

AAVEA VIRTUAL

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News Alert: Proposed staggered South African school holidays calendar a victory for national attractions industry

For Immediate Release

The African Association of Visitor Experiences and Attractions (AAVEA), led by esteemed tourism professional Sabine Lehmann, is delighted with the release of the Department of Basic Education's proposed staggered 2023 inland and coastal school holidays calendar for comment.

This proposed staggered school holidays will ensure a number of benefits to tourism operators, attractions, and the domestic tourism market, including the following:

- Staggering school holidays, particularly the summer school holidays, would extend the domestic tourism season thus critically supporting this industry.
- Demand for accommodation, local flights, long distance bus trips, and camp sites would be spread across a broader time span. This would increase the opportunity for South Africans to enjoy their own country and could reduce the cost of domestic travel.
- Inter-provincial road travel would be spread over a broader time span, thus reducing traffic on the roads, leading to lower accident rates.
- Staggering school holidays would result in a longer peak season. A lengthened peak season increases the sustainability of tourism and results in job growth.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has advocated reviewing school holiday schedules as a strategy for boosting domestic demand. AAVEA has lobbied with the Department of Basic Education for the past four years, advocating the benefits of staggered school holidays.

Having first engaged the then Minister of Tourism Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane at its 2019 conference, AAVEA is delighted that national government has now taken consideration of this global best practice:

"We encourage the Department of Basic Education to consider making this a permanent move both to aid tourism recovery as well as to encourage and promote domestic tourism in the years ahead. We look forward to assisting the Department in any way that we can with the next steps for this exciting development, including by sharing data we have recently collected in our first benchmark survey of South African attractions ", says Lehmann.

As the first membership-based organisation of its kind on the continent, AAVEA represents the

interests of visitor experiences and attractions, raises awareness of the contribution they make to the broader tourism industry, and hosts events and online sessions that provide education, valuable engagement with industry peers, and collaboration opportunities.

The organisation announced its partnership with South African Tourism (SAT), the marketing agency for the Department of Tourism, in 2020.

Join the #StaggeredSASchoolHolidays conversation online this August:

AAVEA and its partner South African Tourism are excited to discuss this promising new development with participants at their upcoming AAVEA 2021 virtual conference on Thursday 19 August 2021. [Registration](#) is now open.

For more information about AAVEA and its lobbying initiatives, please visit www.aavea.org.za.

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