



**Mpumalanga Tourism
Research & Information
Management Strategy**



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ABBREVIATIONS

MTPA ACT	Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency Act, 2005
CTRU	Cape Town Routes Unlimited
GTA	Gauteng Tourism Authority
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information Communications Technology
IKM	Information and Knowledge Management
IM	Information Management
IS	Information System
KMIA	Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport
KNP	Kruger National Park
KM	Knowledge Management
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
MEGA	Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency
MTGS	Mpumalanga Tourism Growth Strategy
MTPA	Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency
RTOs	Regional Tourism Offices
SA	South Africa
TIOs	Tourism Information Offices
TIS	Tourism Information Services
TKZN	Tourism KwaZulu-Natal
TRIMS	Tourism Research and Information Management Strategy

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1 PROJECT INTRODUCTION

In 2008, the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA), the official tourism authority for the province of Mpumalanga, appointed Urban-Econ (Mpumalanga) and Urban-Econ Tourism, development consultancies, to develop a '**Tourism Research and Information Management Strategy**' (TRIMS) for the province. This strategy, which is to supplement the recently developed Mpumalanga Tourism Growth Strategy, is aimed at providing the MTPA with the necessary tools to bridge the strategic gaps that currently exist around interventions and actions to direct research and information management in the province.

As the concept of 'research' differs from the concept of 'information' in many aspects, all of which will be discussed more extensively in this report, two separate strategies have been developed as follows:

- ▶ A Tourism Research Strategy
- ▶ A Tourism Information Management Strategy

Consultants commissioned by the MTPA, are currently in the process of developing a Destination Management System (DMS) for the effective storage and management of tourism research and information. This strategy will essentially provide the tools regarding the operation of the DMS in terms of research and information input and output.

Although these strategies have been developed independently, crucial links between research and information do exist, and these have been acknowledged in the respective strategies.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

The primary scope of this project is the development of a strategy for tourism-related research and information management for the province of Mpumalanga that will feed into the recent Tourism Growth and Development Strategy. Specifically, this report lays out feasible strategies to plan for more effective research and information management in order to meet the aims and objectives set out by the MTPA.

Broadly speaking, the primary purposes for the development of this report and strategy are as follows:

- ▶ Provide the tools to assist the province in developing an efficient information system
- ▶ Provide a comprehensive and integrated strategy to direct tourism research practices
- ▶ Provide a comprehensive and integrated strategy to direct tourism information practices

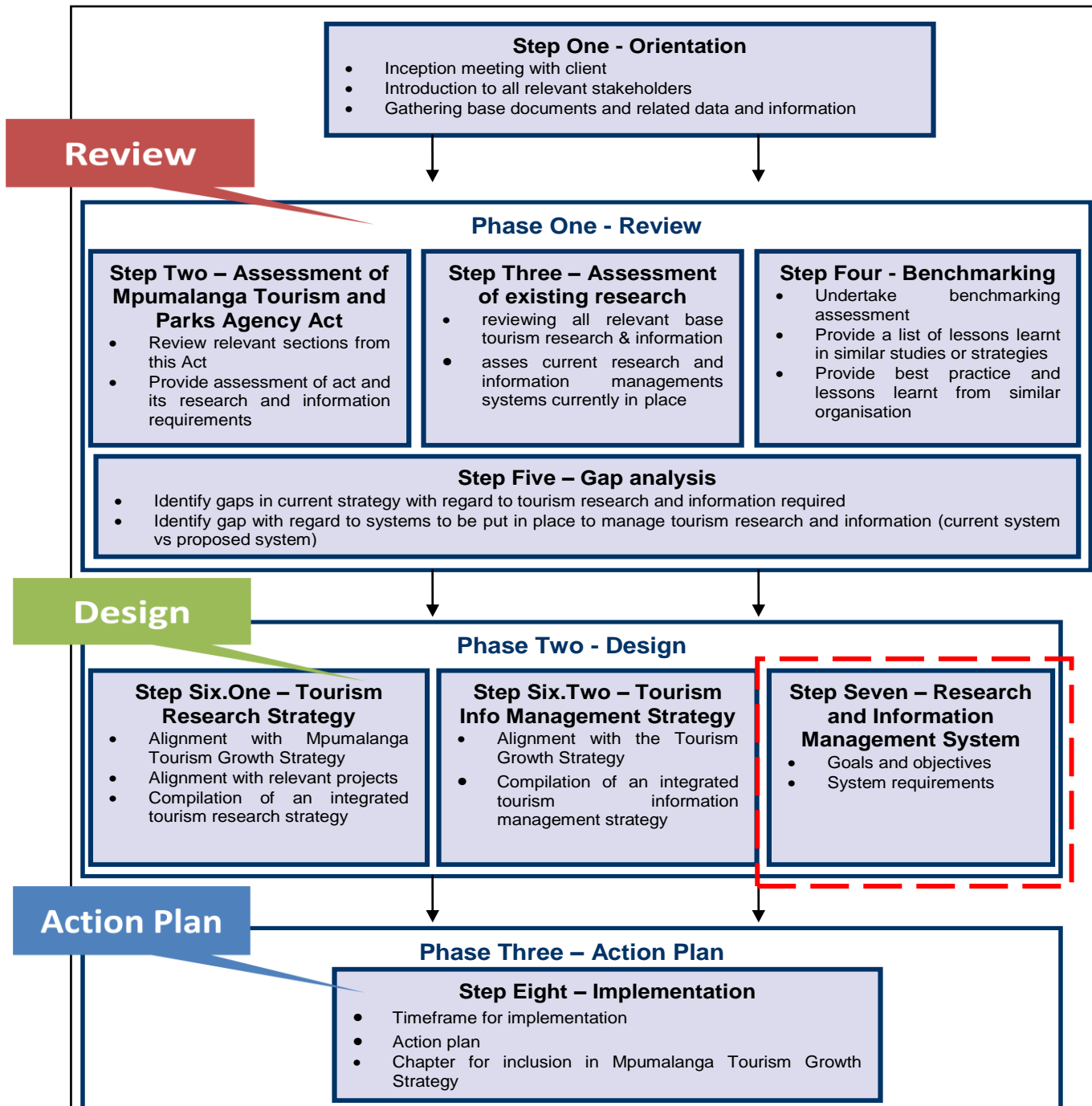
1.2 METHODOLOGY

An extensive amount of desktop research was undertaken for this project, particularly to acquire an accurate understanding of the relevant research and information concepts, and to understand the significance of effective research and information management for tourism development. This strategy was developed to take into account relevant legislation, policies and programmes with

which the strategy needs to align. Of particular importance is the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency Act, 2005 and the recent Mpumalanga Tourism Growth Strategy, both of which were consulted extensively.

The diagram below and discussion to follow indicates the methodology used for the development of this TRIMS:

Diagram 1: Methodology for Report



Urban-Econ Tourism 2008

Following the inception meeting and introduction to the relevant stakeholders for this project, **Phase 1**, as indicated in the above diagram, involved the assessment of all relevant legislation and policy, in particular, the MTPA Act, 2005. Also during this phase, all existing research and information was reviewed. A benchmarking assessment was then undertaken in which best practice cases were identified and examined. A gap analysis was then undertaken to identify gaps in current research and information practices within the province of Mpumalanga.

Phase 2 involved the design of the tourism research strategy and the tourism information management strategy. The box outlined in red, the development of the research and information management system is currently being developed by other consultants as outlined in the project introduction and therefore does not fall under the scope of this project. However, there are crucial links between this strategy and that of the DMS system and database development, all of which are acknowledged in this strategy.

Phase 3 indicates the development of a detailed action plan which provides a timeframe for implementation and an action plan with associated budgetary considerations.

The development of this strategy involved extensive consultation with various stakeholders. Telephonic and personal interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, and questionnaires were developed for local tourism informational offices in Mpumalanga, local and district municipalities in the province and managers of various research and information units throughout the country.

Three workshops were held during the development of this TRIMS, one at each district municipality in Mpumalanga. The aim of these workshops was to get an understanding of the current gaps that exist with regard to tourism research and information and suggestions on how to improve these practices. Essentially, the workshops provided an opportunity for tourism representatives and government officials to provide valuable input into this strategy.

1.3 CONTENTS OF THE STRATEGY

This Tourism Research and Information Management Strategy (TRIMS) strategy is structured as follows:

- Brief Introduction to the MTPA
- Legal Framework Assessment
- Status Quo Analysis
- Best Practice Assessment
- Gap Analysis
- Tourism Research Strategy
- Tourism Information Strategy
- Implementation Plan

This strategy begins with a brief introduction to the MTPA, outlining the agency's aims, objectives and key functional areas. The second section, the legal framework assessment, provides an overview of the legislative requirements stipulated in the MTPA Act regarding tourism research and information management in the province. The status quo analysis is divided into four broad focus areas, namely:

- ▶ Relevant institutional factors
- ▶ Current Information systems
- ▶ Operation of research practices
- ▶ Operation of information practices

The best practice assessment, which will provide essential guidelines for developing this strategy, outlines the key institutional and operational factors pertaining to the chosen national and international best practice cases. The gap analysis identifies the key gaps in current tourism research and information practices within Mpumalanga.

The core sections of this report, the tourism research strategy and the tourism information management strategy follow the gap analysis. These strategies, informed by best practice and the valuable input acquired from the workshops and stakeholder consultations, set out the key goals pertaining to tourism research and information management, the objectives to meet these goals, and the relevant actions required to meet the stated objectives. The strategy concludes with a detailed implementation plan, as an annex to this strategy.

2 INTRODUCTION TO THE MTPA

The Mpumalanga Tourism & Parks Agency (MTPA) was established in the year 2006 through the Mpumalanga Tourism & Parks Agency Act (5 of 2005). The agency, which has incorporated the former Mpumalanga Tourism Authority and the Mpumalanga Parks Board, has the following primary mandate:

'to provide for the management and promotion of responsible tourism and nature conservation in the Province and to ensure sustainable utilisation of natural resources for the benefit of everyone in the Province.'

In order to meet the stated objective, the MTPA has set out the following broad aims:

- ▶ To promote tourism growth by increasing the number of both domestic and international tourists.
- ▶ To broaden the participation of historically disadvantaged individuals (HDIs) in the tourism industry.
- ▶ To ensure sustainable development and the management of the environment

Key functional areas of the MTPA are reflected in the entity's organogram and include:

- ▶ Tourism Business Development
- ▶ Corporate support services
- ▶ Human resource management
- ▶ Financial Management
- ▶ Marketing
- ▶ Biodiversity Conservation

3 LEGAL FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENT

This section of the Mpumalanga Tourism Research and Information Management Strategy (TRIMS) provides an assessment of the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency Act to establish the legislative requirements regarding tourism research and information management as specified in this act.

The preamble to this act recognises the following:

- ▶ *'The tourism industry has the potential of being a catalyst for significant economic growth and development within the Province of Mpumalanga,'*
- ▶ *'It is priority of provincial government to develop the tourism sector within the province in a sustainable and acceptable manner so as to ensure that the development of the true potential of the tourism sector will significantly contribute to economic growth and development within the province in order to improve the quality of life of every inhabitant in the province.'*

3.1 PURPOSE OF THE ACT

The MTPA Act came into operation in 2005 for the following reasons:

- ▶ To provide for the establishment of the MTPA and for the management thereof by a Board
- ▶ To provide for the sustainable development and improvement of the tourism industry in Mpumalanga
- ▶ To provide for conservation management of natural resources
- ▶ To confer powers and functions upon the agency
- ▶ To provide for registration of certain persons and entities involved in tourism
- ▶ To provide for transitional agreements

3.2 POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE AGENCY IN TERMS OF TRIMS

The act sets out specific powers and functions of the MPTA with regards to research and information in Mpumalanga. These are outlined below:

- ▶ To implement all relevant tourism policies, programmes, and regulations pertaining to tourism research and information
- ▶ To monitor, evaluate and ensure the implementation of, and compliance with, all tourism research and information compilation policies, programmes and regulations by those tourism stakeholders to which such policies are applicable
- ▶ To conduct cost-effective and focused research pertaining to tourism in the Province
- ▶ To co-ordinate integrated tourism research
- ▶ To establish and maintain a comprehensive database consisting of information pertaining to, inter alia,
 - ✓ Existing tourism attractions, infrastructure, facilities, services and location thereof and access to, within the Province

- ✓ Natural and cultural attractions that could potentially be developed as tourism attractions within the Province
- ✓ New areas of tourism activity and potential sites where these activities could be carried out within the Province
- ▶ To develop a tourism information service and by disseminating information to tourists and relevant tourism stakeholders

The implications of the above listed research and information requirements are discussed in the following section.

3.2.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR MPUMALANGA TRIMS

The table below presents the research and information requirements specified in the relevant act and provides associated implications for the Mpumalanga TRIMS:

Table 1: Tourism Research and Information Legal Requirements and Implications for TRIMS

Legal Requirement	Implication for TRIMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Implement all relevant tourism policies, programmes, and regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Development of the TRIMS must align with relevant tourism policies, programmes and regulations pertaining to tourism research and information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Monitor, evaluate and ensure the implementation of, and compliance with, all tourism research and information compilation policies, programmes and regulations 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conduct cost-effective and focused research pertaining to tourism in the Province 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure that the TRIMS is directed at focused, cost-effective, integrated tourism research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Co-ordinate integrated tourism research 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Establish and maintain a comprehensive database containing; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing tourism attractions, infrastructure, facilities, services and location thereof and access to, within the Province • Natural and cultural attractions that could potentially be developed as tourism attractions within the Province • New areas of tourism activity and potential sites where these activities could be carried out within the Province 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure that the TRIMS includes a strategy to develop a widespread tourism database containing all relevant information as specified in the act
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop a tourism information service and by disseminating information to tourists and relevant tourism stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure that the TRIMS includes a strategy pertaining to a tourism information services for the Province

3.3 REGISTRATION OF CERTAIN PERSONS AND ENTITIES

The MTPA Act specifies that ‘for the purpose of establishing a comprehensive database of the tourism industry in the Province,’ the registrar (appointed as contemplated in the Act) must keep and maintain a register for the registration of all:

- ▶ Travel agents
- ▶ Tourist guides
- ▶ Tour operators
- ▶ Carriers
- ▶ Tourism training providers
- ▶ Hotels and other accommodation establishments
- ▶ Restaurants
- ▶ Conference centres
- ▶ Vehicle rental operators
- ▶ Activity operators
- ▶ Hunting operators
- ▶ Other tourist amenities, entities, organisations

3.3.1 PUBLICATION OF A LIST OF CERTAIN PERSONS OR ENTITIES

The act requires the Agency to, twice a year, publish a comprehensive list of all registered persons and entities.

4 MPUMALANGA TOURISM GROWTH STRATEGY

This section of the strategy briefly introduces the recently developed **Mpumalanga Tourism Growth Strategy**. The section discusses pertinent issues set out in this growth strategy significant to the development of the Mpumalanga TRIMS. Recognising the fact that this TRIMS must align with the growth strategy, it is essential to understand the requirements and expectations set out in this growth strategy.

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE GROWTH STRATEGY

Although Mpumalanga has the potential to be a premier international and domestic tourism destination, the province has failed to translate its rich resource base into a significant tourism industry. With a view to develop the tourism sector as a driver of economic activity and diversification, the provincial government began the development of the Mpumalanga Tourism Growth Strategy in 2007.

The growth strategy’s primary objective is to elaborate a framework to guide tourism initiatives and development, providing the following outputs:

- ▶ An integrated tourism marketing plan,
- ▶ A tourism product development plan
- ▶ A tourism human resource plan

- ▶ A proposal for an appropriate institutional framework
- ▶ An action plan for implementation

4.2 FACTORS SPECIFIC TO TRIMS

The growth strategy identifies some key factors relevant to the development of this TRIMS. These factors are as follows:

In terms of market research, the strategy specifies: 'To monitor and guide the province's marketing and product development strategy, market research should be undertaken on an on-going basis to include:'

- ▶ Visitor surveys to determine tourist profiles
- ▶ Database of intermediaries
- ▶ Product inventory
- ▶ Market segmentation studies to match products with markets for domestic, regional and international markets

In terms of the improvement of Tourism Information Services (TIS), the strategy suggests a coordinated approach with regard to services provided, literature displays, information and reservations, pricing for services etc

Other key factors identified in this strategy with regards to tourism research and information management are highlighted below:

- ▶ There is a lack of knowledge of tourism in some areas of the province
- ▶ Many Tourism Information Offices (TIOs) have inadequate supplies of tourism information literature from neighbouring localities/regions
- ▶ The status and role of Regional Tourism Organisations and Community Tourism Organisations is unclear
- ▶ There is currently a fragmented approach to tourism in the province with many tourism stakeholders 'doing their own thing'
- ▶ There is inadequate engagement by the MTPA with district municipalities
- ▶ The strategy advocates the establishment of the Mpumalanga Tourism Forum
- ▶ There is currently no touring map/brochure of the province which integrates the seven regions
- ▶ The MTPA website is poorly constructed and incomplete, geared primarily for domestic tourists and not international tourists (only English version, no overall map of the province, some links to tour operators and local tourism associations do not work etc)
- ▶ There is limited classification and grading of tourism operations
- ▶ Branding of the Mpumalanga Route is insufficient

4.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR TRIMS

The box below presents the project implications arising from the Mpumalanga Tourism Growth Strategy, 2007:

PROJECT IMPLICATIONS

In aligning with the market research and TIS requirements set out the growth strategy, this TRIMS must provide feasible research and tourism information management strategies to market the province effectively and develop the tourism product. The strategy must also address the need for the following:

- Tourism training within the province
- Improvement of the website, particularly to attract more international visitors
- The development of a tourism map of the province
- Research aimed at branding the Mpumalanga Route
- Attention given to the establishment of a Mpumalanga Tourism Forum
- Attention given to the possible grading and classification of tourism products

5 STATUS QUO ANALYSIS

This section of the TRIMS presents the status quo analysis, which examines the current tourism research and information management practices within Mpumalanga. In developing this section, the following groups of stakeholders were consulted:

- ▶ MTPA
- ▶ Tourism information officers
- ▶ Regional tourism officers
- ▶ Local municipal and district managers
- ▶ Other tourism authorities and publicity associations

The methodology used for the development of the status quo analysis is explained in the introduction section of this strategy.

The section begins by providing relevant definitions, and discusses the importance of undertaking research and information. Following this, both the research status quo analysis and the information status quo analysis for Mpumalanga are presented.

5.1 RESEARCH AND INFORMATION DEFINITIONS

As the core focus of this strategy is centred on research and information, it is important to understand what these terms represent.

'Research' can be defined as follows:

- 'Original investigation undertaken to gain knowledge and/or enhance understanding'
- 'Systematic investigation to establish facts or collect information on a subject'
- 'Scholarly or scientific investigation or inquiry'

'Information' can be defined as follows:

- 'Facts, data, or instructions in any medium or form'
- 'Knowledge derived from study, experience, or instruction'
- 'The communication or reception of knowledge or intelligence'

5.2 IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH AND INFORMATION

Tourism research and information management is critical for effective tourism planning. Tourism research, if detailed, accurate and focussed, will enable relevant stakeholders to understand a tourism market in a given area. This is critical in assisting with appropriate planning for tourism development within that given area. Research, therefore, is largely focussed on understanding the target market in a given area.

Primary users of research output are as follows:

- ▶ Tourism planners (including government, consultants and other decision makers)
- ▶ Potential investors

Information on the other hand, is based on gaining an understanding of the supply of tourism products in an area, and using this knowledge to market the area through the provision of relevant tourism information to tourists. Information dissemination is critical to enable tourists to have the necessary information to plan their holiday to a particular area. The internet is an effective means of disseminating tourism information and information offices are critical to providing tourists with any information that they require. Information on tourism products is critical to attract tourists to a particular area as well as to diversify their experience in that area. The primary users of tourism information output are therefore tourists.

More specifically, tourism research and information is important for the following reasons:

- ▶ Tourism research helps with planning for future tourism growth
- ▶ Research provides the evidence to underpin and inform policy-making and decision-making
- ▶ Tourism research helps identify gaps evident in certain regions tourism strategies
- ▶ Research and information fosters economic development in the tourism sector
- ▶ Tourism research expands knowledge pertaining to the tourism industry of tourists, businesses and other users of tourism information
- ▶ Tourism research helps understand the customer base (in terms of visitor expectations, satisfaction, preferences), the industry (in terms of economics, product development, HR requirements) and the need for resource sustainability (in terms of environmental, cultural and social resources upon which the tourism sector is reliant)
- ▶ Up-to-date, accurate research encourages investment
- ▶ Tourists need information to decide if they should come to an area
- ▶ There is an increased need for new methods of accessing information due to advanced technology
- ▶ Dissemination of information to tourists important for competing against other provincial tourism markets
- ▶ There is a need to provide tourists with up to date information on tourism products & services
- ▶ Growing market dynamics raise information needs

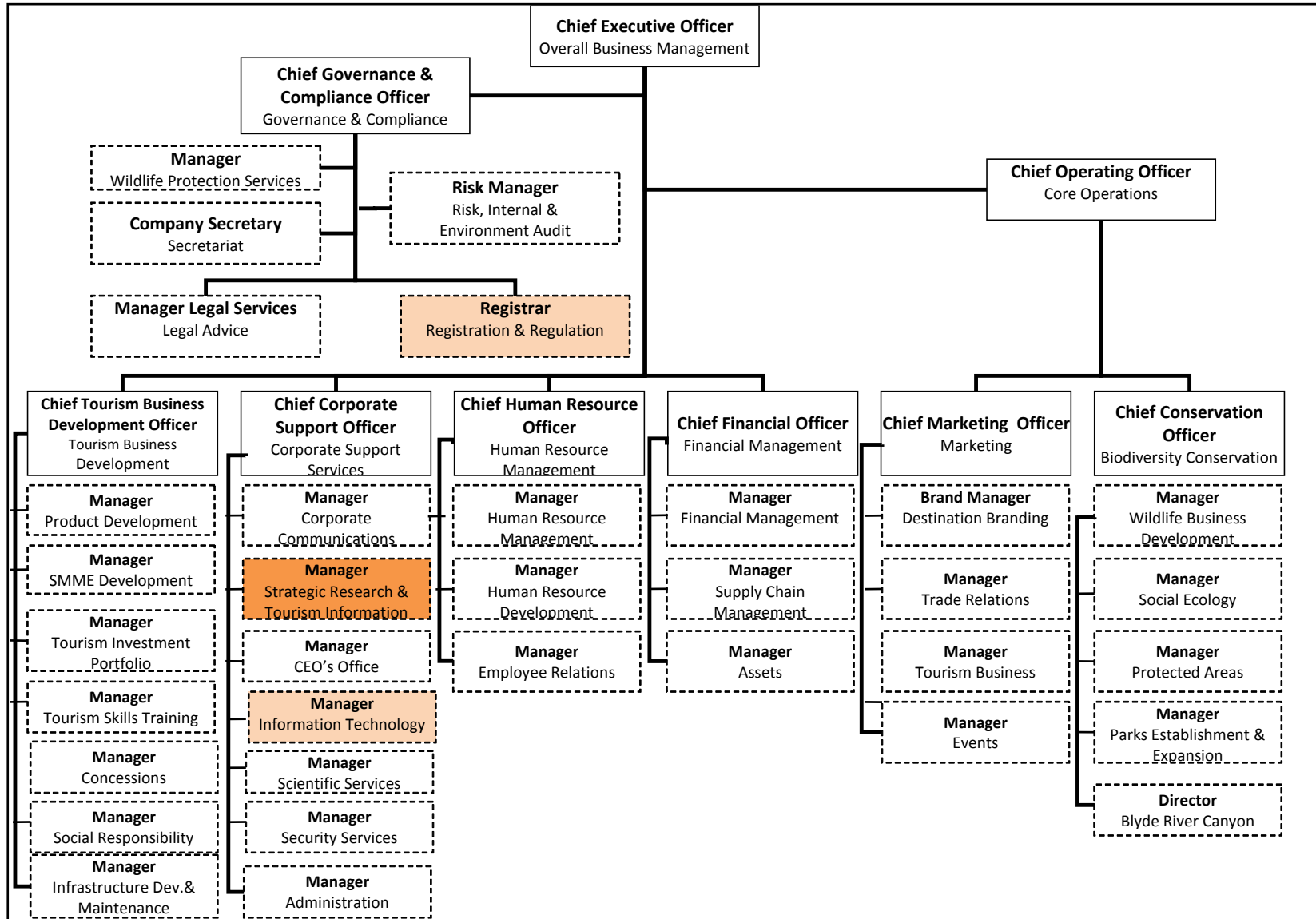
5.3 INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

This section examines the current institutional arrangements regarding the practice of tourism research and information in Mpumalanga. Particularly, the organisational structure of the MTPA is provided and other institutional factors are discussed.

5.3.1 MTPA STRUCTURE

The following organogram presents the current organisational structure of the MTPA. The key unit relevant to this strategy – the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit is highlighted in dark orange, and the two other units important to this study (Information Technology and the Registrar) are highlighted in light orange.

Diagram 2: Current MTPA Structure



With regards to research and information, two units of the MTPA are relevant for the purposes of this TRIMS. The first is the **Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit**, as indicated by the orange box on the above diagram. This unit is overseen by a general manager who is accountable to the Chief Corporate Support Officer.

The second important unit is the **Information Technology Unit** of the MTPA, also headed up by a general manager. This unit, as the name suggests, is responsible for IT functions of the MTPA. As such, it is expected that this unit will play an important role in storage, and packaging of data and information relevant to the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit.

Finally, the **Registrar** plays an important role in research and information as due to their responsibility in registration of tourism products in the province.

PROJECT IMPLICATION

As research and information practices within the MTPA currently operate without any strategic direction, this TRIM will address this by providing feasible strategies pertaining to the institutional make-up of the MTPA in terms of research and information.

5.4 INFORMATION SYSTEMS

In order to enhance the e-business functionality and/or systems of the MTPA, the agency has recently appointed a consultancy to develop an **'Integrated Destination Management and Internal Communication and Administrative System.'** Rationales for the development of this system include the following:

- ▶ To effectively promote the tourism services and resources of the province of Mpumalanga
- ▶ To enable tourists to transact or book on this system
- ▶ To work effectively and in close co-operation with its various tourism stakeholders in the province, at a national level and abroad
- ▶ To effectively communicate internally with its staff
- ▶ To integrate its administrative systems into a user-friendly intranet environment
- ▶ To generate additional revenue for its marketing efforts and to offset the costs of its eBusiness systems¹

The relevant consultancy is required to develop the following:

- ▶ To refine or replace MTPA's current content and web management system to provide the additional functions as set out below:
 - ✓ A Real Time Booking and an associated Product Management System, which can be provided to all registered tourism providers in Mpumalanga.
 - ✓ A user-friendly Reservation and Tourism Query Assistance interface or module for MTPA's gateway information offices and the staff of these facilities.

¹ MTPA request for proposals, *Tourism eBusiness Project*, 2008

- ✓ Automated capturing of the contact details of consumers or members of the trade who make enquiries or bookings through this system, so that this data can effectively be used for CRM purposes.
 - ✓ A tourism attraction and services database search facility that generates street maps based on the geo-referencing or latitude and longitude point data that has been assigned to the various tourism services (or service providers?) and attractions in MTPA's tourism asset database.
- ▶ To develop a user-friendly intranet environment for MTPA, or a similar system.
 - ▶ The development of an e or web-based Human Resource Management System, which integrated into this intranet and DMS environment

PROJECT IMPLICATION

While this 'Integrated Destination Management and Internal Communication and Administrative System' will be the interface/system for the storage of tourism research and information for users, this TRIMS, in essence, will provide the intellectual tools regarding the operation of what research and information enters and exits the system and how it enters and exits the system.

5.5 OPERATION OF RESEARCH PRACTICES

This section presents the status quo analysis in terms of research practices within the province.

5.5.1 INTRODUCTION

As mentioned earlier, tourism research and information dissemination in the MTPA is currently not informed by any strategy. This lack of direction has resulted in research being conducted in a rather haphazard manner in the past. At present, no particular appointed individuals are responsible for undertaking tourism research within the MTPA.

5.5.2 CURRENT RESEARCH PRACTICES

The following points relate to the current research situation within the MTPA and in the province as a whole:

- ▶ Research by the MTPA in the past was done on a small scale
- ▶ Research consisted primarily of internal surveys conducted within the MTPA
- ▶ Some local municipalities currently do their own research to a greater or lesser degree; this research is not informed by any master plan
- ▶ Some local municipalities have utilised the intelligence of the tourism department of the Tshwane University of Technology in Nelspruit in the past
- ▶ The MTPA is not often informed of the research done by local government
- ▶ The Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA) is also known to have done some tourism feasibility projects
- ▶ Some work has been outsourced to consultancies in the past
- ▶ At national level, the MTPA interacts with the National Tourism Research and Knowledge Management Forum

- ▶ At inter-provincial level, the MTPA interacts with other provinces through various forums
- ▶ No research is currently being done by the MTPA
- ▶ The MTPA is in the process of recruiting a Strategic Research Specialist and 2 researchers
- ▶ Also, several unemployed graduates have recently been appointed to form part of a provincial research panel

PROJECT IMPLICATION

This TRIMS must seek to provide strategic direction on how to improve the structure regarding the operation of research within the MTPA and must look to provide direction on creating links with relevant tourism departments in higher learning establishments. Also, the strategy must address the current lack of communication with local government and independent tourism offices when it comes to tourism research practices.

5.6 OPERATION OF INFORMATION PRACTICES

This section presents the status quo analysis in terms of information practices within the province.

5.6.1 INTRODUCTION

Based on the new organogram developed for the MTPA, it is envisaged that the development of information offices (infrastructure) is undertaken by the Product Development Unit. The information dissemination from these tourism information offices, largely a marketing exercise is expected to be undertaken by the Marketing Unit. However, it is currently not clear under which unit the operation of these offices and the management thereof will fall. The Mpumalanga Tourism Growth Strategy requires that Tourism Development unit be responsible for functions related to the information offices, however, the relevant legislation differs in this regard and instead requires the Information and Knowledge Management unit to be responsible for information management. The new organogram for MTPA of 2008 however, places the role of information with the **Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit**. It is critical that the roles and responsibilities of the various units with respect to information management, in particular around the information offices are addressed in the TRIMS.

5.6.2 CURRENT INFORMATION PRACTICES

The following points relate to the current situation in terms of information services and information management within the province:

- ▶ Apart from the Tourism Development unit, the Registrar also has some responsibility in terms of information management
- ▶ The registration of tourism products has not officially started yet, although it is a requirement in the relevant legislation that the all product owners be registered with the MTPA
- ▶ As indicated above, the province is currently working on the development of a holistic product service database and a destination management system
- ▶ Tourism offices in the province are largely run as independent entities

- ▶ There are currently about 35 tourism information offices within the province
- ▶ The office at the Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport (KMIA) is now functional
- ▶ A 2010 tourism office including coffee chop, information office and internet centre is being planned for the province, to be situated near the stadium in Nelspruit. This office will be handed over to MTPA following the event.
- ▶ The MTPA does have a product service database, however, it is incomplete. This database will be incorporated into the new system and a full audit is currently being undertaken.

PROJECT IMPLICATION

This TRIMS must provide strategic direction regarding the collection and dissemination of tourism information, with particular focus on improving the relationship with tourism offices/centres/publicity associations.

6 ASSESSMENT OF TRIMS BEST PRACTICE

This section of the TRIMS identifies three tourism entities in South Africa to be used as national best practice for the purposes of this strategy. These entities were chosen as a result of their accomplished tourism research and information management/intelligence units. The chosen entities are as follows:

- ▶ Tourism KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Information Services Unit
- ▶ Gauteng Tourism Authority Research and ICT Unit
- ▶ Cape Town Routes Unlimited Research and Market Intelligence Unit

In addition, one international case study was chosen as best practice, that of a **Tourism Research Strategy** developed by the North West Regional Development Agency for England's North West Region.

The section begins with a brief overview of each of the chosen national entities. This is followed by a discussion on the relevant institutional arrangements within each chosen unit. Information systems are then identified for each entity and lastly, each of the unit's research and information practices are examined. The international case study is then discussed and the section concludes with key lessons learnt.

6.1 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

6.1.1 TOURISM KWA-ZULU NATAL TOURISM (TKZN) INFORMATION SERVICES

Tourism KwaZulu-Natal (TKZN), the official tourism authority for KZN, is responsible for the development, marketing and promotion of tourism in the province, under the umbrella brand of the 'Zulu Kingdom.' The authority's direction is drawn from the organisation's vested mandate stipulated in the KZN Tourism Act, 1996.

Recognising the significance of information as a key element of TKZN's core business, an Information and Knowledge Management Division, referred to as **Tourism Information Services** was established.

6.1.1.1 ROLES OF THE TKZN TOURISM INFORMATION SERVICES DIVISION

The core roles of this division are as follows:

- ▶ To collect, analyse and report key information to direct the strategies and programmes of TKZN, with focus on:
 - Increasing tourist flows to the province
 - Increasing spend
 - Extending length of stay
 - Addressing the issue of seasonality
 - Spreading tourism to other destinations through effective marketing and brand promotion
- ▶ To measure the overall performance of the tourism industry in the province and specific TKZN activities
- ▶ To maintain an efficient information and knowledge management system and database
- ▶ To provide tourist information through information offices, electronic marketing tools and brochure distribution

6.1.2 GAUTENG TOURISM AUTHORITY (GTA) RESEARCH AND ICT UNIT

The GTA's Research and ICT Unit is primarily responsible for gathering, analysing and disseminating market intelligence in close collaboration with South African Tourism (SAT) and tertiary institutions. The GTA's renewed focus on increasing tourism in Gauteng recognises the importance of information in understanding various target markets. Under the direction of a research manager, the unit seeks to create a knowledge system to build a central tourism repository and use technology as a strategic business tool to advance the global competitiveness of the authority.

6.1.2.1 ROLES OF THE GTA RESEARCH AND ICT UNIT

The roles of this knowledge unit are outlined below:

- ▶ Gather, analyse and disseminate intelligence on the workings of international, domestic, provincial and local tourism to inform decision making both within the GTA and within the industry
- ▶ Establish and maintain a destination marketing and management website that seeks to enhance the organisational and destination Gauteng Brand
- ▶ Develop coordinated systems and mechanisms to report on the performance of the industry
- ▶ Provide research intelligence aimed at encouraging a provincial-wide culture of knowledge-based planning, product innovation, monitoring and evaluation
- ▶ Commission and analyse syndicated and original research for specific planning purposes
- ▶ Create and sustain cooperative research opportunities and align with as well as draw upon on-going and planned research activities

6.1.3 CAPE TOWN ROUTES UNLIMITED RESEARCH AND MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Cape Town Routes Unlimited provides a variety of services to those involved in tourism in Cape Town and the Western Cape. These services are provided through strategic business units, each with specific roles and responsibilities.

The Research and Market Intelligence Unit is of particular relevance to the development of this strategy. This strategic business unit is responsible for undertaking on-going tourism research in the Western Cape to aid in tourism marketing.

6.1.3.1 ROLES OF CTRU RESEARCH AND MARKET INTELLIGENCE UNIT

The roles of the CTRU Research and Market Intelligence Unit are as follows:

- ▶ The Research and Market Intelligence Unit implements a focused research programme to provide information, statistics and analysis specifically designed to support all aspects of tourism marketing in the Western Cape.
- ▶ It investigates the nature and number of visitors to the province, and It provides insight into both the domestic and international target market in terms of demographics, socio-economic data, travel habits and tourism preferences

6.2 INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

An analysis of the three national case studies points to the Tourism Information Services Division of KZN as being the best practice. As such, only TKZNs institutional and operational factors are considered in this section.

6.2.1 STRUCTURE OF THE TKZN TOURISM INFORMATION SERVICES DIVISION

The Tourism Information Services division is structured as follows:

- ▶ General Manager
- ▶ Research Manager
- ▶ Information Systems Coordinator
- ▶ Registrar
- ▶ Data Capture Clerk (x2)
- ▶ Researcher (x2)
- ▶ Information Services Unit

6.2.1.1 STAFFING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The broad roles and responsibilities of the various staff members making up the Tourism Information Services division are set out in the table below:

Table 2: Staffing Roles and Responsibilities of TKZNs TIS Division

Staff Member/Unit	Key Roles and Responsibilities
▶ General Manager	▶ Oversee all activities of the division
▶ Information Systems Co-	▶ Maintain TKZN's tourism asset database

ordinator (and data capture clerks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Maintain web system ▶ Maintain other databases such as VIP database and Teli-Tourist and fax-on-demand systems
▶ Registrar	▶ Registration of tourist guides and other tourism information services
▶ Research Manager	▶ Direction of research
▶ Information Services Unit	▶ Responsible for TKZN's Gateway Information Offices and information distribution function

6.3 OPERATION OF RESEARCH AND INFORMATION PRACTICES

6.3.1 TKZN'S KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

TKZN's distinguished Knowledge Management Programme can be divided into two broad focus areas as per the following:

- ▶ Monitoring of key macro research and data, market trends and TKZN's marketing and development campaigns
- ▶ Relevant ad-hoc strategies and core tourism industry-based studies²

According to TKZN's Strategic Plan 2006-2011, the Knowledge Management Programme commands the following:

- ▶ Ensure leading edge market research availability for the domestic market
- ▶ Provide a comprehensive tourism information service to consumers and the trade
- ▶ Initiate domestic tourism measurement to monitor performance against targets
- ▶ Continue management of tourism registration systems
- ▶ Provide training to frontline staff on the information of accessible services and attitudinal training for appropriate customer care
- ▶ Ensure effective marketing tools to include specific reference to where information can be obtained on accessible tourism services and attractions (E.g. TKZN website, information services etc)

TKZN has published over 100 research reports since 1997. The research programme has also given TKZN the ability to develop critical strategies with the key aim of developing and raising the level of awareness of the 'Zulu Kingdom' brand. Examples include: Database and registration, website management, information office and customer care strategies etc.

Some examples of specific research reports undertaken by the unit are presented in the box below:

² Report by Prof. Ernie Heath, Tourism Management (University of Pretoria), *Nomination of TKZN as a Candidate for a UNWTO Ulysses 2007 Award*

Event Impact Assessments:

- ▶ Comrades Marathon Impact Assessments
- ▶ Loerie Awards Impact Assessments
- ▶ Sardine Run Economic Impact Assessment Reports

Research Projects:

- ▶ KZN Visitor's Book Project Report, March 2004
- ▶ KZN Aviation and Charter Final Strategy Report, November 2002
- ▶ Proceedings of a Workshop: Research on Community Involvement in Tourism, September 1997
- ▶ A proposed Framework to Create a Successful Tourism Investment Climate in KwaZulu-Natal, July 1998
- ▶ KZN's Winter Holiday Events 2000, Feb 2001
- ▶ KwaZulu-Natal's Tourism Policy and Legislation Review, January 2001
- ▶ A Community-Based Tourism Development Strategy for KwaZulu-Natal, July 1999
- ▶ KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Investment Report, July 2005

The establishment of a tourism asset database in 1997 has proved to be one of TKZN's most notable projects. A tourism asset database can be defined as: *'a collection of details of the tourism services and attractions of the tourist destination'*³

Operational aspects of this database are outlined below:

- ▶ The resource is maintained by a team of TKZN staff, with the support of all District Municipalities and CTO's in the province
- ▶ The database is made up of 17 categories and contains 10 000 records
- ▶ TKZN has entered into a relationship with Braby's, one of SA's leading directory development and mapping agencies, to assist it with the maintenance of its data and to print a Tourism Trade Directory for the province
- ▶ There is a critical link between this database and Tourism Information offices (TIO's) in the province. This system, together with its websites, provides information officers in KZN with the necessary information which they require to deal with tourist information enquiries

6.3.1.1 TKZN REGISTRATION SYSTEM AND OTHER DATABASES

In 2001, TKZN launched a tourism registration system and to date, it has registered more than 3000 tourism services in the province. The aim of this system is two-fold; first, to obtain individual tourism service support in upgrading its tourism asset database and second, to develop a register of services

³ Report by Prof. Ernie Heath, Tourism Management (University of Pretoria), *Nomination of TKZN as a Candidate for a UNWTO Ulysses 2007 Award*

that meet the basic minimum standards required to operate. Also part of this registration system is the registration, policing and development of tour guides in the province. The system offers a degree of consumer protection with its ability to deregister services guilty of offering poor customer service. Over 900 guides are registered to date, and a number of development workshops have been conducted in order to improve their guiding knowledge.

TKZN is also responsible for the existence of other electronic marketing tools and databases including the following:

- ▶ On-line editing and referencing abilities
- ▶ The first Telitourist service in Africa
- ▶ SA's first fax-on-demand service

6.3.1.2 TKZN TIO'S AND OTHER KZN INFORMATION OFFICE SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

The TKZN Tourism Service Division is responsible for establishing and maintaining an array of Gateway and key market tourism information offices. The aim of these offices is to provide accurate, up to date tourist information to potential tourists and tourists entering the province. Strategic office locations are as follows:

- ▶ Durban International Airport
- ▶ Kokstad (key gateway town to KZN)
- ▶ V&A Waterfront in Cape Town
- ▶ Sandton shopping centre in Johannesburg
- ▶ Golela Swaziland Border Post

6.4 INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

This section highlights some of the key factors taken from the Tourism Research Strategy for North West England (NWE). This strategy was developed in response to the increasing demands and expectations to provide robust evidence for monitoring performance and to support planning, policy and funding decisions.

The strategy recognises the need to develop a high quality research base for the following reasons:

- ▶ To demonstrate to Central Government, the importance of tourism within the wider economy, thereby helping to secure funding for the region.
- ▶ To monitor trends in demand (e.g. by month/year/area/sector) in order to guide regional and sub-regional investment/intervention decisions.
- ▶ To measure the impact of public sector investment/intervention and of shocks/major incidents.
- ▶ To improve the performance of the region's tourism businesses through the provision of high quality industry intelligence that can support their business development decisions.

6.4.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategy follows three broad headings:

- ▶ National surveys
- ▶ Regional research
- ▶ Publication/dissemination of data

The strategy emphasises that fact that although national tourism surveys often come under heavy criticism, they still provide great value in the following aspects:

- ▶ They provide essential contextual information
- ▶ They enable comparisons between regions

Surveys such as International Passenger Surveys, Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions, Day Visit Surveys and various Occupancy Surveys have been identified in this strategy as key research recommendations.

A comprehensive regional research programme was recommended, with particular focus on the following:

- ▶ Volume and value statistics (economic impact analysis, tourism demand models)
- ▶ Industry performance surveys (accommodation occupancy surveys, visitor attraction surveys, business performance surveys)
- ▶ Market analysis (visitor and spending survey, regional day visit research, visitor profile and perceptions)

6.5 LESSONS LEARNT FROM BEST PRACTICE

Below is a list of key lessons learnt from the above national best practice cases as well as the international case study example. These lessons will provide essential guidelines for the development of the research and information management strategies.

- ▶ Undertake regular tourism research to enable effective tourism planning and to attract investment
- ▶ Collect and disseminate tourism information on an on-going basis to provide tourists with all the information they require and to support tourism marketing
- ▶ Ensure easy access to research reports for relevant stakeholders through a research database
- ▶ Ensure easy access to all tourism information for tourists through a tourism information database
- ▶ Ensure a well developed, informative tourism website for the province with interactive tourism maps, photographs and functional links to all tourism services
- ▶ Ensure regular communication between tourism stakeholders, both private and public in the province in terms of research and information

- ▶ Ensure effective institutional capacity to undertake tourism research and collect and disseminate tourism information
- ▶ Ensure a tourism research and information management system for the storage and management of tourism research and information
- ▶ Ensure the development of a structured, implementable research programme

7 GAP ANALYSIS

This section of the strategy identifies gaps in current tourism research and information management practices. The discussions to follow are based on liaison with the MTPA, district and local municipalities and relevant tourism information offices and related tourism associations.

7.1 INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

The table below identifies current gaps relating to the institutional arrangement of tourism research and information management practices within the province.

Table 3: Gaps regarding current Institutional Factors

INSTITUTIONAL & GENERAL	▶ There is no delegation of tourism research responsibilities to members of staff within the MTPA
	▶ There is currently a lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities for the various components of research and information between units
	▶ Institutionally, the MTPA is currently not appropriately structured for effective research and information practices
	▶ The MTPA is currently not seen as the top authority in terms of tourism research and information
	▶ There is conflict between the MTPA Act and the Mpumalanga Growth Strategy regarding research and information
	▶ There is a lack of communication between the MTPA and other institutions involved with tourism research

PROJECT IMPLICATION

This TRIMS needs to provide strategic direction in terms of delegating research responsibilities within the MTPA, resolving conflict between current legislation and the growth strategy, and assisting in building the reputation of the MTPA in terms of knowledge management so that it can be respected as the top authority in terms of tourism research and information.

7.2 INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The table below identifies gaps evident with current information systems in Mpumalanga in terms of tourism information management:

Table 4: Gaps regarding current Information Systems

INFO SYSTEMS	▶ Current product service database incomplete
	▶ Registration system incomplete and ineffective
	▶ No Destination Management System for the storage of tourism research and information for users as of yet but currently being developed
	▶ There is currently a lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities for information between various units

PROJECT IMPLICATION

Although the MTPA is currently in the process of developing a comprehensive Destination Management System, this strategy must provide the necessary tools regarding the operation of research and information within the system. The strategy must also address the concerns relating to the current registration system.

7.3 RESEARCH PRACTICES

The table below identifies gaps evident in current research practices within Mpumalanga:

Table 5: Gaps regarding current Tourism Research Practices

RESEARCH PRACTICES	▶ Scope of tourism research very narrow in the past
	▶ No research currently being done by MTPA
	▶ Lack of clarity on research roles and responsibilities between various units
	▶ Research done haphazardly in the past
	▶ No institutions willing to share knowledge
	▶ Lack of communication between stakeholders

PROJECT IMPLICATION

This TRIMS needs to focus on providing strategies aimed at improving the relationship between the MTPA, local government and independent tourism offices. The research strategy must aim to broaden the scope of research and encourage sharing of knowledge amongst stakeholders.

7.4 INFORMATION PRACTICES

The table below identifies gaps evident in current tourism information practices within Mpumalanga:

Table 6: Gaps regarding current Tourism Information Practices

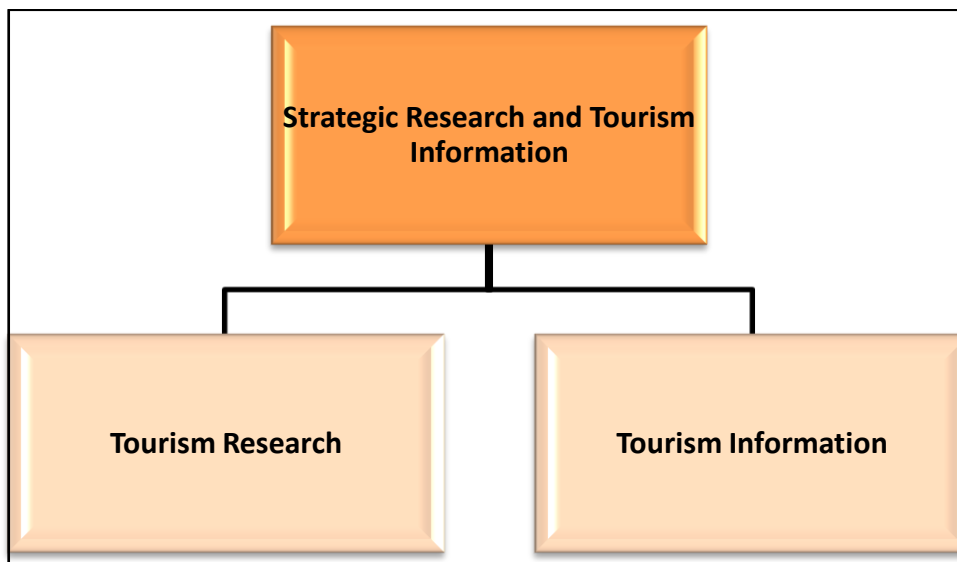
INFORMATION PRACTICES	▶ Tourism information incomplete and not up-to-date
	▶ Website poorly developed
	▶ Incomplete asset databases
	▶ Lack of communication between stakeholders
	▶ Under resourced tourism information offices
	▶ Only one MTPA office out of the province

PROJECT IMPLICATION

This strategy must look to enhance the new Destination Management System for efficient access to accurate, detailed tourism information. The strategy needs to address the current lack of communication between stakeholders to ensure an efficient tourism information service and up-to-date, informative website.

7.5 INSTITUTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to ensure institutional alignment and to resolve to lack of clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities for both research and information, it is recommended that that proposed Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit be established according to the following diagram, which is subsequently discussed;



- It is recommended, that as this unit is to be responsible for **Research and Tourism Information**, should be composed of two separate but related departments;
 - Tourism Research
 - Tourism Information
- It is further recommended that the institutional positioning of the **Research and Tourism Information Unit** be shifted. It is currently positioned under Corporate Support Services. Due to the fact that research and information are more an operational issue than a corporate support issue, it is recommended that the unit be moved to be placed under “Core Operations”.
- Finally, it is recommended that long term planning should consider elevating the institutional level on which **Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit** currently sits, to a higher institutional position. As the unit currently stands, it is situated on similar levels to “trade relations” and “tourism skills training” for example. It is recommended therefore that **Research**

and Tourism Information be elevated alongside Marketing and Biodiversity Conservation to be situated under Core Operations.

- It is further recommended that the tourism section consists of considerations are made that the registrar be positioned within this unit. The reasoning for this is that the registrar plays a critical role in information gathering of all tourism products within the province and registered products form the basis of information dissemination, and in some cases, research.
- It is recommended that the operations of research and information be situated within this unit. However, the storage and packaging of both research and information should be undertaken by the IT unit, with implications that strong operational linkages between these two units will have to be created. In particular, it is envisaged that the IT unit will be responsible for database management, website design, GIS, research storage.

8 TOURISM RESEARCH STRATEGY

As indicated earlier in this strategy, this TRIMS consists of two focus areas, tourism research and tourism information management, the former primarily used by tourism planners and the later used largely by tourists. This section of the report sets out the developed **tourism research strategy** with the section to follow focusing on the tourism information management strategy. The section begins by introducing the concept of a research strategy after which the goals, objectives and required actions are set out and discussed. The section ends off with a comprehensive summary.

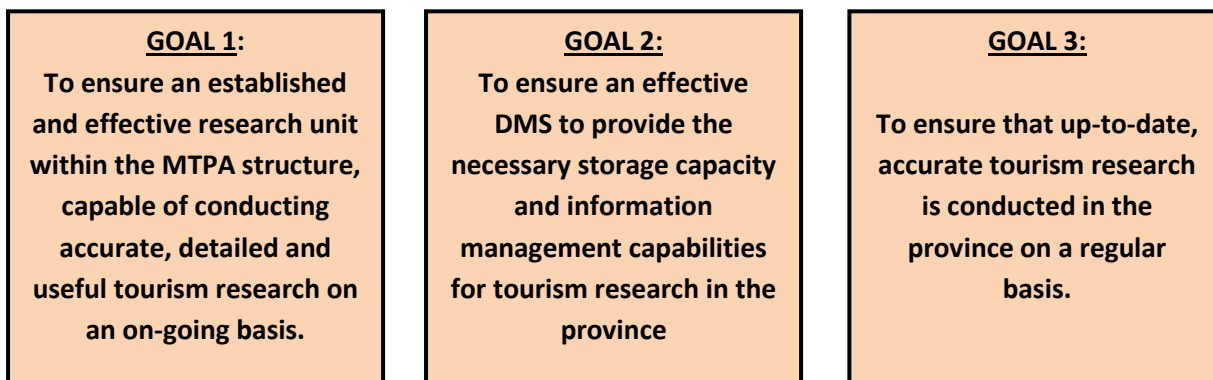
8.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STRATEGY

In earlier sections of this strategy, the concept of 'research' was defined. Also discussed, was the importance of undertaking tourism research. For the purpose of this section, it is necessary to indicate what a **research strategy** is. Specifically, this tourism research strategy will provide the necessary tools for the MTPA to:

'collect and develop research and to disseminate it to aid future tourism planning'

8.2 TOURISM RESEARCH STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the strategy identifies the key tourism research goals, the objectives required to meet the stated goals, and the strategic interventions/actions essential to meet the objectives. The boxes below present the three tourism research goals:



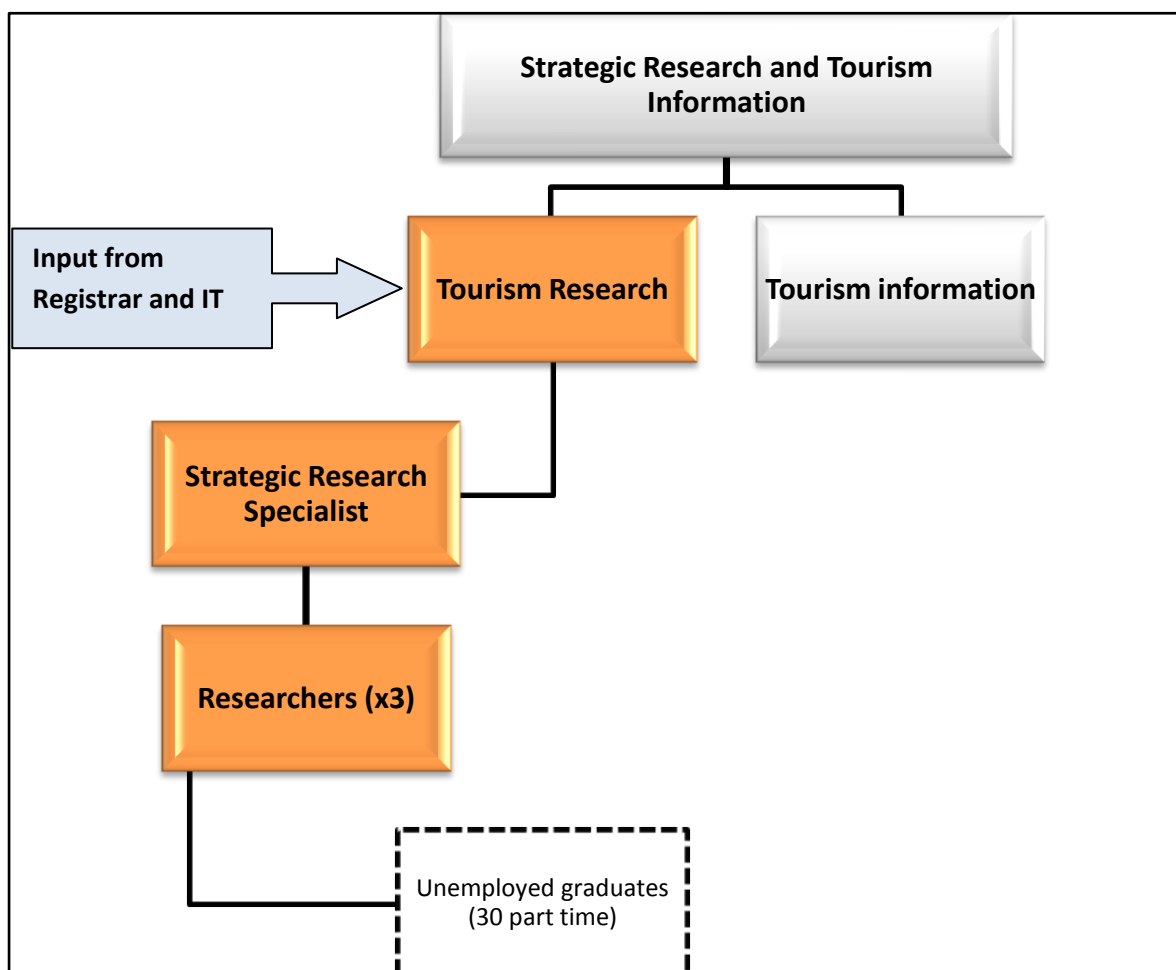
GOAL 1: To ensure an established and effective research unit within the MTPA structure, capable of conducting accurate, detailed and useful tourism research on an on-going basis.

It is critical that a structured, well staffed research unit be established for the purpose of conducting regular, accurate tourism research. At present, little tourism research is being conducted within the MTPA and therefore it is critical that research responsibilities be delegated to tourism research specialists.

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 1.1: Create institutional capacity to conduct relevant tourism research.** While the MTPA is mandated by the MTPA Act and directed by the Mpumalanga Tourism Growth Strategy to undertake tourism research, this is currently not being done. This strategic intervention therefore recommends the establishment of a research unit within the *Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit* of the MTPA.

Below is the proposed organogram for the institutional structuring of the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit's research department within the MTPA based on the institutional diagram presented above:

Diagram 3: Proposed Institutional Structure of Strategic Research & Tourism Information: Research Section



Source: UET, 2008

Proposed staffing requirements and associated roles and responsibilities and skills/experience for this particular section of the unit are as follows:

Table 7: Proposed Research Staffing Requirements

STAFF MEMBER	SKILLS/QUALIFICATIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS
Strategic Research Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Post-graduate degree/diploma (Marketing, BComm, Economics, Social Science) ▶ Training in research and minimum 5 years research experience ▶ Knowledge of tourism marketing and destination marketing ▶ Experience in collection, analysis, interpretation and management of data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Manage MTPA's strategic research programme ▶ Establish research needs, facilitate and coordinate internal and external research proposal to reach MTPA objectives ▶ Ensure annual revision and implementation of strategic research plan ▶ Service the market intelligence needs of various users and stakeholders and report thereon

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analytical skills ▶ Strong project management skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Relationship building ▶ Resource management ▶ Source funds for research project
Researchers (x3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ B-Degree/diploma in tourism, marketing or development, Economics or Social Science ▶ 3 years research experience and training in research ▶ Experience in collection, analysis, interpretation and management of data ▶ Knowledge of tourism marketing and destination marketing ▶ Analytical skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Implement MTPA strategic research plan ▶ Manage all tourism research enquiries ▶ Manage all research projects implementation plans ▶ Collect, collate and analyse data and report on results

In addition, the MTPA has recently employed 30 unemployed graduates to form part of a provincial research panel. These graduates will primarily be responsible for undertaking primary research throughout the province, particularly tourism survey research.

GOAL 2: To ensure an effective Destination Management System to provide the necessary storage capacity and information management capabilities for tourism research in the province

As mentioned earlier in this strategy, the MTPA has recently commissioned consultants to develop a Destination Management System for the province. This DMS will essentially be the interface for tourism research and information management. It is critical that this system has the ability to store and effectively manage all tourism research. It is recommended that this system be housed within the IT unit, and the research collected by, and undertaken by the unit be stored at the DMS through linkages with the IT unit.

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 2.1: Create a well-structured tourism research database within the DMS.** As tourism research differs in concept from tourism information, the former used primarily by tourism planners and the latter used primarily by tourists, it is essential that the DMS system cater for both tourism research and information separately. In terms of tourism research, a database/library should be created for tourism research reports and related documents.
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 2.2: System must allow for easy access to research reports.** It is important that stakeholders who are permitted to access the tourism research output (the issue of access to research reports will be discussed later in the strategy), be able to do so without going through a cumbersome, lengthy process.

GOAL 3: To ensure that up-to-date, accurate tourism research is conducted in the province on a regular basis.

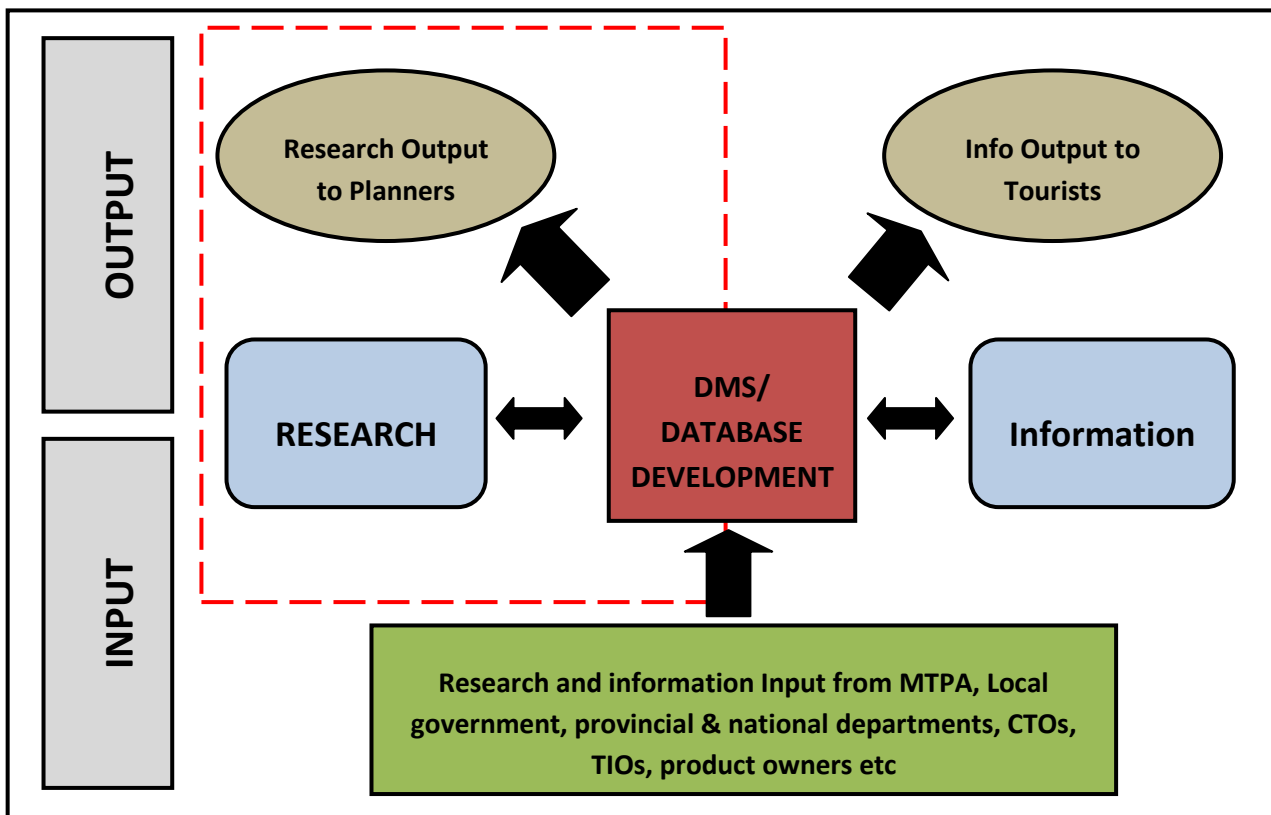
As mentioned in earlier sections, tourism research is critical for targeted marketing and demand based tourism product development. Tourism research is essential for understanding tourist profiles and preferences and most importantly, for aiding future tourism growth in a particular area. The

scope of research within the MTPA also needs to be broadened as only internal research was done in the past.

In addition to the current development of the Destination Management System, the MTPA has also commissioned consultants to develop a comprehensive holistic database to incorporate data from all MTPA units.

The diagram below and discussion to follow examines the linkages between the current database and DMS development projects, and the key components of this TRIMS. The box highlighted in red indicates the specific research component applicable to this tourism research strategy.

Diagram 4: Linkages between MTPA Research and Information Projects



Source: Urban-Econ Tourism 2008

The DMS and database system, to essentially provide the storage and management capabilities for all tourism research and information, is indicated in the centre of the above diagram. The research and information components of this strategy are shown on either side of this central box, thus emphasising the important distinction between tourism research and information.

The left hand side of the diagram distinguishes research and information **input** from research and information **output**, thus indicating the inflow of research and information into the storage systems (illustrated in the bottom half of the diagram), and then the outflow of such information out of the system, as expressed in the top half of the diagram.

Although tourism information can be distinguished from tourism research, as indicated in earlier sections of this strategy, there is a crucial link between the two; tourism information can inform tourism research in many ways and vice versa. This relationship stems primarily from the concept of demand and supply. Tourism research provides information associated with tourism demand whilst tourism information (e.g. product service databases) essentially provides information on the supply of all tourism products in a particular area/region/province. As such, with both tourism research and tourism information on hand, one can determine whether supply meets demand in a particular situation. In turn, strategic actions can be taken to address such imbalances.

This tourism research strategy will provide feasible tools to direct tourism research input flowing into the system and tourism research output flowing out of the system, while the tourism information management strategy, in the next section, will provide the tools to direct the inflow and outflow of tourism information.

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.1: Research should be conducted on an on-going basis.** As preferences, statistics and consumer profiles change constantly, it is essential that tourism research be conducted on a regular basis, to ensure that research output is up-to-date and relevant.

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.2: Research should be done by various institutions but fed through to the MTPA.** It is important that there are other sources of tourism research such as local government, relevant national tourism departments and local tourism associations; however, this research should be fed to the MTPA to avoid a fragmented approach to tourism development and dissemination. It is also important that the MTPA be respected as the provincial co-ordinator in terms of tourism research in the province.

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.3: Appropriate research topics should be chosen.** It is important that relevant research be undertaken to avoid wasted research resources and also to aid tourism planning in areas where research is most required. As such, appropriate research topics must be chosen. The list below provides some broad research topics:
 - ✓ General industry research
 - ✓ General tourism statistics
 - ✓ Regional tourism research
 - ✓ Research on environmental assets in the province
 - ✓ Consumer preferences
 - ✓ Consumer profiles
 - ✓ Demand for tourism activities
 - ✓ Community research
 - ✓ Transformation
 - ✓ Skills and capacity building
 - ✓ Event impact assessments
 - ✓ Border post surveys (entry and exit)

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.4: Effective research methods should be used.** It is critical that only the most effective research methods be used for undertaking tourism research. Part of determining this is trial and error, but best practice will provide useful guidelines in this regard. Specific actions will be dealt with later in the strategy.
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.5: Research reports should be made available to relevant stakeholders.** Tourism research is only valuable if it can easily be accessed by planners and potential investors. This strategic intervention focuses on mechanisms to make this research available to all who require it.
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.6: Liaison between public and private sector should take place regularly.** It is essential for there to be an effective working relationship between the public and private sector. An agreement will need to be created pertaining to the sharing of research knowledge, owing to the current lack of communication between the two sectors and disincentive to share any knowledge.

The table below presents the identified tourism research goals, key objectives required to meet these goals, and associated actions required to meet these objectives.

Table 8: Tourism Research Goals, Objectives and Actions

STRATEGY GOALS	KEY OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
<p>GOAL 1: To ensure an established and effective research unit within the MTPA structure, capable of conducting accurate, detailed and useful tourism research on an on-going basis.</p>	<p>▶ OBJECTIVE 1.1: Create institutional capacity to conduct relevant tourism research.</p>	▶ Create a research unit within the Research and Tourism Information Unit of the MTPA as per the proposed organogram above
		▶ Employ a strategic research specialist in accordance with qualification/skills requirements specified above
		▶ Employ 3 researchers in accordance with qualification/skills requirements specified above
		▶ Send employees on relevant training courses if required
		▶ Create linkages with national and other research units nationally and in the province
<p>GOAL 2: To ensure an effective Destination Management System to provide the necessary storage capacity and information management capabilities for tourism research in the province</p>	▶ OBJECTIVE 2.1: Create a well-structured tourism research database within the DMS.	▶ Liaise with consultants developing the DMS to ensure the capacity for a separate tourism research database
	▶ OBJECTIVE 2.2: Ensure the DMS system allows for easy access to research reports	▶ Make the research database available via the MTPA website
		▶ Create other web-page linkages for access to these reports
<p>GOAL 3: To ensure that up-to-date, accurate tourism research is conducted in the province on a regular basis.</p>	▶ OBJECTIVE 3.1: Research should be conducted on an on-going basis.	▶ Monthly reports by the MTPA to keep all stakeholders abreast
		▶ Quarterly research reports (statistics, destinations visited etc)
		▶ Annual research reports (tourist profiles, focussed research)
		▶ Bi-annual up-date of research database
	▶ OBJECTIVE 3.2: Research should be done by various institutions but fed through to the MTPA.	▶ Create links with STATS SA, national and provincial tourism authorities to obtain up-to-date tourism statistics
		▶ Create links with local government to establish a two-way communication channel in terms of tourism research

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create links with tourism departments at higher learning establishments such as the tourism department at the Tshwane University of Technology in Nelspruit ▶ Create links with SANPARKS, KMIA, toll road authorities
	▶ OBJECTIVE 3.3: Appropriate research topics should be chosen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conduct relevant tourism research ▶ Liaise with all tourism stakeholders to determine other specific research topics
	▶ OBJECTIVE 3.4: Effective research methods should be used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Identify current research that can be used and interpreted ▶ Conduct effective desktop research ▶ Develop visitor books for key destinations ▶ Develop border post surveys ▶ Develop airport and toll road surveys ▶ TIOs to develop surveys relevant to their region ▶ MTPA to send out researchers to conduct personal interviews with tourists, product owners etc on a regular basis ▶ A suitable statistical testing programme should be purchased for accurate testing of raw data
	▶ OBJECTIVE 3.5: Research reports should be made available to relevant stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure all general research reports are accessible ▶ Determine which stakeholders should have access to which focussed research reports and make those relevant reports available to the identified stakeholders ▶ Ensure the accessibility of hard copy reports
	▶ OBJECTIVE 3.6: Liaison between public and private sector should take place regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop a database containing the contact details of all local tourism associations, publicity associations, local tourism government departments, MTPA contacts etc ▶ Develop an MOU between public and private sector regarding the sharing of tourism research

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Use the Mpumalanga Tourism Forum as a platform for communication between the public and private sector and also between private sector associations▶ Convene quarterly meetings between stakeholders to discuss progress
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9 TOURISM INFORMATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

This section of the strategy sets out the **Tourism Information Management Strategy**, the second main focus area of this TRIMS. The section begins with an introduction to the strategy. Thereafter, key tourism information management goals are identified, objectives required to meet the stated goals, and strategic interventions/actions required to meet the objectives.

9.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

In earlier sections of this strategy, the concept of 'tourism information' was defined. Also discussed, was the importance of collecting and disseminating tourism information. For the purpose of this section, it is necessary to indicate what a **tourism information management strategy** is. Specifically, this tourism information management strategy will provide the necessary tools for the MTPA to:

'collect, use and disseminate tourism information to tourists'

9.2 TOURISM INFORMATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

Key goals for this tourism information management strategy are set out in the boxes below and discussed thereafter:

<p><u>GOAL 1:</u> To ensure an established and effective Information Management capacity within the MTPA structure, capable of collecting and disseminating accurate, up-to-date tourism information on an on-</p>	<p><u>GOAL 2:</u> To ensure an effective Destination Management System to provide the necessary storage capacity and information management capabilities for tourism information in the province</p>	<p><u>GOAL 3:</u> To ensure that up-to-date, accurate tourism information is collected and disseminated in the province on a regular basis</p>
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GOAL 1: To ensure an established and effective Information Management capacity within the MTPA structure, capable of collecting and disseminating accurate, up-to-date tourism information on an on-going basis.

It is critical that a structured, well staffed information management capacity be established for the purpose of collecting, using and disseminating tourism information. At present, tourism information is dealt with by two MTPA units:

- ▶ The Research and Tourism Information Unit (recently renamed as such)
- ▶ The Tourism Development Unit (especially for information centre development)

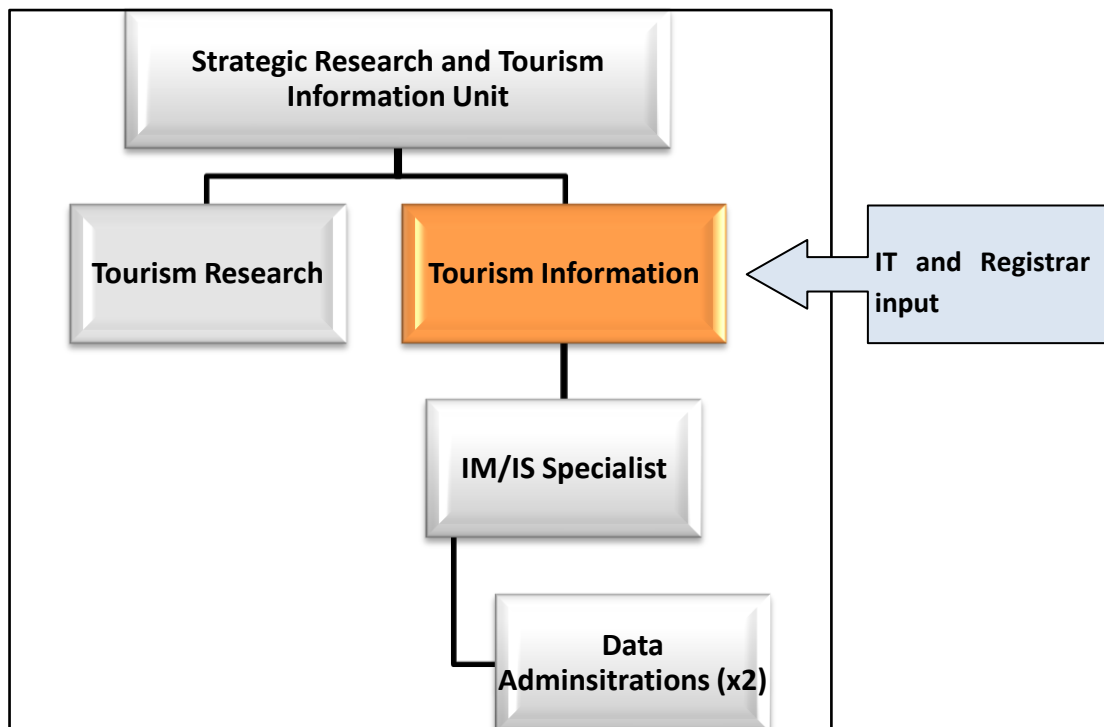
Tourism information is currently dealt with by both these units in an unstructured, irregular manner. There is currently conflict between the MTPA Act and the Mpumalanga Growth Strategy regarding

the responsibilities of tourism information, the act mandating the IKM unit to collect and disseminate information and the growth strategy mandating the tourism development unit to carry out tourism information responsibilities. (The IKM has now been renamed the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit.) On this note, it is recommended that tourism information be solely the responsibility of the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit, as shown in the diagram above, to avoid a fragmented approach of information collection and dissemination. As tourism research and information often go hand in hand, tourism information often informing tourism research, it is appropriate for the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit to have capacity to deal with both tourism research and tourism information.

- **OBJECTIVE 1.1: Create institutional capacity to collect and disseminate relevant tourism information.** It is essential that qualified, experienced personnel be employed for the Information section of the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit to effectively carry out all tourism information responsibilities required. These staff members may require relevant training.

Below is the proposed organogram for the institutional structuring of the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit and its tourism information section within the MTPA, as was set out in the tourism research strategy:

Diagram 5: Proposed Institutional Structure of MTPA Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit



Source: MTPA Knowledge Management Draft

The significant unit for the purpose of this tourism information management is indicated in the above diagram by the section, entitled 'Information Management/Information Systems' (IM/IS). This section, under the ultimate directorship of the General Manager (Strategic Research and Tourism Information) will also establish essential relations with the records and admin secretary as well as the executive secretary.

Proposed staffing requirements and associated roles and responsibilities and skills/experience for this particular unit are as follows:

Table 9: Proposed Information Management Staffing Requirements

STAFF MEMBER	SKILLS/QUALIFICATIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS
IM/IS Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ B. Degree in Computer Science or Engineering or related discipline with an IT focus ▶ A postgraduate qualification in management and/or training in data management and information systems ▶ 5 years minimum management experience in business application design and systems development, implementation and maintenance of large-scale systems ▶ Previous experience in business process re-engineering ▶ Business analysis experience ▶ Interpersonal and negotiating skills ▶ Decision making, problem solving, analytical and conceptual skills ▶ Business planning and project management skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Development, implementation and review of IM/IS strategy, policy and procedures ▶ Design, develop, deploy and manage the IM/IS network and business processes ▶ Develop, maintain and manage applicable MTPA databases ▶ Continuous maintenance and development of the MTPA website, intranet and Geographical Information System ▶ Manage all aspects of system analysis, design, development etc ▶ Information management ▶ Resource management ▶ Project management
Data Administrators (x2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ B. Degree in Computer Science or Information Systems equivalent ▶ 3 to 4 years experience in information systems and database management ▶ Ability to write reports and procedure manuals ▶ Ability to read, analyse and interpret general business periodicals, journals and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Installation, design, configuration, upgrade, administration, monitoring and maintenance of databases and associated software products in support of operational systems and the development environment ▶ Capturing and maintenance of data on MTPA core information services databases ▶ Ensure that the MTPA's intranet sites are comprehensive and up-to-

	technical procedures ► Presentation and communication skills	date ► Assist the registrar in capturing and managing tourism product database
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GOAL 2: To ensure an effective Destination Management System to provide the necessary storage capacity and information management capabilities for tourism information in the province

As mentioned earlier in this strategy, the MTPA has recently commissioned consultants to develop a Destination Management System for the province. This DMS will essentially be the interface for tourism research and information management. It is critical that this system has the ability to store, disseminate and effectively manage all tourism information.

- **OBJECTIVE 2.1: Create a well-structured tourism information services database within the DMS.** It is critical that a comprehensive TIS database be developed within the DMS to provide tourists with any information that they may require with regards to any tourism services within the province.
- **OBJECTIVE 2.2: DMS must allow for easy access to tourism information.** It is important that tourists area able to access information without going through a cumbersome, lengthly process. Information should be readily and easily available through the MTPA website and these databases should be linked to other tourism web pages in the province.

GOAL 3: To ensure that up-to-date, accurate tourism information is collected and disseminated in the province on a regular basis

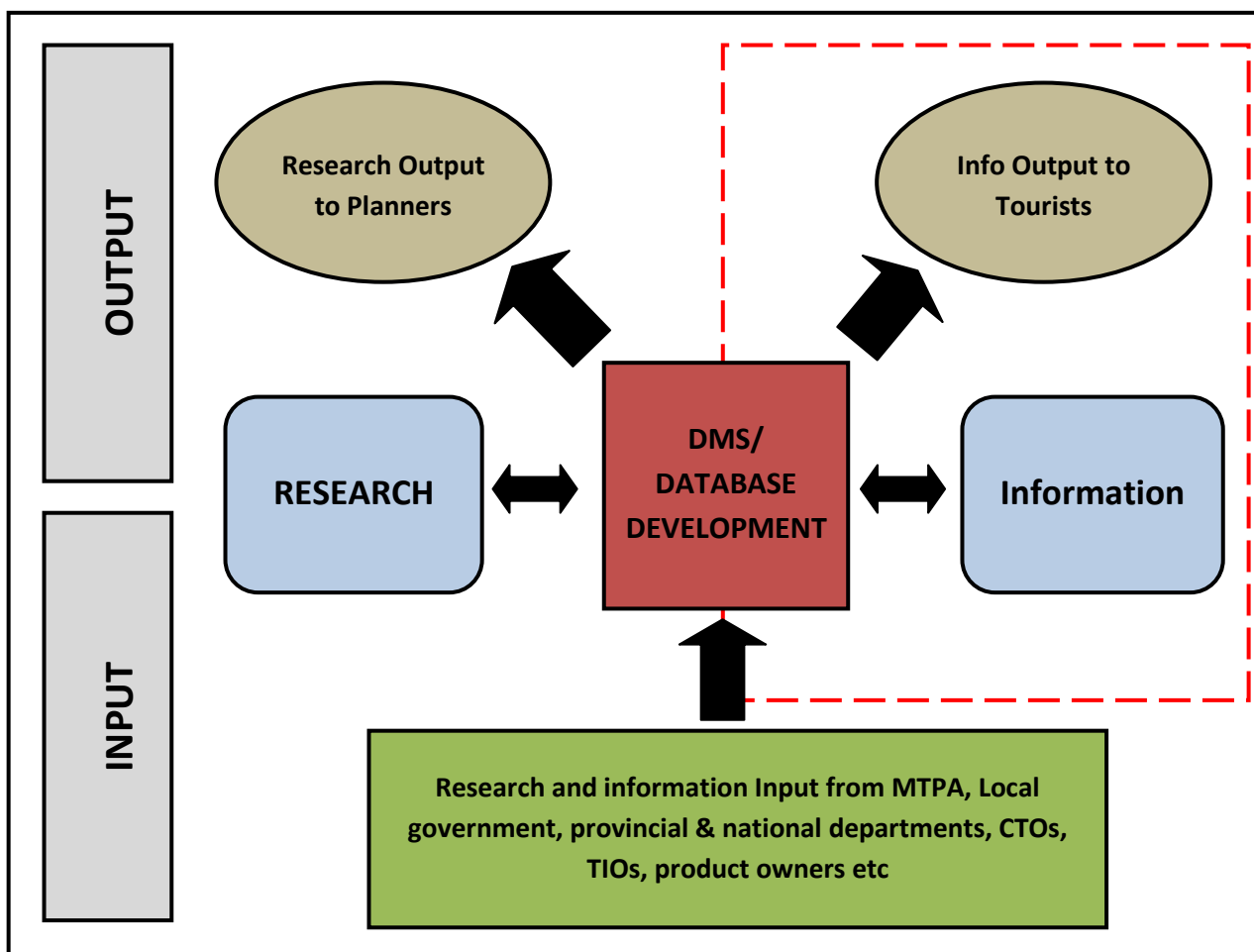
As mentioned in earlier sections, tourism information is critical in providing tourists with everything they need to know in order to plan their trip to the province. Tourists should be able to access the following information:

- Geographical maps of the province, touring maps, maps of the 7 tourism regions etc
- Information regarding tourism services, accommodation establishments, tour guides, facilities, attractions, restaurants etc
- General information regarding the province such as the weather, exchange rates, medical facilities, banks, etc

The diagram below, as shown in the previous section, indicates the important linkages between the components of this strategy and the development of the DMS and database systems currently being developed. In terms of this information management strategy, information input will primarily be sourced from product owners, local tourism associations and other related tourism associations and local government. Tourism information output will be used primarily by tourists.

The red highlighted box specifies the information management components of the TRIMS pertinent to this tourism information management strategy.

Diagram 6: Linkages between MTPA Research and Information Projects



Source: Urban-Econ Tourism 2008

- **OBJECTIVE 3.1: Tourism information should be collected and disseminated on an on-going basis.** As many aspects of tourism services change on a regular basis (such as prices), it is essential that tourism information be collected and disseminated on a regular basis, to ensure that information output is up-to-date and accurate. The following tourism information should be collected and disseminated:

- ✓ Accommodation establishments
- ✓ Restaurants
- ✓ Tourist guides
- ✓ Tour operators
- ✓ Attractions and activities
- ✓ Parks
- ✓ Tourism regions/towns
- ✓ Routes (Mpumalanga Route etc)
- ✓ Climate
- ✓ Conferences, venues, organisers

- ✓ All related tourism services

It is critical that web page linkages be developed, especially for those tourists using the internet to book accommodation, activities etc. The following web page linkages should be developed:

- ✓ Regional Tourism Offices
- ✓ Local tourism associations
- ✓ Accommodation websites
- ✓ Restaurant websites
- ✓ Tour operating websites
- ✓ Attractions websites (KNP etc)
- ✓ Other tourism-related sites

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.2: All tourism associations and related institutions should collect information but this should be fed through to the MTPA by agreement.** The collection of tourism information needs to be sourced from all bottom level tourism associations. It is critical that this information gets fed through to the MTPA in an effective manner and on a regular basis. Like with tourism research, the MTPA needs to be respected as the top authority in terms of collection and dissemination of tourism information and information management. The Knowledge Management Unit will only be able to operate effectively if all tourism associations are on board.

Due to the current lack of communication between private and public sector when it comes to tourism information, it is recommended that some formal agreement be developed between the MTPA and other tourism stakeholders. This agreement should incentivise TIOs, local government CTOs and other relevant tourism association to collect and disseminate tourism information, and feed this information through to the MTPA. An example of an incentive could include free advertisements in local travel guides.

This agreement should specify the following:

- ✓ The type of information that should be collected
- ✓ How often it should be collected
- ✓ Who should be collecting it
- ✓ Submission of information to the MTPA etc
- ✓ Incentives

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.3: Ensure the effective operation of all TIOs and local tourism associations in the province.** It is essential that all local tourism associations, publicity associations, CTOs and relevant local government departments have the capacity to effectively collect and disseminate tourism information in each relevant town/region.

There are currently 35 local tourism associations dispersed in the province. Although all of these should have the necessary resources to collect and disseminate information, It is critical that the following offices be especially capacitated as they are key gateway offices into the province:

- ✓ Assegaai Tourist Association (gateway into province from KZN along N2)
- ✓ Amajuba Tourist Association (gateway into province from KZN along N11)
- ✓ Komatipoort Information Centre (gateway into province from Mozambique along N4)
- ✓ Lydenberg Tourism Bureau (gateway into province from Limpopo along R37)
- ✓ Middelberg Information Centre (gateway into province from Limpopo along N11)

At present, there is no established tourism information office in the town of Leandra, along the N17 from Johannesburg. This is a key roadway from Oliver Tambo International Airport in Gauteng, where the majority of international visitors arrive. It is also the gateway town into the province of Mpumalanga for tourists travelling along the N17. As such, it is recommended that a tourism information office be established.

At present, there is one MTPA office at Ushaka Marine World in Durban, but no offices in Gauteng or Cape Town, both of which are key domestic source and destination tourism markets, and key destination provinces for international tourists. As such, it is essential that the MTPA establish tourism information offices at the following recommended locations:

- ✓ Oliver Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg
- ✓ Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, Cape Town

O.R. Tambo International is the major arrival airport for all international visitors to South Africa and is frequented by streams of domestic tourists on a daily basis. The V & A Waterfront is arguably Cape Town's top tourist attraction and therefore also frequented by many tourists, both domestic and international. As such, these locations will be ideal for the establishment of MTPA information offices to provide tourists with brochures, maps and any information about Mpumalanga that they may require. These offices will give a sense of MTPA presence in other provinces, promoting Mpumalanga's fine tourist attractions.

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.4: Effective information collection methods should be used.** It is critical that only the most effective information collection methods be used for the process of gathering relevant tourism information. This strategy will set out actions to address this.
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.5: Liaison between public and private sector should happen regularly.** It is essential for there to be an effective working relationship between the public and private sector. An agreement will need to be created pertaining to the sharing of tourism information, owing to the current lack of communication between the two sectors and disincentive to share any knowledge.
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE 3.6: Review the current product owner registration system.** There is a need to review the present registration process as many tourism product owners are currently not registered as per the legal requirements. There is a need to provide incentives to encourage all product owners as per the act, to register. Some incentives include the following:

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- ✓ Registered stakeholders will have access to the extensive tourism database currently being developed, including all research reports
- ✓ Registered stakeholders will be included in travel and trade guides
- ✓ Registered stakeholders will receive an automatically-generated and hosted webpage that displays details of their establishments, hyperlinks to its email, formal website and booking service facilities, photographs and branding of the establishment

The table below presents the identified tourism information goals, key objectives required to meet these goals, and associated actions required to meet these objectives.

Table 10: Tourism Information Management Goals, Objectives and Actions

STRATEGY GOALS	KEY OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
<p><u>GOAL 1:</u></p> <p>To ensure an established and effective Information Management capacity within the MTPA structure, capable of collecting and disseminating accurate, up-to-date tourism information on an on-going basis.</p>	<p>▶ <u>OBJECTIVE 1.1:</u> Create institutional capacity to collect and disseminate relevant tourism information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Re-establish the IM/IS unit within the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit of the MTPA as per the proposed organogram above ▶ Employ a strategic IM/IS specialist in accordance with qualification/skills requirements specified above ▶ Employ 2 database administrators in accordance with qualification/skills requirements specified above ▶ Send employees on relevant training courses if required ▶ Create linkages with national and other information management units nationally and in the province
<p><u>GOAL 2:</u></p> <p>To ensure an effective Destination Management System to provide the necessary storage capacity and information management capabilities for tourism information in the province</p>	<p>▶ <u>OBJECTIVE 2.1:</u> DMS must allow for easy access to tourism information at all times</p> <p>▶ <u>OBJECTIVE 2.2:</u> Create a well-structured tourism information services database within the DMS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Liaise with consultants developing the DMS and other databases to ensure easy accessibility to tourism information services by tourists ▶ Convene meetings in all districts with all tourism stakeholders to introduce the new DMS ▶ Database administrators to ensure regular updating and maintenance of the system ▶ Ensure the accessibility of all databases through the MTPA website and create other web-page linkages for access to these databases
<p><u>GOAL 3:</u></p> <p>To ensure that up-to-date, accurate tourism information is</p>	<p>▶ <u>OBJECTIVE 3.1:</u> Tourism Information should be collected and disseminated on an on-going basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Re-structure the MTPA website ▶ Create a database containing all contact details of tourism stakeholders in the province

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collected and disseminated in the province on a regular basis		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Collect and disseminate relevant tourism information ▶ Develop interactive maps, photos, electronic brochures, photo tour of Mpumalanga and other interactive links ▶ Create relevant web-page linkages ▶ Develop brochures on the various regions, attractions etc and distribute these at all offices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ OBJECTIVE 3.2: All tourism associations and related institutions should collect information but this should be fed through to the MTPA by agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop an agreement between MTPA and all tourism stakeholders regarding the collection and dissemination of tourism information.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ OBJECTIVE 3.3: Ensure the effective operation of all TIOs and local tourism associations in the province 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Determine which local tourism associations require research and information resources and necessary capacity ▶ Establish TIO in the town of Leandra ▶ Establish MTPA offices at O.R. Tambo and V&A Waterfront ▶ Convene annual meetings in all districts with local tourism associations to share progress regarding tourism information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ OBJECTIVE 3.4: Effective information collection methods should be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop electronic forms to be filled in by all local tourism associations, local government on a quarterly basis ▶ Send unemployed graduates to regions to collect other information from relevant associations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ OBJECTIVE 3.5: Liaison between public and private sector should happen regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop a database containing the contact details of all local tourism associations, publicity associations, local tourism government departments, MTPA contacts etc ▶ Use the Mpumalanga Tourism Forum as a platform for communication between the public and private sector and also between private sector associations ▶ Convene quarterly meetings between all tourism stakeholders to discuss information management issues

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	<p>▶ OBJECTIVE 3.6: Review the current product owner registration system</p>	<p>▶ Look to tweak current legislation with clauses to incentivise registration</p> <p>▶ Convene workshops in all districts to discuss the registration system with product owners</p>
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10 CONCLUSION

This strategy serves to provide feasible strategies to enable the MTPA to direct tourism research and information management practices more effectively. The gap analysis clearly pointed to the following:

- ▶ The need for improved and more regular communication between tourism stakeholders in the province
- ▶ The need to re-structure the current MTPA Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit for more appropriate research and information management practices
- ▶ The critical need for regular tourism research to aid planning
- ▶ The critical need for the collection and dissemination of up-to-date tourism information for tourists
- ▶ The need to capacitate key tourism information offices and associations within Mpumalanga and establish new offices locally and nationally

This TRIMS addressed the above gaps by providing implementable strategic interventions aimed at:

- ▶ Ensuring an effective tourism research and information management unit within the MTPA
- ▶ Ensuring the effective operation of a DMS to enable efficient storage and management of tourism research and information and to ensure easy access to the relevant databases
- ▶ Ensuring the regular undertaking of relevant tourism research and the on-going collection and dissemination of tourism information

To avoid a fragmented approach to tourism research and information practices, it is essential that the MTPA be respected as the primary, provincial coordinator in terms of research and information management. For this to occur, both the private and public sector must come on board and work together as a team.

APPENDIX A: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This section of the strategy presents a comprehensive implementation plan, giving practical effect to the stated goals and objectives set out in the respective strategies. This plan has a five year time frame and indicates the following:

- ▶ Key stakeholders responsible for carrying out the respective actions
- ▶ Partners associated with the respective actions
- ▶ Budgetary considerations where relevant

In terms of implementation, striped cells represent **once off costs** (capital set up costs), while the shaded blocks represent on-going, **operational costs**. These are estimated costs, and exact costings will need to be sourced by MTPA prior to implementation of any of these actions.

Table 11: Tourism Research Strategy Implementation Plan

TOURISM RESEARCH STRATEGY				Budget and Implementation				
Goal 1: To ensure an established and effective research unit within the MTPA structure, capable of conducting accurate, detailed and useful tourism research on an on-going basis.				2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Objectives	Actions	Stakeholders	Partners					
OBJECTIVE 1.1: Create institutional capacity to conduct relevant tourism research.	Create a research unit within the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit of the MTPA as per the proposed organogram above	MTPA Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit	TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations	R50 000	R660 000	R726 000	R798 600	R878 460
	Employ a strategic research specialist in accordance with qualification/skills requirements specified above							
	Employ 3 researchers in accordance with qualification/skills requirements specified above							
	Send employees on relevant training courses if required							
	Create linkages with national and other research units nationally and in the province							
Goal 2: To ensure an effective Destination Management System to provide the necessary storage capacity and information management capabilities for tourism research in the province.								
OBJECTIVE 2.1: Create a well-structured tourism research database within the DMS.	Liaise with consultants developing the DMS to ensure the capacity for a separate tourism research database	Consultants commissioned by the MTPA	MTPA, TIOs, CTOs, LM, DM, STATS SA, SA Tourism etc	R100 000		R10 000		R12 100
OBJECTIVE 2.2: Ensure the DMS system allows for easy access to research reports	Make the research database available via the MTPA website and create other web-page linkages for access to these reports	Consultants commissioned by the MTPA	Planners, investors, academics					

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Goal 3: To ensure that up-to-date, accurate tourism research is conducted in the province on a regular basis.								
OBJECTIVE 3.1: Research should be conducted on an on-going basis.	Monthly reports by the MTPA to keep all stakeholders abreast	MTPA, TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations	STATS SA, , higher learning establishments, SANPARKS, KMIA etc		R80 000	R88 000	R96 800	R106 480
	Quarterly research reports (statistics, destinations visited etc)							
	Annual research reports (tourist profiles, focussed research)							
	Bi-annual up-date of research database							
OBJECTIVE 3.2: Research should be done by various institutions but fed through to the MTPA.	Create links with STATS SA, national and provincial tourism authorities to obtain up-to-date tourism statistics	MTPA, TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations,	STATS SA, , higher learning establishments, SANPARKS, KMIA etc		R20 000	R22 000	R24 200	R26 620
	Create links with local government to establish a two-way communication channel in terms of tourism research							
	Create links with tourism departments at higher learning establishments such as the tourism department at the Tshwane University of Technology in Nelspruit							
	Create links with SANPARKS, KMIA, toll road authorities							
OBJECTIVE 3.3: Appropriate research topics should be chosen	Conduct relevant tourism research	MTPA Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit	TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations	R20 000	R22 000	R24 200	R26 620	R29282
	Liaise with all tourism stakeholders to determine other specific research topics							
OBJECTIVE 3.4: Effective research methods should be used.	Identify current research that can be used and interpreted	MTPA, TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations,	STATS SA, , higher learning establishments, SANPARKS, KMIA etc		R100 000	R110 000	R121 000	R133 100
	Conduct effective desktop research							
	Develop visitor books for key destinations							

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	Develop border post surveys								
	Develop airport and toll road surveys								
	TIOs to develop surveys relevant to their region								
	MTPA to send out researchers to conduct personal interviews with tourists, product owners etc on a regular basis								
	A suitable statistical testing programme should be purchased for accurate testing of raw data								
OBJECTIVE 3.5: Research reports should be made available to relevant stakeholders.	Ensure all general research reports are accessible	MTPA Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit	TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations, planners, investors		R30 000	R33 000	R36 300	R39 930	
	Determine which stakeholders should have access to which focussed research reports and make those relevant reports available to the identified stakeholders								
	Ensure the accessibility of hard copy reports								
OBJECTIVE 3.6: Liaison between public and private sector should take place regularly	Develop a database containing the contact details of all local tourism associations, publicity associations, local tourism government departments, MTPA contacts etc	MTPA Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit	TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations,		R40 000	R44 000	R48 400	R53 240	R58 564
	Develop an MOU between public and private sector regarding the sharing of tourism research								
	Use the Mpumalanga Tourism Forum as a platform for communication between the public and private sector and also between private sector associations								
	Convene quarterly meetings between stakeholders to discuss progress								

Source: Urban-Econ Tourism 2008


Table 12: Tourism IM Strategy Implementation Plan

TOURISM INFORMATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY				Budget and Implementation				
Goal 1: To ensure an established and effective Information Management capacity within the MTPA structure, capable of collecting and disseminating accurate, up-to-date tourism information on an on-going basis.				2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Objectives	Actions	Stakeholders	Partners					
OBJECTIVE 1.1: Create institutional capacity to collect and disseminate relevant tourism information.	Re-establish the IM/IS unit within the Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit of the MTPA as per the proposed organogram above	MTPA Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit	TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations	R210 000	R540 000	R594 000	R653 400	R718 740
	Employ a strategic IM/IS specialist in accordance with qualification/skills requirements specified above							
	Employ 2 database administrators in accordance with qualification/skills requirements specified above							
	Send employees on relevant training courses if required							
	Create linkages with national and other information management units nationally and in the province							
Goal 2: To ensure an effective Destination Management System to provide the necessary storage capacity and information management capabilities for tourism information in the province								
OBJECTIVE 2.1: DMS must allow for easy access to tourism information at all times	Liaise with consultants developing the DMS and other databases to ensure easy accessibility to tourism information services by tourists	Consultants commissioned by the MTPA	Tourists, researchers	R500 000		R10 000		
	Convene meetings in all districts with all tourism stakeholders to introduce the new DMS						R12 100	

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	Database administrators to ensure regular updating and maintenance of the system								
OBJECTIVE 2.2: Create a well-structured tourism information services database within the DMS.	Ensure the accessibility of all databases through the MTPA website and create other web-page linkages for access to these databases	Consultants commissioned by the MTPA	Tourists, researchers			R10 000			R10 000
Goal 3: To ensure that up-to-date, accurate tourism information is collected and disseminated in the province on a regular basis									
OBJECTIVE 3.1: Tourism Information should be collected and disseminated on an on-going basis.	Re-structure the MTPA website	MTPA, TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations,	Tourism product owners, Tourism service providers		R150 000	R165 000	R181 500	R199 650	R219 615
	Create a database containing all contact details of tourism stakeholders in the province								
	Collect and disseminate relevant tourism information								
	Develop interactive maps, photos, electronic brochures, photo tour of Mpumalanga and other interactive links								
	Create relevant web-page linkages								
Develop brochures on the various regions, attractions etc and distribute these at all offices									
OBJECTIVE 3.2: All tourism associations and related institutions should collect information but this should be fed through to the MTPA by agreement.	Develop an agreement between MTPA and all tourism stakeholders regarding the collection and dissemination of tourism information.	MTPA, TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations,	Tourism product owners, Tourism service providers						
OBJECTIVE 3.3: Ensure	Determine which local tourism associations require research and	MTPA	TIOs, local						

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the effective operation of all TIOs and local tourism associations in the province	information resources and necessary capacity		tourism associations, publicity associations, tourism bureaus						
	Establish TIO in the town of Leandra								
	Establish MTPA offices at O.R. Tambo and V&A Waterfront								
	Convene annual meetings in all districts with local tourism associations to share progress regarding tourism information								
OBJECTIVE 3.4: Effective information collection methods should be used	Develop electronic forms to be filled in by all local tourism associations, local government on a quarterly basis	MTPA, TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations,	Tourism product owners, Tourism service providers			R30 000	R33 000	R36 300	R39 930
	Send unemployed graduates to regions to collect other information from relevant associations								
OBJECTIVE 3.5: Liaison between public and private sector should happen regularly	Develop a database containing the contact details of all local tourism associations, publicity associations, local tourism government departments, MTPA contacts etc	MTPA Strategic Research and Tourism Information Unit	TIOs, CTOs, Tourism Bureaus, LM, DM, Publicity Associations,						
	Use the Mpumalanga Tourism Forum as a platform for communication between the public and private sector and also between private sector associations								
	Convene quarterly meetings between all tourism stakeholders to discuss information management issues								
OBJECTIVE 3.6: Review the current product owner registration system	Look to tweak current legislation with clauses to incentivise registration	MTPA	All tourism product owners			R30 000		R40 000	R50 000
	Convene workshops in all districts to discuss the registration system with product owners								

Source: Urban-Econ Tourism 2008

APPENDIX B: REFERENCES

Research and Information Definitions:

- <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/information>
- <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/information>
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