



# Effect of sports ban on tourism decried

By SIYA BOYA

## Hanekom calls for more consultation

**T**HE tourism ministry is unhappy it had not been consulted ahead of a recently imposed sports ban.

Tourism Minister Fikile Mbalula recently banned Athletics South Africa, SA Rugby, Cricket South Africa and Netball SA from bidding to host any events in the country because they had not met their transformation targets.

Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom said while they should have been consulted, this never happened before the ban.

“Tourism interfaces with many other departments. Decisions taken elsewhere [by other ministers] could impact positively or negatively on tourism. So [currently] the process of engaging with fellow ministers on policy is not going very well,” he said.

Hanekom was speaking at a media panel discussion facilitated by veteran CNN journalist Richard Quest, along with Gillian Saunders of Grant Thornton South Africa, Mmatsatsi Ramawela of Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) and Deputy Tourism Minister Thoko Xasa.

The robust debate on Saturday kicked off the country’s annual tourism indaba at the Nkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre in Durban.



DEREK HANEKOM

“I would support the minister when saying we have to address transformation so that South Africans can be proud of the various sporting codes and say yes, they represent us. He is right, that is his job. The question is, in the event that they have

failed to meet those targets, what is the best way to tackle it,” Hanekom asked.

“Our job is to promote tourism. So our job is to interact with other ministers and say, ‘minister, let’s consider the possible negative impact of not proceeding with our bids’,” he added.

Ramawela said while consultation did not happen, transformation was an important issue that needed to be addressed.

Quest said to his panel: “The sports issue would not be so serious if it was not a repeat of the visa debacle, followed on by the birth certificate calamity.”

Ramawela said: “This is why we say consultation is very important. Let us all know what is coming and let us have an input. We look forward to a time when every law or bill passed is subjected to an economic impact study.”

Hanekom said the lesson was that government departments needed to consult with one another before making policies.

“One of the lessons from the visa issues is, do not proceed with measures without careful consultation with affected departments.” — [siyab@dispatch.co.za](mailto:siyab@dispatch.co.za)