

## Satsa to unlock SA's adventure tourism potential

In a push to unlock Adventure Tourism potential in South Africa, SATSA, the voice of inbound tourism, launches its Adventure Tourism Chapter led by a committee of eight dedicated and knowledgeable industry leaders. The chapter aims to position South Africa as a top adventure destination while helping to reignite South Africa's economy, create jobs and contribute to rural development.



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Adventure Tourism offers a strong growth opportunity for South Africa, not only economically and in respect of job creation but also as a contributor to rural development.

Last week on 4 November, Satsa, the voice of inbound tourism, hosted the inaugural meeting of its newly formed Adventure Tourism Chapter.

This new chapter will provide a dedicated voice for adventure tourism with the ultimate aim to promote credible adventure products and position South Africa as a top adventure destination.



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Casey van Niekerk 30 Nov 2017

"The Adventure Chapter has been many years in the making. Satsa and the tourism community have long recognised the significant role that Adventure Tourism plays in South Africa—creating jobs, attracting foreign exchange, uplifting rural communities and contributing to the safeguarding of our country's beautiful and thrilling natural assets," says David Frost, CEO of Satsa.

"While this year has been marred by hardship for the tourism industry, it has provided us with the opportunity to evaluate our structures and to see where we can enhance our business models. And so, the Adventure

Chapter was born."

Satsa previously did extensive work to promote adventure tourism self-regulation. Through a 2014/2015 partnership with the Department of Tourism, a steering committee was set up to guide discussions, research and negotiations. Whilst the project Satsa had hoped for never materialised, this work laid a strategic foundation for the creation of the Adventure Chapter.

**Four members of this steering committee from 2015, who continued to lobby for a dedicated voice, now comprise Satsa's Adventure Tourism Chapter committee:**

- Johan Radcliff; Dirty Boots (Chair);
- Bill Harrop; Bill Harrop's "Original" Balloon Safaris;
- Marie-Louise Kellett, Gravity Adventures (Access, Inclusivity and Diversity), and
- Andre du Toit, SATIB Insurance Brokers.

**Committee members were officially nominated and elected during the chapter AGM on 4 November, with additional nominations for:**

- Mark Brown, Canopy Tours South Africa (Vice-Chair);
- Mike Rumble, Mother City Skydiving;
- Paul Blignaut, GS Africa Motorcycle Rentals and Tours; and
- Quintin Smith, Bikes 'n Wines (Marketing).

Together this dedicated assemblage of industry leaders brings an impressive and multi-faceted 170 years of experience to the table.

"I've been a Satsa member since 1982, serving on various Satsa committees and the Satsa Board. In the nearly four decades, I have seen my peers in tourism, my own business, and the industry as a whole undergo waves of change. We've adapted to changes in our local South African market, evolving traveller behaviours and technologies, and an increasingly connected global travel network. But nothing has been equal to the tsunami of Covid-19 and the pivot prowess it demands," says Harrop.

"By kicking off the Adventure Tourism Chapter now, we hope to clear the path to recovery by fostering the adventure community, providing a credible platform from which operators can lobby, and creating awareness in the domestic and international market of our unique products and activities."

## **Key chapter pillars**

The Adventure Tourism Chapter will also aim to drive market access, develop and share standard operating procedures and risk management services, and serve as a central resource for training lobbying and capacity building within the adventure tourism industry.

The chapter's key pillars to achieve these goals are marketing, membership, self-regulation, lobbying, research and education. The focus is on easy to achieve, low-hanging and cost-effective solutions with community collaboration as the centre point from which all this radiates.

"Across our tourism industry, there is a strong belief and a sense of pride in South Africa as a destination. And we know we have something special when it comes to adventure," says Johan Radcliff, newly appointed Chair of the Adventure Chapter. "But we also can't be everything to everyone. What we can do is focus on

our strengths and create partnerships where possible to advance the industry."

In the short term, the chapter has its sights set on bolstering membership and sharing its resounding message that adventure tourism represents a strong growth opportunity for South Africa into the future, not only economically and in respect of job creation but also as a contributor to rural development.

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