

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ASATA WELCOMES DEFERMENT OF NEW IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTATION

The Association of Southern African Travel Agents has welcomed Home Affairs Minister Malusi Gigaba's announcement today that the new immigration regulations that require South African travellers to apply for unabridged birth certificates to travel internationally with their children under the age of 18 due to come in to effect on 1 October 2014, have been deferred until end May 2015. The deferment comes following months of fervent lobbying by ASATA and its trade association partners in South Africa, including meetings with both the Minister and Deputy Minister, letters to the Ministry and opinion pieces in the press, to raise awareness of the negative impact these new immigration regulations would have on the travel and tourism sectors and the shortfalls in the ability of Home Affairs to meet their own objectives regarding various amendments to the Immigration Act. Since the regulations were announced on May 22, 2014, ASATA has been working relentlessly to drive engagement with the Ministry and outbound travel sector to ensure better understanding of the issues, practical implications and minimal confusion and disruption to the travelling public. "We are grateful to have had the opportunity to address our concerns with Minister Gigaba regarding the impact of these new immigration regulations and pleased that

these concerns have been heard and reacted to in this way. “We look forward to engaging with the department over the next few months to find a suitable solution for all parties involved including the appointment of a joint government industry task team that will work to fully understand the objectives, identify international best practice and how these should be implemented effectively for SA. We also need to devise and roll-out a global public awareness and information campaign,” says ASATA CEO Otto de Vries.

**For all media enquiries: Lloyd Orr
Communications**

Tel: +27 11 702 9601

Chantal

Nieuwenhuizen

chantal@lloydorr.com

Tyashnee Gounden

tyashnee@lloydorr.com