for continuous monitoring as well as awareness creation initiatives to make consumers aware of the world – class service standards.

Reference is made to the National Tourism Service Excellence Strategy. The Strategy makes provision for key five (5) pillars that are important to improved service levels. Service Excellence Norms and Standards pillar is considered to be one of these key pillars. The emphasis is on the development of generic standard that can be used as a guiding tool for customer service.

Reference is made to the National Consumer Act. The emphasis is on the protection of the rights of consumers.

Introduction

The 2008 Skills Audit Report recommended that systems should be put in place to improve customer care training in the tourism sector South Africa was ranked 61 out of 133 countries in competitiveness based on The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report of 2009. Overall, the current state of customer service delivery within the country is inconsistent with extremes of poor to excellent service being provided. This is reflected in the research report that was conducted by the National Department of Tourism (NDT) in collaboration with Disney Institute (DI) and Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) in 2009.

One of the main factors contributing negatively to the current service levels is the fact that the tourism sector does not have integrated standards and norms that can be used as a guiding tool in terms of customer service. It has therefore become imperative for action to be taken to address and even attempt to correct some of the above-mentioned situations. by developing the National Tourism Service Excellence Standards. The National Tourism Sector Strategy emphasises the importance of partnering with relevant structures in the development of policies, guidelines and programmes to ensure holistic approach and collective ownership. It further emphasised the importance of improving levels 'throughout the tourism value chain, including all service points (e.g immigration, transport, accommodation and financial institutions)' pg 25.

It is therefore important for the sector and value chain to be encouraged to adopt and apply the Service Excellence Standards and Norms and implement their own self assessment tools. Application and adherence to these standards will position tourism as a service-driven industry; and South Africa as a globally competitive service economy and the world's destination of choice. South Africa should be seen as the country that offers the best service globally, this will strengthen the existing international perception as our people are best known for their "ubuntu". .

The standard is meant to:

- (a) Introduce generic standards for planning, developing, implementing and improving service excellence in the tourism sector
- (b) Introduce specific minimum requirements for the performance of organisations measurement and monitoring of service standards in the tourism sector
- (a) Popularise a credible service standard; and to
- (b) Introduce system that includes behaviour and attitude assessment.

DRAFT

Contents

Foreword

Introduction

1. Scope
2. Normative references
3. Definitions
4. Principles of service excellence
5. Requirements:
 - 5.1.....
 - 5.2.....
 - 5.3.....
 - 5.4.....

Annex A (informative) Title Error! Bookmark not defined.

Bibliography..... Error! Bookmark not defined.

TOURISM SERVICE EXCELLENCE - REQUIREMENTS

1. SCOPE

- 1.1 This standard establishes specific minimum requirements for the performance of organisations **involved / participating / engaged** in the tourism sector and value chain in relation to providing excellent standards **service delivery** for customer/ **guest** service. This will enable organisations to develop and customise their respective norms and standards.
- 1.1 This national standard establishes guidelines for planning, developing, implementing, maintaining and improving service excellence, within the various sub-sectors and organizations found within the tourism sector and guest related value chain. . These guidelines are applicable to any Tourism related business and organizations wanting to contribute towards a meaningful and positive experience for all their visitors, both internal and external.
- 1.2 The purpose of this standard is to implement, maintain and enhance sustainable practices for organisations in the tourism sector value chain. **In addition, to ensure compliance** within their own defined service excellence guidelines. It **also** aims to make a tangible difference to conditions of service provided by the tourism sector, and to give **provide** measuring criteria and tools in order for the tourism sector to be recognised as **to build strengths, seize opportunities, address weaknesses and mitigate threats towards** achieving Guest Service Excellence.
- 1.2 The purpose of this standard is to apply agreed sustainable practices for organisations in the tourism sector and guest related value chain to achieve Tourism Service Excellence.
- 1.3 This standard is intended for use by all Tourism organizations and guest related value chains regardless of type, size, and product provided, including organizations that design customer satisfaction codes of conduct for use by other organizations.
Annexure B gives guidance specifically for small businesses.
- 1.4 This standard is not intended for certification or for contractual purposes, and is not intended to change any rights or obligations provided by applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.
Note 1: While this standard is not intended for contractual purposes, this standard can be applied within the individual organizations contracts
and code of practice.

2. NORMATIVE REFERENCES

The following referenced document is indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies. Information on currently valid national and international standards can be obtained from the SABS Standards Division.

SANS 10001:2008 Quality Management – Customer Satisfaction
ISO 10001: 2007 Quality Management – Customer Satisfaction

SANS 123, XXX

3. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document, the following terms, definitions and abbreviations apply.

Definition – What is Customer/**Guest** service

Customer/**Guest** service was defined, without using the words “customer” or “service” in their definition. These were some of issues highlighted to describe some terms:

3.1 Customer/**Guest** – focused:

- Putting an effort to make sure that the person on the receiving end is satisfied.
- Attending to the needs of the consumer of your products and seeking feedback in order to keep the standards and quality of business high.
- The efficient and professional delivery of services to client.
- Exceeding guest expectations.
- Paying attention to details.

3.2 Product – Focused:

- A system of ongoing quality management that enhances the consistent delivery of guest care
- The enjoyable delivery of a product.
- Passionate and knowledgeable interactions in the delivery of a product or service - is what you provide and the way you provide it to the client.

3.3 Service – Focused:

- Working with a smile and delivering quality work with a good attitude and respect.
- Being warm, talking with the guest with interest, smile and valuing their presence.
- Excellent reaction, experience, courtesy, warmth, value for money spent, quality investment in satisfaction and the ability to capture the tourists' soul from the experience.

3.4 Customer/Guest Service

- Customer/**Guest** Service is any contact between a customer/**guest** and a company, that causes a negative or positive perception by a customer/ **guest**
- Customer/**Guest** service is a process for providing competitive advantage and adding benefits in order to maximize the total value to the customer /**guest**
- Customer/**Guest** Service is the commitment to providing value added services to international external and domestic internal guests , including attitude knowledge, technical support and quality of service in a timely manner

3.4 Areas where Customer/**Guest** Service is Important?

- The general consensus is that customer/**guest** service is important in all sectors – whenever there is a product or service offered - there will be guests, who need to be served.
- Every enterprise has customer/**guest** - therefore customer/**guest** care is everybody's business.
- Customer/**Guest** service is important in both public and private sectors.
- Putting the customer first
- Building relationships with customers
- Knowing and understanding your guests

3.5 What is World Class Customer/Guest Service?

- World-Class Customer/**Guest** Service was defined as the total seamless experience of great quality.
- Personalized attention were the key themes of excellent guest service participants experienced and remembered (*A hotel wishes me happy birthday when it's my birthday, you go to a facility with a welcome note with your name, reception greets you by name, you feel you belong, everyone was enthusiastic from the cleaner and up, on a visit to a hotel my name was on all of the amenities in the room*).

3.6 What is Good Customer/Guest Service?

- When you have been attended to, nothing to complain about
- Service is good, not offended, everything is technically correct, but not beyond.
- Delivering on the implied promise or meeting expectations; however it was universally agreed, that good guest service is not good enough!
- When you received honest and accurate information about the product.
- Maintain customers confidence.

3.7 What is Mediocre **Minimum Level of** Customer/**Guest** Service?

- Mediocre **Minimal level of** customer/**guest** service was seen as service with minimally acceptable levels of service and emotions.

- Service that usually evokes little response from guests.

3.8 What is Poor Customer/Guest Service?

- Unacceptable and emotionally detached customer **guest** service.
- Something going wrong is not poor service; the response to the poor service makes the difference between great and poor service (not responding to complaints, not replacing the offered service as per customer **guest's** request)
- No product knowledge, no desire to help and it goes beyond poor attitude.
- Service that makes you feel angry, cross and feeling cheated

3.9 Tourist

A person who travels away from home, staying away for at least one night. A tourist can be a domestic tourist (for example resident of Johannesburg staying one night in Durban), a regional tourist (a visitor from Zimbabwe spending one or more nights in the Free State) or an overseas tourist (a resident of Germany staying one or more nights in the North-West Province). A tourist travels for different purposes including business, leisure, conference and incentive.

3.10 Tourism

All travel for whatever purpose, that results in one or more nights being spent away from home.

3.11 Tourism Industry

All recipients of direct spend incurred by tourists. This includes pre-trip expenditure on travel and booking, travel and enroute expenditure, and all spending at the destination.

3.12 Tourism Sector

Three of the sub-sectors of tourism: Hospitality; Travel and Tourism; and Conservation and Tourism Guiding.

3.13 Tourism Value Chain

A description of the full range of activities required to bring a product or service through the different phases of production (including physical transformation, and the input of various producers and services), in response to consumer demand.

3.14 Tourist Service Experience

All the touch points a tourist interacts with during a visit to the country.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SERVICE EXCELLENCE NORMS AND STANDARDS

Guiding principles on norms and standards are guided by key service excellence values and principles outlined in the National Tourism Service Excellence Strategy.

4.1. Service Excellence is based on the following minimum set of values and principles:

DRAFT

4.1.1 Cause and effect relationship

It is important to start every encounter with the ultimate end in mind, i.e. a happy and satisfied guest. From the moment the guest commences with his/her decision making process up to the point when they depart, each and every supplier of tourism service excellence must understand and appreciate how they fit, what the processes are required beforehand and the processes are required afterwards. On this is fully understood, a common language will start prevailing and ultimate the whole (overall tourism service excellence experience) will be greater than its parts. In order to provide a tourism service excellence experience to guests, all management and staff should have a clear vision, purpose and understanding of the organization. It is important to understand the responsibility and consequences of each action that a service person undertakes in every encounter. In order to provide a tourism service excellence experience to guests as an intrinsic organisational culture, all management and staff should have a clear vision, purpose and understanding of the organisation”.

4.1.2 Customer/Guest Focus

The critical part of this approach is to effectively identify guests, consult them in a meaningful way and efficiently measure the outcomes of the service provided. This approach is not only about being able to collect information, it is also about the ability to interpret and use the information collected.

4.1.3 Organisational Culture

Tourism Service excellence should be propagated as a nationwide value to be owned by all levels of staff in each organisation. It is important to build and foster a truly guest focused culture. In order for these to be realised, we need aligned commitment throughout the organization starting with the strategic leadership down to the front-line staff. All processes should (where needed) be re-engineered towards the optimum satisfaction of all customer needs.

4.1.4 Information and Access

The value proposition to customers must become the company's core “at all cost” deliverables. Accurate and comprehensive information to be made available to guests through appropriate channels. Putting your guest first can be an important step towards effective communication. It is also important for staff to keep abreast of new development in the service field (learning organisation). Customer insights and continuing service innovation is to be rewarded as this knowledge capital will increase competitive advantage.

4.1.5 Service Delivery

Listening to the views of your guest about a service provided, can be just as important as achieving key performance targets. Comments, feedback and complaints from guests can help in making vital adjustments to the way the business is conducted and can lead to improvement in service delivery. Proactive identification of changes in needs or global trends is to be used in continuing service innovation and product customaries.

4.1.6 Timeliness and Quality of Service

The promptness of the initial contact and keeping to agreed timelines is crucial to guest satisfaction. However, we need to ensure that quality is not compromised at the expense of providing a timely service.

Service quality dimensions are relevant as dimensions could provide service standards as a basis to achieving service quality. Furthermore, prospective customers could use similar criteria, to base their perception regarding service quality. Time consciousness to be a non-negotiable in all process/areas of the organisation. Quality control at all guest contact points.

4.1.7 Customer/Guest Service Guidelines

In order to understand different levels of service (i.e. poor, good and excellent service). It is important for organisations to set up generic norms and standards for guest service that can be used as benchmarks for defining services. Customer service to be advanced as the responsibility of every staff member and excellence should be rewarded from front-desk to back office

4.1.8 Consistency

Ensure that there is consistency in the service offered in order to create favourable perceptions by guests.

4.2 THE FOLLOWING ARE KEY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON SERVICE EXCELLENCE NORMS AND STANDARDS.

4.2.1 Commitment

An organization should be actively committed to the adoption, integration and dissemination of the Tourism Service Excellence Guidelines and the application of its principles.

4.2.2 Capacity Building

The organization should apply these Tourism Service Excellence Guidelines and principles based on its own capacity and capability to deliver on the promises made and as such, sufficient resources should be made available from the organization for planning, design, development, implementation, maintenance and management of the Tourism Service Excellence Guidelines effectively and efficiently within their organizations.

4.2.3 Visibility

All organizations participating in Tourism Services Excellence should prominently display their participation logo, participation id and their signed code of practice in a prominent position which is easily accessible by their guests, personnel and other interested parties.

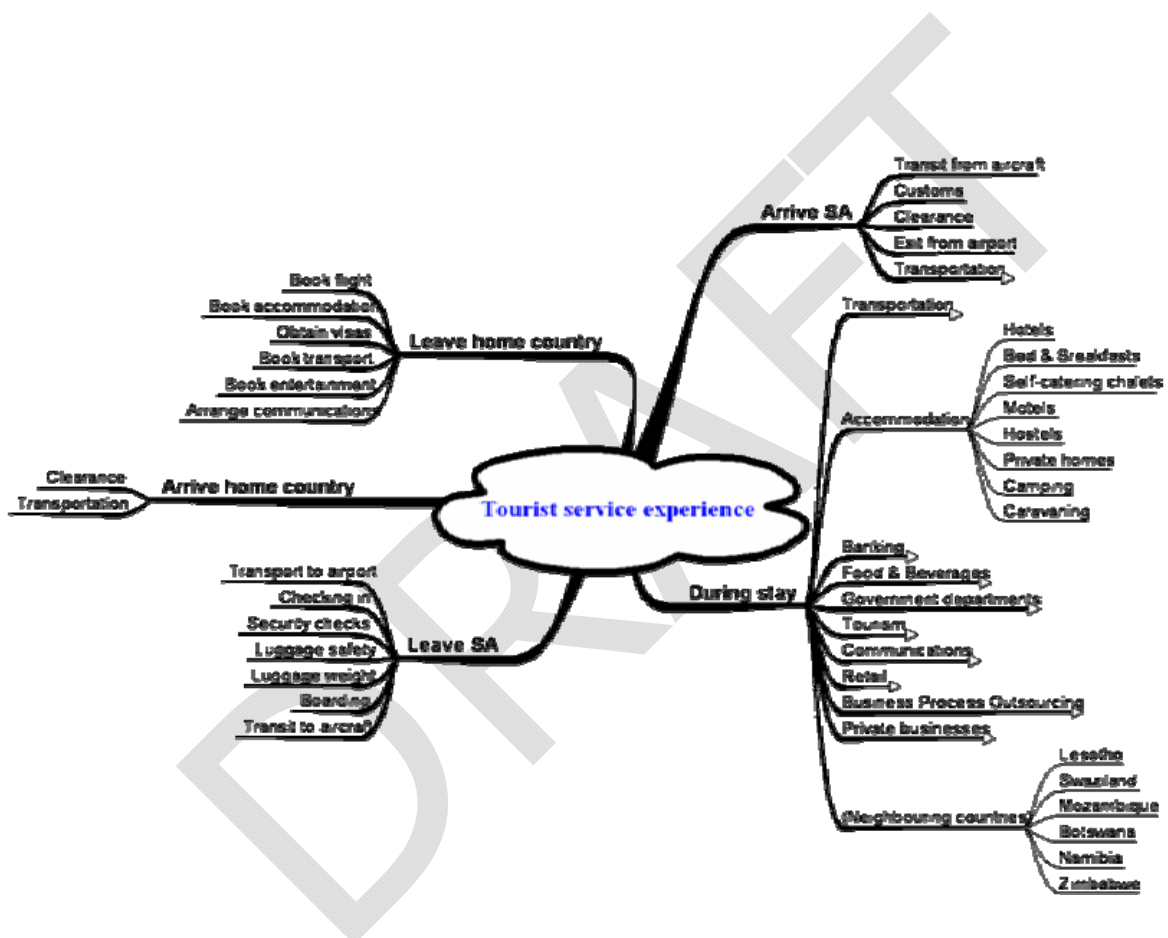
- 4.2.4 **Access**
The Tourism Service Excellence code of practice and relevant information should be easy to find and apply within the organization.
- 4.2.5 **Responsiveness**
All organizations should respond to the various needs of their guests and the expectations of interested parties through Tourism Service Excellence.
- 4.2.6 **Accuracy**
An organization should ensure that the Tourism Service Excellence code of practice, and information about its code, is accurate, not misleading, verifiable and in compliance with relevant statutory and regulatory requirements.
- 4.2.7 **Accountability**
The organization should establish and maintain accountability for, and reporting on, the actions and decisions with respect to the Tourism Service Excellence code of practice.
- 4.2.8 **Continual Improvement**
Increased effectiveness and efficiency of the Tourism Service Excellence code of practice and its use should be a prominent and permanent objective of the organization.

DRAFT

5. CUSTOMER/GUEST SERVICE EXPERIENCE

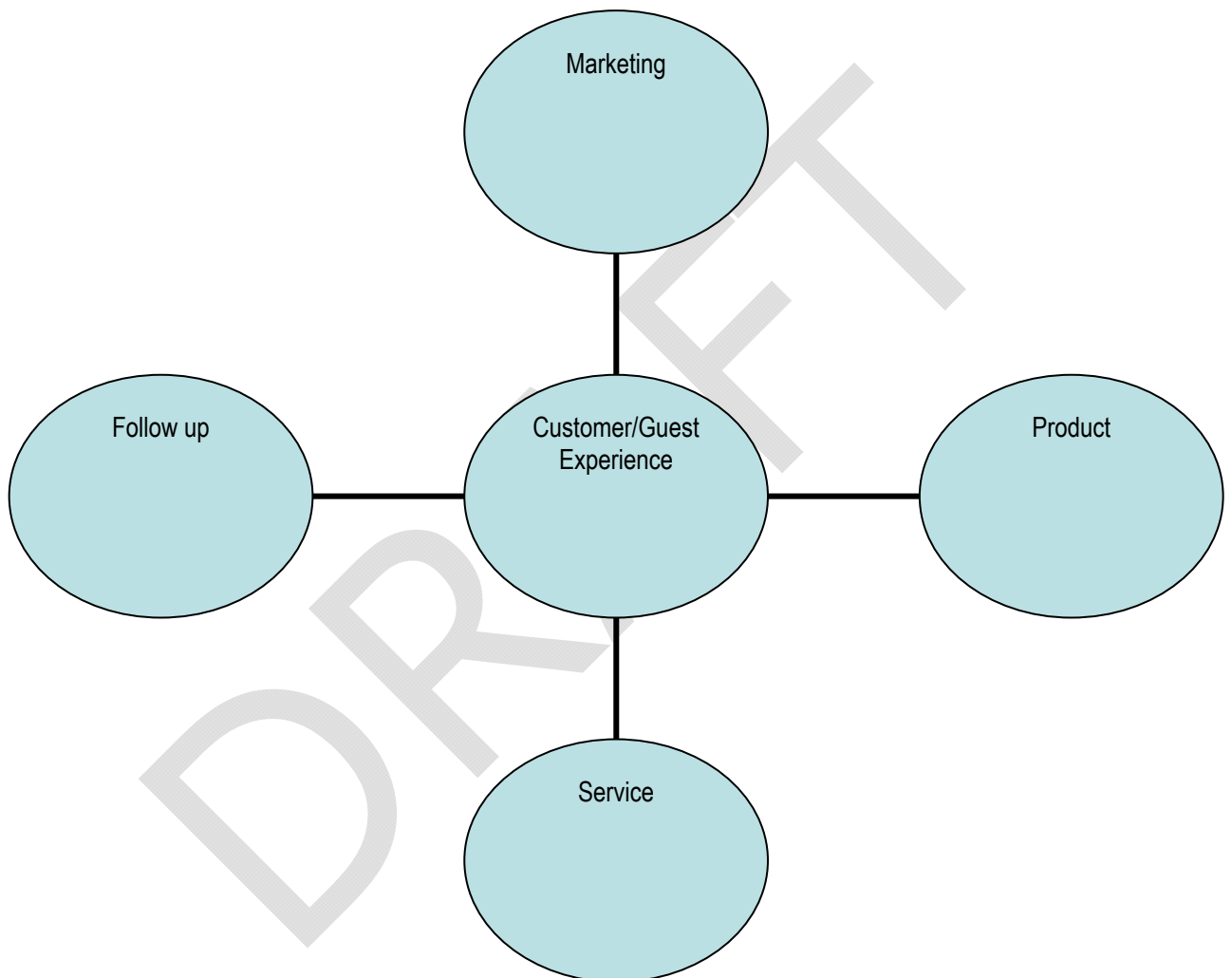
5.1 Service Cycle Points:

According to the current National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS) there is a need to deliver tourist/guest experiences that equal or surpass the expectations of foreign and domestic tourists/guests alike. This can only be achieved if effective and memorable services are provided at all levels; from the point of contact to exit. Details on the service cycle are reflected on the diagram below.



5.2 Key Focus Areas:

The provision of excellent service will be achieved if norms and standards are applied in the following focus areas. Marketing, product development, service delivery point, follow up as well as engineering level.



5.2.1 Marketing

Focus Area	Key Considerations
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consistency of message ○ Accuracy of information ○ Constant updating of message and material ○ Evolve to meet customer/guest needs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Honest and truthful information ○ Effectiveness of communication ○ Aligned/ synergistic target market approach ○ Market sensitive/ non- offensive ○ Co-competitive collaborative messaging (no ambush marketing/ degrading comparison)
--	--

5.2.2 Product

Focus Area	Key Considerations
Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flexibility/ Choice ○ Consistent Quality ○ Sustained condition of offering State of Repair ○ Convenience consideration ○ Availability ○ Value for Money ○ Accessibility – access to and from business ○ Safety and Security ○ Upskilling of staff ○ Information management ○ Universal accessibility – open to all

5.2.3 Delivery of Service

Focus Area	Key Considerations
Delivery of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Professionalism/ Upskilling/ Training ○ Emotional Value ○ Personal interaction ○ Customer/Guest-focused attitude ○ Customer centric Processes ○ Service Recovery ○ Service excellence-orientated organisational behaviour ○ Contractive peer reviewing Service Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Courtesy –respecting your customers ● Safety –providing the welfare of your customers ● Efficiency- providing smooth operation. ○ Consultation; Service Standards, Redress, Service Quality

5.2.4 Monitoring and analysis

Focus Area	Key Considerations
Monitoring and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consistency Control ○ Accuracy of information collected ○ Revision and evaluation ○ Research companies/ Feedback System at each touch point ○ Reporting Medium of stakeholders ○ Rewards and awards system ○ Information sharing at all staff level ○ National clearing house

6. TOURISM SERVICE EXCELLENCE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Marketing

- The organization should not misrepresent the product through false advertising (example website)
- The organization should consider the accuracy of information when marketing its product
- *a. consistency of message*
- The organization should ensure that the message they carry throughout the various mediums of marketing is consistent with the promises that they are making to the guests.
- *b. accuracy of information*
- The organization should ensure that the message they carry throughout the various mediums of marketing is accurate with the promises that they are making to the guests.
- *c. constant updating of message and material*
- The organization should ensure that the message is updated at regular intervals throughout the various mediums that they are marketing through.
- *d. evolve to meet guest needs*
- *e. honest and truthful information*
- The organization should ensure that the message they carry throughout the various mediums of marketing is honest, truthful and within their ability to deliver on the promises that they are making to the guests.

6.2. Product

a. Quality

Organizations should ensure that the products they are providing to the guest is of exceptional quality and should exceed the guest expectations for the type of market that the organization is focusing on.

The organization should ensure that the product delivered matches the planned arrangements and specifications of what was intended

b. State of Repair

Wherever possible and appropriate the organization should ensure that all the products they provide to the guests are in an exceptional state of repair.

c. Flexibility/ choice

Wherever possible and appropriate the organization should ensure that the guest has a choice of products which meet and exceed with their requirements, also the organization should be flexible in accommodating the needs of the guests.

d. Facilities available

Wherever possible and appropriate the organization should ensure that there are sufficient facilities available which meet and exceed the needs of the guests.

e. Value for money

The organization should ensure that their guests are offered exceptional value for their money, and when they depart they have a sense of having underpaid.

f. Accessibility – access to and from organization

The organization should ensure that their guests have easy access to and from the organization and where appropriate provide alternative means to access the organization.

g. Safety & security

The organization should ensure that there are adequate safety and security measure's in place.

h. Upskilling of staff

The organization should ensure that all there staff are continually upskilled in the products offered at the organization.

i. Information management

The organization should ensure that their guests have are offered exceptional value for their money, and when they depart they have a sense of having underpaid.

j. Universal accessibility – open to all

The organization should ensure that their guests have are offered exceptional value for their money, and when they depart they have a sense of having underpaid.

6.3 Service Delivery

a. professionalism/ upskilling/ training

The organization should ensure that all their staff are continually upskilled in a variety of service proficiencies, which will result in a better quality of service offered.

b. value for money

The organization should ensure that their guests are offered exceptional value for their money, and when they depart they have a sense of having underpaid.

c. personal interaction

The organization should ensure that all interaction with the guests remain personal.

d. guest-focused attitude

The organization should ensure that at all times their focus and attention is on fulfilling the needs and wants of the guests, all the while ensuring that this is done within the organizations capacity to deliver.

e. processes

The organization should ensure that there are set systems and processes in place which not only will result in a better quality of service offered, but ensure consistency when dealing with the guests.

f. service recovery

The organization should ensure that they follow their systems and processes especially when dealing with complaints and queries to ensure that any complaint is dealt with speedily and in line with the companies set standards.

g. service excellence-orientated organisational behaviour

The organization should adopt an operational behavior focused on delivery exceptional service and value to all their guests.

The organization should ensure service delivery is consistent to the prescribed projected outcomes and is independent of the individual staff member

The company shall ensure:

- Reliability-Performance is consistent, Access to services at customer convenience, Doing things right the first time and on time, Upholding promises.
- Credibility-Claims are honest, Reputation is based on fact; Service personnel are trustworthy, Handling problems are directly.
- Appeal-Conducting business professionally, Premises are neat and tidy, Printed materials are neat and easy to read, Telephone conversations are pleasant and convey accurate and concise information,
- Responsiveness-Services are easily accessible and user-friendly service personnel are available and helpful, Service is swift and efficient, immediate communication, Problems handled and solved within reasonable time frames, Customer continually.
- Concerns Concern-Customers treated as individuals with their own unique needs being respected; Problems are used too as an opportunity and challenge to articulate reliability and credibility, Displaying empathy

6.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

a. consistency

The organization should ensure that the information collected and evaluated is consistent and addresses the needs and wants of the guests. In addition to this, the organization should ensure that they are constantly monitoring and analysing themselves against delivering on their promises.

b. accuracy of information collected

The organization should ensure that the information collected and evaluated is accurate and thorough by means of setting their own standards.

c. revision and evaluation

The organization should ensure that their monitoring and evaluating policies, procedures and processes are updated at regular intervals.

d. research companies/ feedback systems

Wherever possible the organizations are to utilize the services of internal/ external research companies, or put in place guest feedback systems.

e. reporting medium of stakeholders

Wherever possible there should be a consistent and accurate reporting medium for all industry stakeholders.

f. rewards and awards system

- The organization should consistently monitor and evaluate the level of product and service provision against the planned arrangements as described in its marketing message

6.1 Customer Service

The organisation should

The organization and staff shall strive to:

- Provide excellent, memorable and pleasant service to every person they encounter, especially customer/guests.
- Inspire a guest service culture, so that all people in the sector understand and embrace the importance of guest service and each person's part to make it successful.
- Treat all people with courtesy, respect, dignity and ubuntu.
- Strive to provide world-class customer/guest service consequently positioning South Africa as *a globally competitive service economy and the world's destination of choice*.
- Understand our customer/guest, anticipate their needs and wants, exceed their expectations and make an emotional connection with them.
- Commit to providing necessary training to their staff to equip them with the necessary skills to deal with customer/guests and provide excellent service.
- Promote the service industry and educate people on its significance in the economy that will alleviate the stigma that service industry is a subservient industry thus promoting the tourism as a career of choice.
- Practice service excellence internally, so as to build trust and share responsibilities.
- Implement a service recovery philosophies and processes that support employees and increase the likelihood of repeat customer business such as attending to problems in the shortest time possible and ensure that the guest is satisfied with the results.
- Provide service that is not discriminative.

- Develop effective structures, systems and processes that support and enable a culture of service excellence.
- Increase shared commitment by applying principles of employee engagement – develop creativity and problem-solving capabilities by actively involving employees in decisions that have an impact on them.

7. FRAMEWORK

7.1 Establishment

The Tourism Service Excellence code should be supported by an organizational framework for decision-making and applied actions throughout the planning, design, development, implementation, maintenance and improvement of the code. This framework should involve resource assessment, provision and deployment needed to carry out the interrelated activities to fulfil its objectives. It also should include executive management commitment, assignment of appropriate responsibilities and authorities, and training programmes throughout the organization.

7.2 Integration

The code framework should be based on, and integrated with, quality and other management systems of the organization, where appropriate.

8 PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF AN ORGANIZATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT TOWARDS TOURISM SERVICE EXCELLENCE

8.1 Determine objectives

The organization should determine their objectives to be achieved through the application of this code.

Note: It is advisable that code objectives be articulated in such a manner that their fulfilment can be measured using performance indicators as identified by the organization.

8.2 Gather and Assess Information

Information should be gathered and assessed concerning:

- The issues that the code is attempting to deal with and its application towards Tourism Service Excellence;
- How these issues arise;
- How these issues could be dealt with;
- How and to what extent these issues affect the organization's activities that are not related to the code nor the application of Tourism Service Excellence;
- How other organizations are dealing with the code and their application towards Tourism Service Excellence;
- Possible resource and other implications of dealing with these issues through use of a code;
- Statutory and regulatory requirements associated with dealing with these issues through use of the code.

Note: This information is intended to assist the organization in articulating the codes purposes and in determining an appropriate approach to code development and assessment that is aligned with the Tourism Service Excellence Initiative along with the organizations other activities.

8.3 Obtain and assess input from relevant interested parties

It is important for the organization to obtain and assess the input from relevant interested parties (e.g guests, suppliers, industry associations, consumer organizations, relevant government agencies, personnel, owners) concerning code content and application towards Tourism Service Excellence.

8.4 Prepare code

Based on the information and inputs that the organization has gathered the organization should prepare a code of practice. The code should be clear, concise, accurate, and not misleading, written in simple language and should include:

- The codes scope and purpose appropriate to the organizations and its guest profile;
- The promises made by the organization to its guests that can be fulfilled, and any limitations concerning these promises;
- Definitions of key terms used in the code;
- How and to whom enquiries and complaints about the code should be directed;
- A description of what action will be taken in the code promises are not fulfilled.

In preparing the code, the organization should ensure that the code can be effectively implemented and that its provisions are not in violation of any statutory and regulatory requirements. Of particular relevance are statutory and regulatory requirements concerning deceptive or misleading advertising and prohibitions against anti-competitive activity. The organization should also ensure that the code's provisions take into account any other relevant codes and standards.

The organization should consider testing the code to determine the need for adjustments.

8.5 Preparation of performance indicators

The organization should prepare quantitative and qualitative performance indicators designed to assist in understanding whether the code is successful in fulfilling its objectives.

Note: Performance indicators associated with a code can include grading or ranking from customer satisfaction surveys, or statistics regarding complaints and their resolution.

8.6 Preparation of code procedures

The organization should prepare code implementation, maintenance and improvement procedures, including how enquiries and complaints are dealt with. The organization should identify and deal with any obstacles to the effective use of the code, and identify any possible incentives that would assist in code implementation, maintenance and improvement. Procedures should be developed in accordance with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements:

- Communicating the code to the guests;
- Training relevant personnel on the code;
- Resolving instances where code promises are not met;

- Recording enquiries and complaints about the code;
- Recording and evaluating performance of the code;
- Using and managing records;
- Disclosing of information regarding code fulfilment.

8.7 Preparation of internal and external communications plan

The organization should develop a plan to make its code, and supporting information (e.g. feedback form), available to personnel and other parties involved in code application.

8.8 Determine resources needed

The organization should determine the resources needed to fulfil code promises and to provide adequate remedies in cases of non-fulfilment of the code (e.g. customer compensation). Resources include personnel, training, procedures, documentation, specialist support, materials and equipment, facilities, computer hardware and software, and finances.

9. IMPLEMENTATION

The organization should manage implementation activities as planned, in a timely manner. The organization should, at appropriate levels within the organization:

- Apply relevant procedures, and internal and external communications plans;
- Provide appropriate remedies to customers;
- Take necessary action to address cases promptly where the code provisions are not fulfilled; *these actions can be initiated following a complaint about the code or as a result of information gathered by the organization regarding code performance.*

The organization should record:

- Resource usage in code application;
- The type of training and instruction regarding the code and personnel have received;
- Application of the internal and external communications plan;
- Handling of enquiries or complaints about the code, and remedial actions undertaken by the organization.

10. MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

10.1 Collection of information

The organization should regularly and systematically collect information needed for the effective and efficient evaluation of code performance, including information, input and records described in clauses 6 and 7.

10.2 Evaluation of code performance

The organization should regularly and systematically evaluate the performance of the code.

This evaluation should include verification and analysis of fulfilment of overall code objectives and promises.

Enquiries and complaints about the code or its use should be classified and analysed to identify systemic, recurring and single incidents problems and trends, and to help eliminate the underlying causes of complaints about the code.

Note: In addition, it is advisable that the organization takes steps to determine whether enquires and complaints about products and processes that do not mention the code are nonetheless related to the provisions of the code. These enquiries and complaints can reveal misapplication of the code provisions.

To evaluate the impact of the code, information is needed on the situation prior to the code being launched, and at appropriate intervals afterwards. This information can be used not only to determine weaknesses in code design and implementation, but also to demonstrate results achieved (if any) and progress made through use of the code.

10.3 Satisfaction with the code

There should be regular and systematic action taken to determine customer satisfaction with the code and its use. This can take the form of random surveys of customers and other techniques.

Note: One method of evaluating customer satisfaction is the simulation of a contact of a customer with the organization concerning a matter addressed in a code, where this is permitted by law.

10.4 Review of the code and code framework

The organization should review the code and its framework on a regular and systematic basis in order to

- Maintain their suitability, adequacy, effectiveness and efficiency,
- Address significant instances of non-fulfilment of the code of promises,
- Assess the need and opportunities for improvement, and
- Provide for related decisions and actions, as appropriate.

In conducting the review, the organization should include relevant information on:

- Changes to the code and its framework;
- Changes in legislation;
- Changes in practices of competitors or technological innovations;
- Changes in societal expectations;
- Fulfilment of code promises;
- Status of corrective and preventative actions;
- Products offered;
- Actions decided at previous reviews.

10.5 Continual improvement

The organization should continually improve the code and code framework in order to increase customer satisfaction, using means such as preventative and corrective actions, and innovative

improvements.

The organization should take action to eliminate the underlying causes of existing and potential problems leading to complaints, in order to prevent recurrence and occurrence, respectively.

Note: It is advisable that an organization using a code developed by another organization informs the other organization of any problems which may arise during use.

The organization should:

- Explore, identify and apply best practices in the structure, content and use of the code;
- Foster a customer-focused approach within the organization;
- Encourage code innovation;
- Recognize examples of outstanding performance and practices related to the code and the application thereof.

Annex A (informative)

Components of Tourism Service Excellence Guidelines

A.1.1 through A.1.4 are factors which contribute towards a meaningful tourism service excellence experience for the guests.

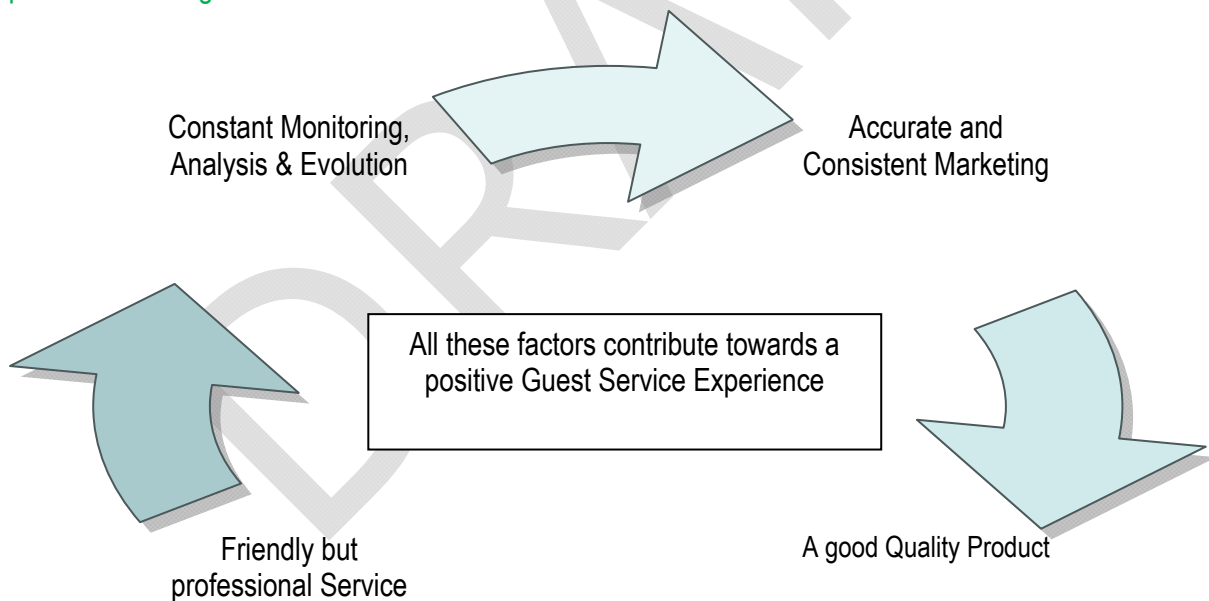


Diagram A.1 The diagram above highlights the critical success factors required to ensure that the guest receive a holistic Tourism Service Excellence Experience.

DRAFT

Annex B
(informative)

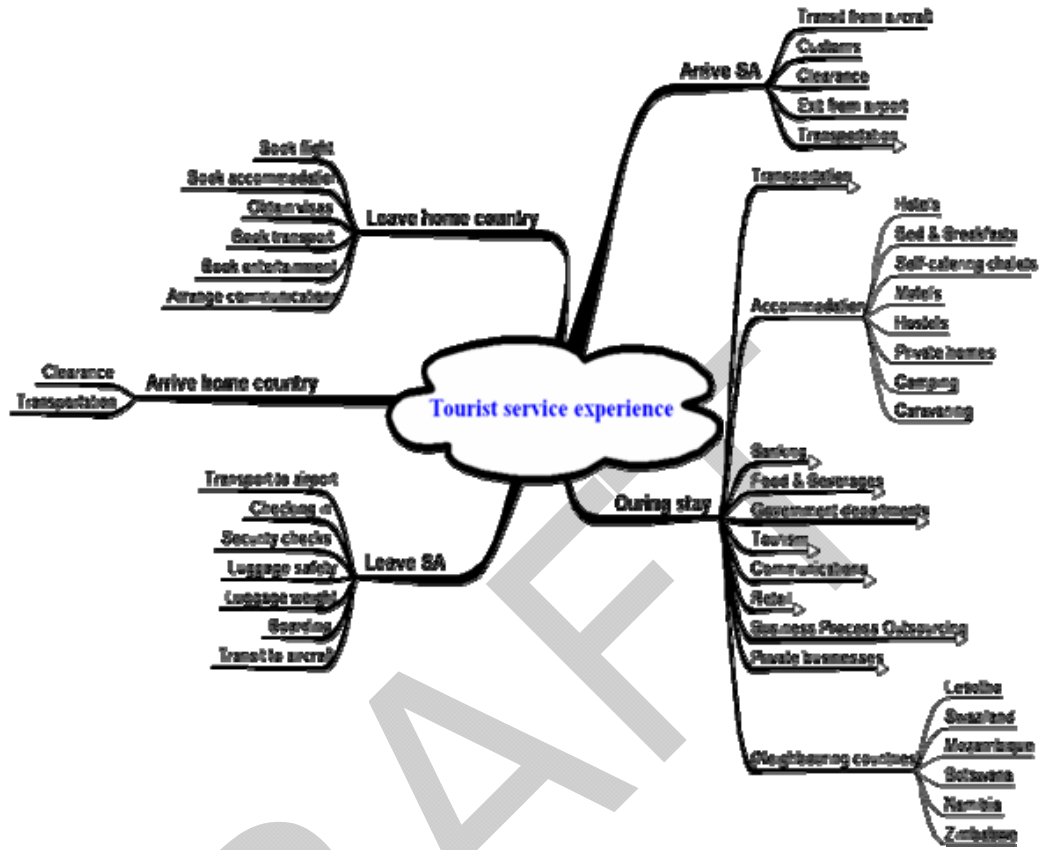
Application Guidance for small businesses

This national standard is intended for organizations of all sizes. However, it is recognized that many small organizations will have limited resources for planning, designing, developing, implementing, maintaining and improving a Tourism Service Excellence code. The example below highlights key areas where organizations can focus their attention to achieve an appropriate code, with suggestions for action in each.

- Examine the codes outlined and determine how best to apply these codes in your organization;
- Consider adhering to an established code (e.g. participate in a code programme run by an industry or professional association).
- Ask customers and business colleagues what they would most like to see as a promise to the customer;
- Consider what changes to the current operations of the organization would be necessary to effectively and efficiently fulfil the code promises, including relevant procedures, training, new staffing, changes to facilities, new equipment or communications.
- Consider how your organization could measure whether or not it has been effectively and efficiently fulfilling its promises;
- Test how well the code works on a trial basis before finalizing it and making it widely known;
- Put in place a simple procedure for customers to enquire or complain about the code or its implementation;
- Review applicable laws and regulations (e.g. consumer protection laws);
- Communicate to guests through signs, advertisement's and other means that your organization is a participating member of the Tourism Service Excellence Initiative;
- Regularly review how well the organization is fulfilling its promises, by asking guests and business colleagues their views on the code and its implementation, and make changes to ensure that the code is still suitable, adequate, effective and efficient.

Annex C
(informative)

Components of Tourism Service Value Chain



DRAFT

Annex D
(informative)

Example of an Organizations Tourism Service Excellence Commitment

The organization and staff shall strive to:

- Provide excellent, memorable and pleasant service to every person we encounter, especially guest's.
- Inspire a guest service culture, so that all people in the sector understand and embrace the importance of guest service and each person's part to make it successful.
- Treat everyone with courtesy, respect, dignity and ubuntu.
- Strive to provide world-class guest service consequently positioning South Africa as *a globally competitive service economy and the world's destination of choice*.
- Understand our guests, anticipate their needs and wants, exceed their expectations and make an emotional connection with them.
- Commit to providing necessary training to all our staff and equip them with the necessary skills to deal with customers and provide excellent service.
- Promote the Tourism service industry and educate people on its significance within the economy.
 - Note: this will alleviate the stigma that service industry is a subservient industry and thus promote Tourism as a career of choice.
- Practice service excellence internally, so as to build trust and share responsibilities.
- Implement service recovery philosophies and processes that support employees and increase the likelihood of repeat customer business such as attending to problems in the shortest time possible and ensure that the customer is satisfied with the results.
- Provide service that is not discriminative.
- Develop effective structures, systems and processes that support and enable a culture of service excellence.
- Increase shared commitment by applying principles of employee engagement – develop creativity and problem-solving capabilities by actively involving employees in decisions that have an impact on them.

DRAFT

DRAFT