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New national standard that creates a common vocabulary for accommodation used in the tourism industry

When going on holiday and booking your accommodation, do you understand the difference between a homestay, holiday home, couch sharing, apartment hotel, a holiday cottage, camping, glamping or the multitude of other descriptions used in tourist accommodation? SABS, through its Technical Committee, SABS TC 228, Tourism standards, has recently published a new national standard SANS:18513 that sets out the vocabulary for hotels and other types of tourism accommodation.

According to the Department of Tourism, tourism contributes 3.7% to the South African GDP, employing more than 1 million people and is a sector that is growing. In 2019, before the Covid 19 pandemic, the global tourism sector was estimated at USD 8.9 trillion.

SANS 18513 has been adopted from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and provides the definitions to create a common understanding of the various accommodation types and facilities. "The tourism sector evolves on a regular basis as new experiences and types of facilities emerge and it is important that there is a globally accepted and used common vocabulary. A common set of terms, especially identifying types of accommodation and the facilities will improve the tourist experience as consumers can adequately find the right accommodation to meet their needs and allow service providers to correctly advertised their offerings," explains Sadhvir Bissoon, Acting CEO of the SABS.

The national standard includes definitions for half board, suites, junior suites, early check in, mini-bar service, accessible rooms, air conditioning, gyms and a range of other commonly found amenities that applies to the tourism sector. SANS 18513 can be purchased from the SABS webstore, via www.sabs.co.za

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Notes

1. The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa grades accommodation in South Africa through a rating, using1-5 stars
2. The tourism industry in South Africa is regulated by the Tourism Act 72 of 1993, and under the purview of the Department of Tourism
3. SANS 18513 is a voluntary standard and the SABS does not have any authority to regulate the standard, the industry.