

Airbnb, SA tourism minister meet to discuss home rental regulations

Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom recently met with representatives of Airbnb to discuss various policy issues, in particular, the regulation of short-term home rentals. The meeting took place in the context of the current call for public comment on the Tourism Amendment Bill, published on 15 April 2019, to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to make submissions.



Ivan Kruk via [123RF](#)

Airbnb shared information on a range of global trends and approaches adopted in various countries, states and cities where they operate. There was also an acknowledgement of the need for a proactive legislative and policy response underscored by sound destination management and interventions aimed at enhancing the visitor experience.

"We welcome Airbnb and other game-changing innovations that are opening up new markets for destinations, offering travellers affordable holidays, and allowing smaller industry players to thrive. Many of these are able to flourish through the ease of use of shared-economy platforms," said Hanekom.

"Airbnb is delighted to have had the chance to engage with the National Department of Tourism (NDT) about the proposed amendments to the Tourism Act, and is encouraged to see the recognition of the benefits that hosting brings to the local community and economy," said Velma Corcoran, Airbnb Country Manager, sub-Saharan Africa.

The Tourism Amended Draft Bill aims, amongst others, to address the regulatory vacuum on short-term rentals by defining

short-term home rentals as "the renting or leasing on a temporary basis, for reward, of a dwelling or a part thereof, to a visitor". It also seeks to enable the Minister of Tourism to determine thresholds regarding short-term home rentals, through a notice in the Government Gazette.



Public invited to submit comments on tourism amendment draft bill

17 Apr 2019



"The Amendment Draft Bill in its current form proposes that the Minister of Tourism be empowered to determine such thresholds. We urge our stakeholders to submit their comments, to enable us to strengthen the Bill in order to serve the interest of inclusive tourism growth in South Africa," said Victor Tharage, director-general for the Department of Tourism.

Minister Hanekom welcomed the spirit of the discussion and cooperation from Airbnb, and further appreciated their commitment to contribute constructively to the legislative review processes, in support of South Africa's tourism development growth objectives.

"Hosts on Airbnb have already contributed significantly to the South African economy - welcoming people into their homes and creating exciting Experiences and tours, showing to visitors the true and varied face of the country. From June 1, 2017 through May 31, 2018 it has been estimated that host and guest activity on Airbnb generated an estimated R8.7 billion in economic impact in South Africa and this corresponds to a total of over 22,000 jobs supported across the broader South Africa economy.

"To continue this trend and to not disadvantage any citizen of South Africa, Airbnb supports fair and proportional rules that are evidence-based, benefit local people, and distinguish between professional and non-professional activity taking into account local conditions," concluded Corcoran.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>