

Employment Conditions in the South African Tourism Industry:

An Analysis of Tourist Guides

Submitted by: Andries de Beer

Supervisor: Prof C.M. Rogerson

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ABSTRACT

In the existing South African literature on tourism issues little, exploration have been done on the question of employment conditions in the tourism industry. This neglect is remarkable in light of the current emphasis given by national government to the promotion of “decent work” in tourism. This study seeks to contribute to the limited local and international scholarship on employment conditions in the tourism industry. The specific focus of attention is on the working conditions of tourist guides in South Africa.

The main findings of the study are that the majority of tourist guides work as independent contractors (if contracts are used at all), and that they work very long hours with low remuneration and very little legal protection because they do not have permanent positions. The research findings of this investigation point to a number of policy recommendations which, if accepted and implemented, might assist in improving the work conditions of tourist guides and thereby contribute towards creating decent work in this section of the South African tourism industry.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts by coursework in Tourism Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

Andries de Beer _____

Date _____

DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sitting in the Okavango Delta beneath an acacia tree waiting for a group of tourists to return from a mokoro safari, the idea for this research dissertation was born. It was born out of frustration: wondering why even though being a tourist guide is a very fulfilling career, it is close to impossible to afford medical aid, car insurance or any other benefits. Thus this paper is dedicated to the tourist guides that, in spite of numerous encumbering reasons, still make the South African tourism industry work.

There are also various people I would like to thank for their contributions in making this research dissertation possible. The following people who have assisted me along the process:

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BCSA	Basic Conditions of Employment Act
CCMA	Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
DEAT	Department of environmental affairs and tourism
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNR	Code of Good Practice
ILO	International Labour Organization
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PrDP	Professional drivers permit
RSA	South Africa
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SATOUR	South African Tourism Authority
SETAS	Sector Education and Training Authorities
THETA	Tourism Hospitality Education and Training
TOUREES	The locals whose cultural otherness makes them unique
TSA	Technikon South Africa
UK	United Kingdom
UNISA	University of South Africa

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

The tourism industry in South Africa has made considerable progress since the 1994 democratic transition (Rogerson and Visser 2004: 5). International sanctions have been lifted and government is proactively working alongside industry towards developing the tourism industry (Rogerson and Visser 2004: 5). According to the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996), the vision of national government is to develop the tourism sector as a national priority in a sustainable and acceptable manner, so that tourism will contribute significantly to the improvement of the quality of life of every South African. Since tourism is regarded as a lead sector in the national economic development strategy, the need was identified for nurturing a globally competitive tourism industry in order for tourism to be a major force in the reconstruction and development efforts planned by the government.

Along with this vision statement, certain objectives and targets have been set out:

- Economic objectives, focusing on:
 - sustainable growth, aggressive development, community involvement and promoting tourism
- Social objectives, focusing on:
 - cultural and gender equality, providing appropriate tourism education and training. In addition, to promote pride in the cultural resources South Africa has to offer, while encouraging community participation in the planning, development, implementation management and implementation of tourism projects
- Environmental objectives, focusing on:
 - becoming a leader in responsible environmental development and encouraging conservation and sustainable usage of tourism resources (DEAT 1996)

These specific targets are aimed at increasing the contribution of tourism to the gross domestic product (GDP), at sustaining the increase in visitors, and at benefiting from their spending patterns. Job creation, the implementation of new tourism projects and the introduction of tourism as a subject in school curricula are listed as further priorities for action. The number of foreign tourists visiting South Africa has increased from 9, 1 million in 2007 to 9, 6 million in 2010, augmenting the contribution to GDP from 162,9 billion to 194,5 billion over this period. The number of direct and indirect jobs related to tourism increased from 946 300 in 2007 to 1,04 million in 2008 (www.info.gov.za/aboutsa/tourism.htm).

In the existing South African literature on tourism issues little, exploration have been done on the question of employment conditions in the tourism industry. This neglect is remarkable in light of the current emphasis given by national government to the promotion of “decent work” in tourism. In particular, the 2011 National Tourism Sector Strategy places considerable importance on the creation of “decent jobs” in the country’s tourism sector (RSA 2011). The importance of creating decent work in the national tourism economy is in alignment with the New Growth Path promoted for the South African economy since 2009 (RSA 2010).

The limited attention devoted to employment conditions in the tourism industry is mirrored, to some extent, in international literature on tourism. Although there has been a vast expansion in tourism writings over the past decade, only a small amount of work has focused on work in tourism. This study seeks to contribute to the limited local and international scholarship on employment conditions in the tourism industry. The specific focus of attention is on the working conditions of tourist guides in South Africa.

This chapter provides a background to the issues to be researched, defines the problem to be addressed, identifies the objectives of the proposed research, and lists the research questions and methodology that guide the study.

1.2 Problem statement and research questions

The aim in this research project is to examine employment conditions of and perceptions held by tourist guides of their working conditions. The analysis is located against the backdrop of

labour laws of South Africa. The Constitution of South Africa (RSA. 1996 Chapter 2 Section 23) stipulates that every person has a right to “fair labour practices”, which may include a reasonable job with certain criteria that need to be met, with reasonable working hours and a decent remuneration at the end of the working week, month or contract. Further, the labour law (RSA. 1996 Chapter 2 Section 23) states that employees, even contract workers, need to be employed with a contract (either as an independent contractor or with a fixed-term contract). Indeed, after receiving three consecutive fixed-term contracts from the same employer it is considered a full-time job and the status of the worker should change to that of a permanent employee.

The research was conducted through structured interviews with tourist guides and tour operators to determine their employment conditions and perceptions of labour practices in tourism. The research analysed a range of issues relating to job security, income and benefits as they apply to tourist guides in South Africa. More specifically, the research has done the following:

- Analysed the working conditions of tourist guides
- Discussed the views of a selected group of employers in the field on work conditions of tourist guides
- Conducted an assessment of perceptions of tourist guides in terms of select aspects of the labour practice in relation to labour law

The following questions have guided the research:

- What is the post 1994 history of tourist guides and their position in the tourism industry of South Africa?
- What are the perceptions of tourist guides of their working conditions?
- What are the opinions of employers of work conditions of tourist guides?
- What does the labour law say about work conditions in general and for tourist guides in particular?

- How realistic are the perceptions of tourist guides on work conditions in relation to the opinions expressed by employers and in terms of the labour law?

1.3 Methodology

Methodologically, the study uses a number of research approaches. The study is based on a literature review, and field work has been guided by a mix of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

A variety of literature from other developing countries and labour legislation have been looked at and discussed in order to analyse the employment conditions in South African tourism within a global context. In addition, web searches were conducted to access relevant information, applicable laws and information about associations and other groupings.

The first stage in this research was the preparation and refinement of a national database of tourist guides. This database was developed from information obtained from the offices of the National Department of Tourism. All nine provinces were approached and communicated with through telephonic interviews and requests sent via e-mail to obtain the necessary information. Only five provinces supplied this information: these were Mpumalanga, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and Free State. Consequently, the exact total of registered guides in South Africa could not be determined. After further enquiries at the Department of Tourism, a more comprehensive list was provided of registered tourist guides from eight of the nine provinces. From this database, the focus was narrowed to two provinces – Gauteng and Mpumalanga – which are considered representative of major tourism regions in South Africa. These two provinces were the areas chosen for detailed research on the employment conditions of registered tour guides.

In undertaking the research with tourist guides, the study adopted a mixed or combined method where parts of quantitative and qualitative methods are applied. As Holland and Campbell (in Jennings 2001:21) argue: “Different methods ... have their own advantages but cannot replace each other. [Q]ualitative and quantitative methods and data are often more powerful when combined, at different levels and in different sequences.” A survey is a sound

quantitative method to use in order to obtain a wide range of information from tourist guides in the selected areas. Structured interviews were conducted with tourist guides from two selected provinces. The information obtained was used to form a picture of the work conditions of tourist guides in South Africa. It also provided a set of additional information of the general perceptions of guides regarding their work conditions in the industry, their knowledge of the existence of labour law, and their understanding of its influence on their work conditions. To supplement the survey of tourist guides in Gauteng and Mpumalanga, detailed interviews were conducted with key stakeholders representing tour operators in South Africa. More specifically, the survey undertaken with tourist guides was supplemented with structured interviews with five leading tour companies in South Africa and five smaller ones, on the question of employment and contractual conditions of tourist guides. These interviews were qualitative in nature, with open-ended questions being used to determine whether there are differences between the perceptions of the tourist guide (the employee) and the tour operator (the employer). Finally, relevant labour legislation relating to labour employment has been examined.

1.4 Structure of research report

The research report is organised into five chapters, which cover the following themes

- Chapter 1: Introduction (problem statement, objectives and research methodology)
- Chapter 2: Employment in the tourism industry and the position of tourist guides in South Africa: an overview
- Chapter 3: The tour operator
- Chapter 4: Tourist guides in South Africa
- Chapter 5: Conclusion: findings and recommendations

The organisation of the research moves from a consideration of relevant international literature relating to employment in tourism (chapter 2) to the presentation of the empirical findings in chapters 3 and 4. The concluding chapter provides a summary of the key study findings and

offers some suggested policy recommendations in light of the considerable interest by national government in the promotion of decent work in the South African tourism industry.

Chapter 2: EMPLOYMENT IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AND THE POSITION OF TOURIST GUIDES IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN OVERVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Rogerson and Visser (2004) and Visser and Rogerson (2004) provide an overview of the progress of tourism research in South Africa. They show that in the current scholarship of South African tourism the question of employment conditions in the tourism industry is scarcely explored. Although some research that examines employment-related aspects of tourism is available for other countries of sub-Saharan Africa (Sindiga 1994; Jauch 2007; Fortanier and van Wijk 2010), South African research is limited. Despite national government's policy concern for 'promoting 'decent work in tourism, little research is available on employment issues in the tourism industry. The only exceptions are studies by Webster et al (2008) and McIntyre (2007), which are discussed below.

The aim in this chapter is to provide a background and contextual review of literature which relates to employment in tourism and refers to research on tourist guides. Three major sections of discussion are undertaken. First, a review is given on international research concerning employment in the tourism industry. Second, research related to tourist guides is discussed. It is shown that most work that so far has been done on tourist guides has neglected their employment conditions. The last section turns to issues around tourism training in South Africa, which links broadly to tourism skills development, including for tourist guides.

2.2 Tourism and employment

Tourism is generally considered a highly labour-intensive activity and an employer of large numbers of low skilled and unskilled workers, and also as a sector that is particularly important for women's employment (Williams and Shaw 1988; Meyer 2007). According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO 2001: 11), working conditions in tourism are characterised by wage levels that are at least 20 per cent lower than those paid by other sectors, excluding agriculture. In addition, tourism records a high proportion of unskilled part-time workers compared with other sectors and often has a very young workforce, with up to 50

per cent of employees under 25 years (ILO 2001: 11). It is observed also that in small-scale family enterprises, child labour can be an important component of the workforce. The gendered nature of employment in tourism with women relegated to lower-paid employment has been observed as a feature of tourism economies in the developing world (Chant 1997; Sinclair 1997; Gentry 2007).

Meyer (2007: 30) contends that the tourism sector is characterised by high staff turnover, irregular and unsociable working hours, and low levels of unionisation. Seasonality of employment can also be a problem issue (Ball 1989: 35–45). For example, in The Gambia, Farver (1984: 249–265) examined the tourism industry and disclosed that hotels often cut over half of their workforce in the low season, with the consequence that many employees working in tourism were little better off than they were in engaging in farming. Lesmiester (2009, as cited in Christian (2010: 27) argues that an oversupply of unskilled workers generates competition among the workforce and puts further downward pressure on wages. Finally, in developing countries, another feature of tourism labour markets is that they are often dominated by a high percentage of vulnerable migrant workers than other sectors of the economy. Indeed, in the developing world context, several highly critical investigations have appeared concerning poor working conditions and exploitation of vulnerable groups in tourism (Tamborini 2007; Cabezas 2008; [Vandegrift 2008).

Overall, the working conditions of tourism in many countries have attracted considerable criticism and concern (Chant 1997; Adler and Adler 2004; Gentry 2007; Fernandez et al 2009). Brown and Hall (2008: 841) maintain that tourism “involves exploitation of the labour force because of its low wages, and excessive hours or duties for example of cruise line employees, who work seven days a week, twelve to eighteen hours a day for six to ten month contracts. This is empathised by (Clancy 2008 as cited in Christian 2010: 27) stating that work may often be only seasonal and temporary in nature, and also in many developing countries there is a lack of possibilities for advancement to senior positions. Urry (2000) and Patullo (2005, as cited in Christian (2010: 27) also discuss the “emotional work” aspect of the tourism industry, where workers are expected to meet the demands of tourists with a smile, while being overworked

and underpaid. They both state that these structures are reminiscent of the colonial era. The ILO (2001: 11) maintains that while the tourism industry is conscious that human resources are valuable to the sector, additional efforts are required to make working conditions in tourism more attractive to a range of age groups, to increase worker responsibility and to make employment in tourism a prestigious lifetime employment. The ILO offers a number of suggestions for the provision of fair working conditions and adherence to codes of practice that can be of benefit both to tourism businesses and to tourism employees. Among these suggestions for fairer working conditions are respect for employee human rights; fair treatment of all employees, ensuring dialogue and negotiations; respecting rights of indigenous communities; establishing formal contracts with employees; developing systems for grievance procedures and establishing policies and guidelines to ensure worker safety and health. The UK-based charity Tourism Concern has been at the forefront of campaigns that have sought to improve working conditions in the tourism sector, more especially in the developing world (Meyer 2006: 14).

Employment issues in the tourism industry as a whole have been examined by a growing number of tourism researchers (Pond 1983; Williams and Shaw 1988 Riley, Ladkin and Szivas 2002; Crick 2008; Fortanier and Van Wijk 2010). According to Riley et al (2002: 11), at the outset it is important to clearly define tourism employment. Leiper (1979: 400) defines the tourism industry as an industry that consists of various firms and organisations and facilities which are intended to serve the specific needs and wants of tourists. Although Leiper's (1979: 400) definition summarises the industry, it does not give a description of the typical employer in the industry or type of employment available in the tourism industry. Important issues to be considered in order to better understand the perceptions held by tourist guides are the working conditions of these role players in the tourism industry.

Keyser (2009: 321) identifies three types of employment in the tourism sector. First, direct employment refers to all the positions filled in a tourist facility. This ranges from the general manager at hotels to the gardener in the maintenance team and all the employees who are in direct contact with tourists or directly affect their experience. Companies that provide direct

employment in the tourism industry include airlines, cruise lines, travel agents, attractions, accommodation providers, tour operators, and tourism information offices.

A second form of tourism employment is indirect employment. This refers to employment linked to goods and services which are provided to tourism operations by different companies. The list may include vehicles; company logo design; sign writing on the vehicle; brochure design and printing; website design and maintenance; accounting services; and equipment such as picnic baskets, hot water flasks and reference books about the destination. Companies that provide indirect employment are those that serve and support direct tourism employment companies. These companies include construction firms, convention centres, and other tourist facilities, aircraft manufacturers and suppliers of catering equipment.

The third employment category is induced employment. This refers to tourism employment which results from tourism spending. A general increase in tourism at a destination will stimulate growth of employment in other areas, such as retail, schools and municipal authorities. The jobs that result from household spending of added wages, salaries, or proprietor's incomes are induced effects. Keyser (2009: 322) gives the example of a hotel or resort which, after upgrading, may improve the salary of staff in order to motivate the staff members to render a better service. The resort may also employ more staff to support the larger operation. The existing and new employees will earn more money, which they will spend on businesses and support services, for example food shops, crèches and doctors in the area. These business and support services may need to employ more staff in order to cope with the additional customers.

These three sectors of employment illustrate the complexity of the tourism industry and job creation and opportunity that originate within the sector. The major concern in this investigation is with the direct employment sector. It is argued that a stereotype exists that tourism employment is reserved for the "uneducated, unmotivated, untrained, unskilled and unproductive" (Pizam 1982: 279; Williams and Shaw 1988: 91). In work undertaken by Williams and Shaw (1988: 91) in the UK it was shown that almost one third of hotel and restaurant groups pay their employees less than the legal minimum wages set by the National Labour

Council. Their study also found that the jobs offered in the tourism sector provide only limited career progression, affecting the whole labour market. Taken together, poor levels of remuneration and work conditions result in the high rates of labour turnover that the tourism industry experiences. Indeed, Keyser (2009: 322) explains that tourism is often regarded as a substandard form of employment with low salaries in most sectors of the industry. In the accommodations sector, Kontogeorgopoulos (1998: 316) discusses the living and working conditions of employees in the accommodations sector of the tourism industry,

Christian (2010: 26) emphasises that in each segment of the tourism industry there are workers with different skills that contribute to the industry and the workplace. Regardless of the skills and/or qualifications these workers possess, there are certain measurable standards and basic rights in the work environment that need to be considered when examining employment conditions in the tourism industry. These include type of work, wage levels, working hours, and also enabling rights, that is, freedom of association, non-discrimination, voice, and growth potential. Another issue regarding social upgrading in the industry concerns the various segments in the industry where certain jobs are directly linked to and reserved for a specific gender group, ethnic group, region and nationality. Also it appears that the higher the skills required to perform certain duties, the more likely the job is to be reserved for an outsider from a developed country.

According to Shaw and Williams (1994: 145) the work tempo and requirements of the tourism industry varies between seasons, working days, weekends and public holidays and times of the day. The result is that tourism services have to be delivered to customers in both temporal and spatial clusters. Employers are sometimes forced to retrench staff during the off season or out of principle employ mostly temporary or part-time employees. Part-time jobs are also mostly reserved for locals and the higher-paying jobs that are permanent in nature are reserved for skilled persons, from a neighbouring town or another country. McIntyre (2007: 30) states that the nature of tourism does not allow for additional fees for work on Sunday or public holidays, whether the employee is permanent or temporary. Thus, normal overtime compensation mostly does not apply in the tourism industry for full-time or part-time employers.

With regard to the seasonality of the industry, Christian (2010: 27) argues that the inconsistency of tourism employment in developing countries has caused the locals to become entrepreneurs, selling trinkets and souvenirs to tourists. Even though tourism and pro-poor tourism may boost local economies, not all tourism-related economic activities are positive for the country and local community. Much of the currency earned through the tourism initiatives, through leakages in the system, goes back to the international owners and not necessarily to the host country or local communities. While tourism creates many job opportunities, the white-collar and managerial posts usually go to expatriates with more experience and/or better qualifications. The tourism industry may also damage the local economy, because labourers are drawn away from mining or agricultural employment to work in the promising tourism sector (Tefler and Sharpley 2008: 184).

Labour disputes within the tourism industry have been a point of discussion since the early 1970s. Bell (1974) labels the tourism industry a 'post-industrial society based on services'. Shaw and Williams (1994: 142) have indicated that since the early 1980s tourism employers have been guilty of reducing labour costs through cutting salaries and requiring unreasonable working hours. A temporary solution to the problem is part-time contracts or peripheral employees working alongside permanent employees. These part-timers may be employed all year round or just on a seasonal basis (Shaw and Williams 1994: 147). According to the ILO (2001: 12) there can be more severe labour problems in the tourism industry than simply overtime compensation or sick leave. In Burma tourism is directly related to human rights abuses in ways it is not in other countries. Indeed, slave labour was used in the construction of Mandalay Airport and several key roads in the run-up to 1989, the junta's planned Myanmar Year of Tourism (Wastnage 2009).

2.3 International perspectives on tourist guides

Tourist guides have not been a major focus of international research on tourism. This section offers a review of existing material.

Several authors concur that the role of the modern tourist guide has its direct historical origins in the Grand Tour of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Cohen 1985; Hilbert 1969; Lambert 1935), which was also the era that saw the beginning of tourism, as we know it today. The Grand Tour was undertaken as part of the completion of the education of wealthy young men. These men were accompanied by a connoisseur. A connoisseur, according to the *Concise Oxford thesaurus* (1995), is a person who is an expert in fine dining and aesthetics, and an arbiter of taste. The connoisseur had to educate these young men in the finer things in life. Part of his job was to arrange safe passage for himself and his pupils, as well as adequate accommodation. This epoch is also known as the Romantic Era or Age of Enlightenment.

Although much has changed since the Grand Tour era, to a certain extent the tourist guide of today is a modern-day connoisseur with a number of added duties to perform. Ap and Wong (2001: 551) describe modern tourist guides as frontline employees, responsible for the selection and satisfaction of experiences to be had by clients/guests. They are ambassadors not only for their companies, but also for the regions and countries in which they operate. According to Geva and Goldman (1991: 185), the performance of a tourist guide determines the level of satisfaction clients experience, and the success of a tour depends on the 'show' given by the tourist guide. Pond (1993: 17) defines a tourist guide as a person who conducts a tour with broad-based knowledge of a particular area and whose primary duty is to inform.

In the international context, there is a small amount of research that relates to contemporary issues concerning tourist guides. Research on tourist guides discusses various topics not necessarily relating to this dissertation. These include ethnic division within the tourism labour market. Van den Bergh (1992: 236) describes these interacting categories of people involved in the division of ethnic tourism as the tourist (consumers), "tourees" (the locals whose cultural

otherness makes them unique) and the middlemen (who act as guides and interpreters). These middlemen are seen as the exploiters.

Issues that have attracted attention are the origins, structure and dynamics of the role of tourist guiding (Cohen 1985: 6). Cohen's work is important and pertinent to this study as it provide fundamental background and a sketch of the tourist guide by providing a brief history and explaining the structure and dynamics of the types of roles the modern tourist guide portrays. Although focusing on a unique situation and circumstances, Bowman (1992) delves into the politics of tour guiding. He looks at Israeli and Palestinian guides in Israel and the Occupied Territories as a case study. Dahles (2001; 2002) writes about training for tourist guides in Indonesia, and Weiler and Ham (2002) talk about the professionalisation of tour guiding. In Ap and Wong (2001) and also in Jensen (2010), the relations between tourist guides and host communities are discussed. The "emotional labour" of tourist guides interfacing with package tourists is examined in Wong and Wang (2009). Other topics discussed in the international context include the interaction of tourist guides with tourists (Pearce nd), the influence of seasonality on the labour markets (Ball 1989) and the mobility of the labour market in the tourism industry (Szvas, Riley, Airey 2003). An analysis of tipping is examined by Shamir (1984), along with the various forms of employment available in the tourism industry (Vanhove 1981). Human resource issues within the tourism industry are looked at by Baum (2007), while the influence of an organisational culture and learning of tourist guides is discussed by Lugosi and Bray (2008). The works of Pizam and Jeong (1996) were also consulted, in which they wrote about the perceptions of Korean tourist guides with regards to cross-cultural tourism behaviour.

Although these articles have relevance for the report, they do not directly relate to the core focus of this study, which is employment conditions of tourist guides in South Africa. Nevertheless, these articles have acted as guides and indicators for this dissertation. The literature contains only one study which relates to the working conditions of tourist guides, namely Crick's (1992) examination of the world of informal sector guides in Kandy, Sri Lanka.

Crick (1992: 135) looks at the decay of the tourism industry in Sri Lanka over the past 30 years and how informal street/tourist guides make a day-to-day living by negotiating with unlicensed guest houses and unsuspecting tourists who are not making use of package tours. Crick explains that this type of informal work in the tourism industry is characteristic of third world tourism employment; lack of education and proper structures by governments create an insecure dangerous informal sector in the tourism industry.

Tourist guides represent one of the most under-researched elements in South Africa's tourism sector. Currently, research on tourist guiding is minimal, with the exception of works by McIntyre (2007). This dissertation aims to address this gap by conducting an analysis of the working conditions of tourist guides in South Africa. More specifically, it seeks to identify their perceptions of a range of employment-related issues, such as job security, work conditions and income.

2.4 Tourist guides in South Africa

No formal documentation, whether academic or governmental, exists on the history of tourist guides in South Africa. According to Dr Joe Raputsoe, national registrar and spokesperson at the Department of Tourism, the focus of the South African tourism industry has been on marketing and development, and no one has taken the initiative to document historical growth and the role that tourist guides play in the industry.

According to the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996), the vision of national government is to develop the tourism sector as a national priority in a sustainable and acceptable manner, so that tourism will contribute significantly to the improvement of the quality of life of every South African. Since tourism is regarded as a lead sector in the national economic development strategy, the need was identified for nurturing a globally competitive tourism industry so that tourism is a major force in the reconstruction and development efforts planned by the government. While the White Paper on the Development of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996) does not put the spotlight on tourist

guides, it acknowledges the deficiency in the tourism industry as a whole with regards to adequate training, education and awareness.

The only earlier investigation is by McIntyre (2007) on tourist guides in South Africa. McIntyre (2007: 10) states that tourist guiding is a profession that is misunderstood by many people. He argues that the common belief among the general public is that tourist guides are merely glorified chauffeurs who tell foreigners interesting stories, when in fact there is far more to a tourist guide than meets the eye. Not only must a tourist guide be trained according to standards set by the Tourism Hospitality Education and Training Authority (THETA), which cover a variety of disciplines from history to economics, but they must be able to convey their knowledge in an interesting way to their clients and keep track of daily changes around the world.

In South Africa today there are three principal types of tourist guide, namely site guides, driver guides and special interest guides, who each perform a certain set of duties according to their qualifications and registration (South Africa 1978; 1993). Guides can further be subcategorised into local, regional and national.

McIntyre (2009: 17–20) describes the duties of these types of guides (below).

2.4.1 Site guides

Site guides are individual guides who accompany groups around a specific site or area. Their level of knowledge is confined to that site and information relating to it. Typical site guides are found at museums and places of cultural or historical interest, such as Freedom Park and Sterkfontein Caves.

2.4.2 Driver guides

Driver guides are exactly that: tourist guides who are competent and registered to transfer guests. Driver guides can be further subdivided into local, regional and national guides. These guides need to have a valid driver's licence and must be registered with the relevant traffic

authority in order to be issued with a professional driver's permit (PrDP). A PrDP legally permits the guide to transport travellers (passengers) for financial gain. It also assures the tour operator or employee that the driver has no previous convictions.

2.4.3 Special interest guides

Special interest guides are individuals who are experts in specific disciplines. Often these guides follow a vocation in their area of expertise and guide only part time, at weekends or on their annual leave. In some instances these guides may have chosen a career change or taken up guiding as a retirement job. Although the concept and popularity of special interest guides is still a novelty in South Africa, the growing popularity of business tourism indicates that this trend is sure to gain momentum, further influence and maturity in the tourism industry.

2.4.4 Local guides

Local guides can be defined as guides who are registered to accompany travellers in a predefined geographical area. This area may be as big as a metropolitan area. The limitations of their registration prohibit these guides from overnighing with a group outside their defined area. These types of guide normally conduct city tours or cover certain regions, for example wine routes in the Western Cape and meanders such as those in KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and North West.

2.4.5 Regional guides

Regional guides are more knowledgeable than local guides. Their territories normally include one or more of the nine provinces in South Africa. Their tours with clients may go from city to city or province to province. Thus, the duration of their trips is much longer and more intense than that of a local guide. However, it is paramount for these guides to be registered in all the regions or provinces through which they accompany the group.

2.4.6 National guides

This type of guide is registered to operate in all nine provinces of South Africa. With vast knowledge of each province and South Africa in general, they are much more sought after than the other types of tourist guide. These tourist guides are often competent to conduct tours through neighbouring countries such as Namibia, Zimbabwe or Botswana. The duration of their trips is normally much longer than that of other types of guide. Because of their high competency, knowledge and qualification, their remunerations are normally higher than those of regional or local tourist guides.

The training provision for the tourism industry is addressed in the next section.

2.5 Education and training for the tourism industry post 1994

With increasing emphasis from government on regularising the industry through registration and permit requirements for guides, the need for specialist training has also increased. This need is addressed through tertiary education and through training programmes (short courses and full programmes) at levels lower than South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Level 4 (Grade 12). Typically these types of programme are regulated by a sector training authority (in this case THETA) and training is carried out by private service providers.

2.5.1 The contribution by tertiary institutions

While there is a shortage of recorded information on the history of tourist guides in South Africa, information on training and education for the sector after 1994 is more readily obtainable. Looking at the history of tourist guides through the lens of training brings some information that helps to construct a picture of the little-known history of tourist guides in South Africa. A limited number of training service providers and tertiary institutions were approached to gain insight into and understanding of the history of tourist guides in South Africa by considering the growth of training opportunities after 1994.

Lipscombe and Thwaites (2001: 630) emphasise that the credibility of the tourism industry is dependent on training and education that provides specialised skills, especially at the tourist/operator interface: the guide. Consequently, the question is what is being done on the home front to add credibility to the tourism industry and employees working in this sector? Sue Geldenhuys (2003: 71), head of the Tourism Department at Tshwane University of Technology, states that formal education and training for tour operators and tourist guides are relatively new, yet an impressive improvement in the offering of relevant training has occurred over the past fifteen years.

The first tertiary institutions to provide tourism studies as a degree course were the former technikons (the current universities of technology). Although originally a BTech in Tourism Management was the only course offered at these institutions, through research, development and industry participation, other qualifications soon followed. The new qualifications include BTech: Hospitality Management, BTech: Conservation Management, BTech: Ecotourism Management, and BTech: Adventure Tourism Management. Geldenhuys (2003: 56) states that a number of these courses are intertwined and share the same building blocks or foundations, covering the key components that form the tourism industry. Unfortunately, because of the similarity in content of these tourism qualifications, graduates probably compete for some of the same entry-level positions. However, these qualifications have been developed with the input of academics and leading industry role-players, custom designing each qualification to suit the needs of each field. According to Geldenhuys (2003: 56) it was not an easy task to establish a structured qualification with which the role-players in the industry would be satisfied. Their main concern was the difference between theoretical and practical experience and knowledge. Thus the solution that the educators of tertiary institutions offered was to include experiential learning or a practical section, where learners have to gain practical experience in the industry before the completion of their course and qualification.

Other tertiary institutions were latecomers to the game, and although some of the prestigious universities offer courses in Tourism Studies and Tourism Management, most of them focus on postgraduate studies that explore other scientific fields linked to tourism. The University of the

Witwatersrand established Tourism Studies in 2000 for Honours and MA degrees through course work and research report. Originally Tourism Studies fell under the Graduate School of Humanities, but was moved in 2006 to the School of Geography, Archaeology and Environment Studies. The University of South Africa (UNISA) also started Tourism Studies at the beginning of the new millennium, presenting courses in which Tourism Studies was included in the qualifications of Bachelor of Business Administration and Bachelor of Commerce. The degrees of Bachelor of Commerce with specialisation in Tourism Management and Master of Commerce in Tourism Management were also offered. In the mid 2000s when Technikon SA (TSA) merged with UNISA, the National Diploma (Tourism Management) and the Baccalaureus Technologiae (Tourism Management) were introduced.

2.5.2 The contribution by other training service providers

Another group of trainers are service providers that are registered and accredited with the South African Tourism and Hospitality Education and Training Authority (THETA) and provide training to aspirant tourist guides. According to a trainer and director at Drumbeat Academy, this institution has been around since the early 1990s and was the first to obtain accreditation from THETA. Prior the establishment of the sector education and training authorities (SETAS), tourist guide accreditation was provided by SATOUR (South African Tourism Authority). Guides received their training from service providers such as Drumbeat and then were interviewed and questioned on a number of topics in order to establish competency. In the late 1990s a new form of accreditation was introduced, using the NQF (National Qualification Framework) to assess not only tourist guides, but also the service providers who supplied the training. A service provider has to apply for accreditation every five years and the SETA conducts verification visits regularly. The new system is a step in the right direction, yet there are still shortcomings that need to be sorted out.

Geldenhuis (2003: 35) emphasises the importance of frontline staff such as tourist guides, and asks whether higher education institutions should take over the role of training tourist guides in order to enable tourists to have a more enriching experience? This question may need to be examined at national and international level.

2.6. Conclusion

Researching the history of tourist guides is a quest that must continue. Although there still is a shortage of published literature on the history of tourist guides in South Africa, a better understanding can now be formed not only of the role of tourist guides in the tourism industry, but also of the role-players involved in training and regulating tourist guides in this industry.

The establishment of a new Department of Tourism that is separate from the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) may be viewed in a positive light, in the sense that government realises the many challenges facing the tourism industry and its potential economic benefits. The lack of historical documentation on the history and development of tourist guides in South Africa is a challenge to be addressed by the Department of Tourism, and this must be shared with other role-players in the industry, such as academia and the private sector. Fortunately all role-players interviewed in the research for this dissertation are keen to support or initiate further research on this topic.

From the tertiary institutions, it became apparent that although the role they play in training is small in comparison with service providers such as Drumbeat Academy, they play an influential and important part in professionalising the industry. They create graduates in the science of tourism, some of whom may join the tourism employment sector as tour operators or through further training as tourist guides. The aspirant tourist guides or tour operators produced by tertiary institutions will have a broader understanding of the tourism industry and, it is hoped, a more mature and professional approach.

Along with THETA, the service providers who are training tourist guides in South Africa play a vitally important role in supplying the tourism industry with competent guides of excellent standard. Government policy and procedures make provision for equal opportunities for everyone who has a passion for South Africa to follow a vocation as an ambassador for his or her country, as tourist guide.

Labour disputes in the tourism industry have been a point of discussion since the early 1970s. Also, overall working conditions in the industry attracted considerable criticism. These debates are evident in the growing number of researchers of tourism at local and international level who are examining this. The infancy of the South African tourism industry in comparison with the world, along with our even younger representation on the academic side of the industry, may have hindered previous researchers from doing relevant research. Yet the importance of this topic in the industry cannot be ignored and needs to be probed and examined.

In chapter 3, South African labour law is examined with regards to employment of tourist guides with a brief description of tour operators (those who employ tourist guides) and a discussion of in-depth interviews with these operators concerning the employment conditions of tourist guides. In chapter 4 tourist guides and their perception of their working environment are discussed against the backdrop of chapters 2 and 3.

Chapter 3: THE TOUR OPERATOR

3.1 Introduction

Although the expanding tourism economy of South Africa since 1994 has attracted a considerable amount of research (see Rogerson and Visser 2004; Visser and Rogerson 2004), little research attention has been given to the tour operator sector and to specific questions relating to tourist guides. The aim in this chapter is to provide an overview of the tour operator sector in South Africa as an essential background to the employment of tourist guides in the country. In addition, the chapter investigates the legal conditions that affect the employment of tourist guides. Further, the chapter provides an analysis of tour operator perceptions concerning the employment of tourist guides.

The discussion is organised in terms of three sections of material. First, a review is provided of the profile of tourist guides in South Africa as a whole and of the key operators in the provision of tour services. Second, the focus shifts to a detailed examination of legal issues provided for in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. Against this background, the last section turns to an investigation of the views of leading tour operators concerning the employment of tourist guides.

The chapter draws from a range of primary research sources. The background material on the role of tourist guides in the tour operator sector draws from information which has been obtained from the Department of Tourism, key stakeholder interviews with officials and an Internet search of the websites of major tour operating enterprises in South Africa. The second section draws from legal sources concerning the framework of employment which pertains to tourist guides. The third section is based upon a series of 10 original interviews that were conducted in 2010 with a cross-section of tour operators in South Africa.

3.2 A national profile of tourist guides and tour operators

One consequence of the expansion of the tourism industry in South Africa is the growth in the demand for the services of tourist guides. In particular, tourist guides play a vital role in supporting the expansion of international tourism in South Africa. Little data is available, however, to track the expansion in the number of registered tourist guides since 1994. According to the recently established Department of Tourism (which separated from the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism in 2009), by the end of October 2010 there was an estimated total of 10 700 registered tourist guides in the country. It was stated by representatives of the Department of Tourism that the number of tourist guides was continuing to grow as more registrations “were being processed on a daily basis”. The figure of 10 700 tourist guides should be read, therefore, as a best approximation of the size of the tourist guide sector in 2010. It is likely that the real size of the tourist guide sector may exceed the current best estimate as the national total prepared by Department of Tourism does not contain any data for tourist guides in North West. An estimated figure of 300 tourist guides in North West could be included after discussions with the Department.

Table 3.1 Provincial estimates of number of registered tourist guides per province

Province	Number of tourist guides	Percentage
Western Cape	2965	28.6 %
Gauteng	2296	22.3%
Mpumalanga	1897	18.3 %
KwaZulu-Natal	1472	14.2 %
Eastern Cape	882	8.5 %
Limpopo	678	6.5 %
North West	N/A	N/A
Northern Cape	123	1.2 %
Free State	43	0.4%

Source: Interview Department of Tourism and unpublished data provided by Department of Tourism.

In terms of the geographical breakdown of the number of tourist guides, table 3.1 shows the number of registered tourist guides per province, and includes the estimated figure for North West in calculating the provincial shares. The analysis reveals that the largest share of tourist guides are based in Western Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga, which collectively account for nearly two thirds of the total of nationally registered tourist guides. These three provinces represent the major focal points for the international tourism economy of South Africa. The provinces that have the lowest number of registered tourist guides, such as Free State and Northern Cape, are those which attract only a small flow of international tourists.

Table 3.2: Gender breakdown of tourist guides in South Africa, 2010

Province	No of male guides	No of female guides	% Male	% Female
Western Cape	1 928	1 037	65.0	35.0
Gauteng	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mpumalanga	1 575	322	83.0	17.0
KwaZulu-Natal	1 029	443	69.9	30.1
Eastern Cape	633	249	71.8	28.2
Limpopo	524	134	80.2	19.8
North West	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Northern Cape	75	48	61.0	39.0
Free State	31	12	72.1	27.9

Source: Unpublished data provided by Department of Tourism

Information from the National Department of Tourism is incomplete for the gender composition of tour guiding in South Africa. No gender breakdown is available for Gauteng or can be estimated for North West. The available information is summarised on table 3.2. Based on information for seven provinces, the estimated national gender composition of tour guiding is to be 72.1 per cent male and 27.9 per cent female. The male dominance of tour guiding in South Africa is a reflection of the international trend that the profession of tour guiding in the developing world is male dominant. The limited representation of women in tour guiding can be accounted for in terms of women's domestic roles as well as the long hours and often arduous driving that are often perceived better suited to males in tourist guiding work.

Table 3.3: Racial breakdown of tourist guides in South Africa, 2010

PROVINCE	African	White	Coloured	Indian
Western Cape	9.8	68.6	20.9	0.6
Gauteng	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mpumalanga	39.3	60.4	0.3	0
KwaZulu-Natal	32.1	62.9	1.5	3.3
Eastern Cape	29.0	62.8	8.0	0.1
Limpopo	32.2	67.8	0	0
North West	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Northern Cape	15.4	57.7	26.8	0
Free State	46.5	53.4	0	0

Source: Unpublished data provided by Department of Tourism

In relation to the racial breakdown of tourist guides, in 2010 the information as obtained from the Department of Tourism is once again incomplete with respect to Gauteng and North West. Table 3.3 summarises the information concerning the racial classification of registered tourist guides in South Africa. Nationally, the profile that emerges from the available data from seven provinces is that the tour guiding profession is dominated by whites, who represent 64.4 per cent, followed by Africans 25.4 per cent, coloureds 9.2 per cent, and Indians only 0.9 per cent of the total. Not surprisingly, provincial variations can be observed. Northern and Western Cape show the highest proportion of coloured tourist guides. In all provinces, however, whites represent the largest share of tourist guides.

The national group of tourist guides secure employment in a variety of ways. The two most important are as an independent contractor and as a direct contract worker with a tour operating company. According to an interview with Dr Raputsoe (national registrar of tourism),

the Department of Tourism is seeking to reorganise data concerning tour operations in South Africa. Currently, the responsibility for the tour operator sector is divided between two departments, namely the Department of Labour and the Department of Transport. This situation causes difficulties for the Department of Tourism in determining the dimensions and organisation of the tour operator sector in South Africa. Regulation and control of tour operators is made problematic because at present it is not compulsory for tour operators to register with the Department of Tourism.

The network of tour operators in South Africa act as middlemen in the supply chain of tourism as a service. The tour operators might be contacted directly by the clients/guests or by various agencies in order to book a package tour or custom-made trip through the tour operator. The tour operator sells these trips to the guests or agencies. The trips may vary from day excursions to 23-day long overland safaris, dependent on the type of operator. Tour operators contract or employ tourist guides as “ambassadors” to drive, guide and host these international tourists. An Internet search reveals and confirms that the tour operator sector in South Africa is dominated by a small number of large operators. The most important and largest tour operators are Tourvest, Thompsons, Hylton Ross and Springbok Atlas, which are enterprises that have been active in the tourism industry of South Africa for many years. These companies market themselves proudly as engaging qualified and trained guides. In addition to these large operators, there are a considerable number of smaller tour operators. In many instances, these small companies are individually owned and operated closed corporations that have been established by registered tourist guides. The Department of Tourism does not have a database of these small tour operating enterprises in South Africa.

Having sketched a profile of the tourist guide sector in South Africa and identified the broad outlines of the tour operator sector, attention turns in the next two sections to discussing the legal framework that governs the employment and working conditions of tourist guides and then the perceptions of a cross-section of tour operators of the employment of tourist guides in South Africa.

3.3 Legal conditions affecting work as tourist guides

The South African Bill of Rights states that ‘Everyone has the right to fair labour practices’ (S23 (1) of Act 108 of 1996 (as amended), McIntyre 2007: 43). In order to evaluate the working conditions of tourist guides it is first essential to understand the legislative context for their employment that is provided under the Constitution by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA), which was introduced in 1997. This act aims to advance economic development and social justice by enforcing and regulating the right to fair labour practices (a fundamental right in terms of Section 23(1) of the Constitution of 1996) (Basson 2009: 59). In general the BCEA has established the minimum terms and conditions of employment. These terms and conditions will be discussed below, as well as the effectiveness of this legislation. The authority it holds over the tourism industry is also reviewed.

According to Basson (2009: 60), the BCEA applies to all employees. Nevertheless, there are exceptions, which exempt certain workers – or rather certain categories of employment – from the privileges that might be received from the BCEA. Basson (2009: 60) lists them as follows:

- Members of the South African National Defence Force, National Intelligence Agency, and South African Secret Service
- Unpaid volunteers working for an organisation serving a charitable purpose
- Persons employed on vessels at sea to which the Merchant Shipping Act 57 of 1951 applies.

Another exception is that the BCEA does not apply to independent contractors. This poses an interesting conundrum, since in terms of this provision, those guides who regard themselves as independent contractors are excluded from the protection of the act. Those who are employed by companies, however, do have recourse to the law. Basson (2009: 60) states that there are also certain partial exclusions, namely senior managerial employees, employees engaged as sales staff who travel to the premises of customers and who regulate their own hours of work and employees who work less than 24 hours a month. People earning in excess of R115 572 per annum are also excluded.

The BCEA contains a number of provisions as discussed in detail below which relate to the following aspects of employment, namely,

- Regulation of working time
- Ordinary hours of work
- Meal intervals and rest periods
- Overtime
- Sundays, public holidays and night work
- Leave
- Remuneration
- Variations
- Modifications

Each of these issues is detailed and discussed in the sub-sections below.

3.3.1 Regulation of working time

The regulation of working time, according to Van Jaarsveld et al (1999:265), is a grey area of the BCEA that is full of contradictions. On the one hand, the BCEA provides a set of strict rules, yet on the other, it provides loopholes or means of avoiding the legislation. However, the Code of Good Practice (GNR 1140 of 13 November 1998) provides guidelines for designing sound shifts and working hours. Unfortunately, the code provides only guidelines, and the interpretation and implementation of these guidelines remain the responsibility of the employer.

As is shown in chapter 4, the actual working hours of guides can vary from four hours to 12 hours or more per day. It may be argued that long working hours – in some instances these include driving more than 500 km, conducting an interactive tour, and cooking – are the essence of tour guiding work. Yet as well as possible burnout on the guide's side, the safety and wellbeing of the paying clients should be kept in consideration. Without sufficient night rest and long hours, seven days a week, fatigue is a danger, which may lead to negligence by tourist guides. A full discussion of working hours and compensation, as perceived by tourist guides, is given in chapter 4.

3.3.2 Ordinary hours of work

According to Section 9 of the act, the maximum working hours are 45 hours per week, calculated as nine hours per day for five days a week or less. A day is defined as a period of 24 hours measured from the time that the employee normally commences work. However, ordinary working hours of employees may be extended if the employer and the employee both agree, but by no more than 15 minutes a day or 60 minutes a week.

3.3.3 Meal intervals and rest periods

The BCEA makes provision that if an employee works for more than five hours continuously, he or she is entitled to a meal interval of at least one continuous hour. Employees may be expected to perform duties that cannot be left unattended and cannot be performed by other employees during their meal interval. Basson (2009: 61) makes it clear that an employee must be remunerated for a meal interval in which he or she is required to be available for work (in terms of Section 14(1)–14(3) of the BCEA). When touring with clients, it is normal that a lunch break for the clients is included in the package. This is a good example of duties that need to be performed by tourist guides during the meal interval; guides are expected not only to escort the tourists, but also to entertain them. The lunch hour of the tourist guide is therefore usually a ‘working lunch’ and is not included in calculations for remuneration.

3.3.4 Overtime

In Section 10 of the BCEA, provision is made for employees to be required to work overtime only if an agreement exists between employees and their employer, and for not more than ten hours a week. Basson (2009: 61) and Van Jaarsveld et al (1999: 266) remind us that in terms of Section 1A, the agreement between employer and employee may not require or permit an employee to work more than 12 hours on any day. If both parties agree, states Basson (2009: 61), the maximum permitted overtime may be extended to 15 hours a week, but this may not apply for more than two months in any 12-month period.

The BCEA states that overtime is remunerated at one and a half times the employee’s normal remuneration. In Section 12 of the BCEA, provision is made for an employee’s ordinary working

hours and overtime to be averaged over a period of up to four months in terms of a collective agreement. But an employee is still not permitted to work more than an average of 45 ordinary hours a week and an average of five hours overtime a week for the agreed period. Such a collective agreement between the employer and the trade union lapses after 12 months (Basson 2009: 62). As stated above, the working hours of tourist guides should be seriously examined and perhaps amended to further ensure safety and professionalism in the tourism industry.

3.3.5 Sundays, public holidays and night work

Section 18 of the BCEA makes it clear that employees whose normal working days do not include Sundays, but are required to work on Sundays, must be paid double their hourly wage. However, should the normal working day of employees include Sundays, employers must pay a premium of one and a half times the employees' wages for each hour worked (Van Jaarsveld et al 1999: 267).

Basson (2009:62) makes the following point about the situation surrounding public holidays and night work: she states that an employer may not require an employee to work on a public holiday unless this is agreed by both parties. The remuneration conditions for employees working on public holidays are similar to those of employees working on a Sunday.

On the matter of night work, Van Jaarsveld et al (1999:268) explain that it refers to work being carried out between 18:00 and 06:00. According to the BCEA, employees may work night shifts if they have previously agreed with the employer to do so. Further, the employer must compensate the employee in the form of a shift allowance or reduction of working hours. Transportation must also be available for the employee before and after the shift starts. Public transport, where available, will suffice; otherwise, the employer is responsible for arranging transportation (Van Jaarsveld et al 1999:269).

3.3.6 Leave

The provisions in terms of leave are in respect of (1) annual leave; (2) sick leave; and (3) maternity and responsibility leave. Each of these issues is dealt with separately.

– Annual leave

The BCEA makes it clear that in a cycle of 12 months an employee is entitled to at least 21 consecutive days' annual leave on full remuneration: this refers to calendar days and not working days (Van Jaarsveld et al 1999: 268). An arrangement may be reached between the employer and employee, whereupon for every 17 days of work done, one day of annual leave is earned or, alternatively, for every 17 hours of work done, one hour of paid leave is earned.

Basson (2009: 62) stresses that annual leave must be granted no later than six months after the end of the annual leave cycle. She states that it is not uncommon for employees to accumulate leave instead of using it. Some contracts make provision for leave that has not been used during the 12-month cycle to be carried over to the next cycle or even to the end of the employee's services. However, if such provision is not in the contract, the employer is obliged to pay the employee for any period of annual leave owing to him or her that has not been taken.

The BCEA also provides that an employer may not require the employee to take his or her annual leave during other types of leave, for example sick leave or family responsibility leave. Nor may an employer force an employee to take leave during any period of notice of termination of employment. The employee may still request a period of unpaid leave and the employer must permit it. Should a day of paid leave fall on a public holiday, the employer is compelled to give the employee an extra day of paid leave (Van Jaarsveld et al 1999: 269).

Unfortunately those tourist guides who act as independent contractors (sometimes of their own accord, but also because some tour operators refuse to appoint guides in full-time or fixed-term contracts) do not experience legal protection. Thus annual leave or time off can be viewed as unpaid leave, since there is no contractual agreement for annual leave, sick leave or family responsibility leave. The longer the annual leave that these guides take, the harder it is for some of them to obtain regular paying trips. This issue will be examined in further detail in chapter 4.

- **Sick leave**

The sick leave cycle is a period of 36 months with the same employer (Van Jaarsveld et al 1999: 269). The act entitles the employee to six weeks' paid leave in every cycle. Van Jaarsveld et al add that during the first months of employment, employees are entitled to one day's paid sick leave for every 26 working days.

The BCEA, in terms of Section 23(1) and (2), provides a certain amount of protection for employers from employees that are attempting to exploit them. It states that an employer is not required to pay an employee if the employee has been absent from work for more than two consecutive days or on more than two occasions during an eight-week period if he or she does not produce a medical certificate, issued and signed by a medical practitioner, excusing the employee from work (Van Jaarsveld et al 1999: 269).

- **Maternity and family responsibility leave**

Four consecutive months is the norm for maternity leave. That said, an employee is expected to give written notice to the employer of the period in which the leave will be taken, from start to finish (Basson 2009: 64).

Section 36 of the BCEA provides protection to the employee before and after the birth of the child: "[T]he employer may not require or permit a pregnant employee or an employee who is nursing a child to perform work that poses a hazard to her health or the health of the child" (Basson 2009: 64).

With regard to family responsibility leave, Van Jaarsveld et al (1999: 270) describe Section 27 of the BCEA, stating that three days' paid family responsibility leave within each annual leave cycle should be available to employees. The employer may require proof of such an event, however, for example birth or death certificates. The number of days and the circumstances may also vary, depending on prior agreement between employee and employer.

3.3.7 Provisions relating to remuneration

The BCEA makes no provision for general minimum wages. However, as Basson (2009: 65) describes, ministerial and sectoral determinations often prescribe minimum rates of remuneration in different sectors.

The main focus of the BCEA remains on controlling and providing guidelines for remuneration. In Section 32 of the BCEA it stipulates that if an employee is paid in money, this should occur daily, weekly or monthly and in South African currency. Payment should be made in cash, by cheque or by direct deposit into a bank account.

Although the BCEA does not make provision for a set minimum wage (as discussed above), it does provide guidelines as to how remuneration should be determined or calculated. According to section 35 of the BCEA, the number of hours worked by an employee should be used as the point of departure for calculating remuneration. The next step in determining the remuneration, described in Section 35 of the BCEA, states that:

An employee's monthly remuneration or wage is four and one third times the employee's weekly remuneration or wage, respectively.

However, this is a section over which the minister of labour has veto rights and can change and amend it according to industry inputs. Basson (2009: 66) explains that one of the changes that have been made is that employees may be paid in kind or at least partly in kind, for example in food and accommodation. However, the value of payments in kind must be determined either with reference to the value agreed to in the employment contract or to a collective agreement. Alternatively, the value of payment in kind may be determined by referring to the cost incurred by the employer in providing these payments.

This amendment (which allows employers to pay in kind) can be problematic for tourist guides. Tour operators, for example, might argue that the accommodation and meals tourist guides receive on tour are part of the tourist guides' remuneration. Nevertheless, many lodges and restaurants used by tour operators in their packages give complementary food and accommodation to tourist guides as a marketing and public relations tool.

3.3.8 Variation of basic conditions

The BCEA constitutes basic guidelines for employees and employers, not only to protect employees from being treated unfairly, but also to safeguard employers from being exploited. These basic conditions may be adapted to certain industries or individual companies. None the less, certain processes must occur before the BCEA may be amended. Van Jaarsveld et al (1999: 274) explain that changes to the BCEA may take place only by means of a collective agreement concluded in a bargaining council. Another way of amending this act is by powers given to the minister of labour. This procedure has directly affected the tourism sector and is discussed in section 3.3.9 below.

3.3.9 Ministerial and sectoral determinations

According to Basson (2009: 69), the minister of labour has power to replace or exclude any of the minimum standards provided for in the BCEA in respect of any category of employees or any categories of employers (Section 50 of the BCEA). Basson (2009: 69) elaborates on Section 50 of the BCEA as follows:

An employer or employer's organisation may also apply for ministerial determination. A number of limitations apply in respect of the minister's powers: a ministerial determination in respect of ordinary hours of work may only be made if the ordinary hours of work, rest periods and annual leave are on the whole more favourable than the basic conditions of employment laid down in the Act.

Basson (2009: 69) explains that until 2009 the minister had made only one determination in terms of Section 50, which was contained in GNR 293 of 28 February 2003. According to this determination, employees in the hotel trade are paid their ordinary daily wages for work on Sundays. Tourist guides are also affected by this legislation, because by definition in the Tourism Act, tourist guides fall under the hotel trade.

Basson (2009: 70) describes the sectoral determinations provided by the BCEA. A sectoral determination means that minimum standards or rules apply to a certain industry or sector of an industry, including wages, working hours and night work. Although certain limitations are

also placed on the minister with regard to sectoral determinations, these limitations are restricted largely to child labour, working hours and night work.

3.4. Enforcement of the BCEA

As stated above, the BCEA provides guidelines for employees and employers to protect them and ensure that they experience fair employment conditions. There are loopholes and different ways of interpreting the act, but fortunately provision have been made to enforce it.

One of these provisions involves the appointment of labour inspectors to promote, monitor and enforce compliance with the BCEA and other labour legislation (Basson 2009: 72). Labour inspectors have numerous powers, such as the power of entry set out in Section 65, and power to force disclosure of information. The role of the labour inspector is to enforce the legislation and in particular to protect the rights of employees. Currently there is no union to represent tourist guides or direct them and protect them against labour injustice.

3.5 Tour operators perspectives' on the employment of tourist guides

The central focus of this research study is to examine the employment conditions of tourist guides working in South Africa's tourism industry. As a background to the information provided in chapter 4 concerning their work conditions and perceptions of these conditions in this last section of chapter 3 the findings are provided from a set of structured interviews which were conducted in 2010 with a small, select group of tour operators. The discussion and analysis of the views held by tour operators cannot be taken as representative of the entire tour operator sector in South Africa. Nevertheless, the interview sample contained several of the leading national tour enterprises as identified in Section 3.2.

It was observed that most of the operators who participated in the interview seemed nervous and cautious in their responses. Some of those who were contacted to arrange an interview deliberately avoided the researcher and ignored the request to be interviewed. Those who partook in this survey, however, were careful not to expose themselves or their company. This survey was conducted using open-ended questions, asking their comments or

recommendations about a range of issues pertaining to the employment of tourist guides and their remuneration in the tourism industry.

In total, ten tour operators were selected to participate in structured interviews concerning employment issues in the tourism industry. The issues for discussion paralleled those that were under investigation in relation to the set of interviews that were conducted with tourist guides (chapter 4). Five of the ten operators are large tour operators; the other five interviewees were smaller tour operators and representative of the large number of small tour companies that are a feature of the South African tourism landscape. The five smaller independent operators were selected randomly from the list of tour operators in South Africa provided on the website www.linx.co.za

The responses to the interviews are clustered around the following themes:

- The nature of permanent employment
- Freelance tourist guides
- Remuneration and qualifications
- Working hours and benefits

3.5.1 Permanent employment

All tour operators who participated in this survey employ tourist guide on a day-to-day basis. Only three of the ten employ tourist guides on a permanent basis. Tour operators who employ tourist guides on a permanent basis are the “big players” in terms of tour operation. In addition to hiring permanent tourist guides these enterprises employ freelance guides. Of the three respondents who indicated that they employ tourist guides permanently, one employs four permanent tourist guides and the other two operators employ eight permanent tourist guides.

3.5.2 Freelance tourist guides

It is evident from the interviews that there are more opportunities for freelance tourist guides than for permanent employment opportunities. The answers given by the tour operators concur with those given by the guides and explain why more tourist guides operate on a freelance basis. In the interviews with the operators it became apparent that three of the

operators employ only one freelance guide at a time or per trip. Another operator indicated that they employ four freelance guides on average per day. The larger and busier operators employ more freelance tourist guides on a day-to-day basis. One of the largest enterprises indicated that they employ eight tourist guides on average. The four remaining operators, who are leading enterprises, all employ more than 10 tourist guides per day, with figures as high as 50 or 60 tourist guides per day.

Six of the ten operators stated that they employ tourist guides as independent contractors, per day or per trip, and three of the operators employ tourist guides as fixed-term contractors, with annual review and renewal taking place. Only one of the big operators indicated that they do not use any forms of contract for employing tourist guides; these guides are 'on their books' and are contacted for employment when the opportunity arises.

3.5.3 Remuneration and qualifications

When asked how they (the tour operators) determine remuneration, all ten interviewees indicated that the factors of tourist guide qualifications and experience are equally important. Nevertheless, four out of the ten operators stated that other factors influence the decision of how much tourist guides would be paid per day or after each trip. These factors include "the intangible factor" of the "personality" and language ability. One operator pointed out that the market determines the compensation rate. In terms of the "personality" factor, the perceived openness and friendliness of tourist guides towards both the tour operator and guests affected the level of remuneration. In addition, the ability of tourist guides to speak different European languages was a factor in determining level of remuneration.

The different types of tourist guides and their qualifications are explained in chapter 2 of this report. Chapter 2 explains the categories of tourist guides, and provides brief job descriptions (types of duties expected and types of trips that legally they may or may not perform). For instance, a regional guide may operate only in provinces in which he or she is qualified and registered. National guides, on the other hand, are registered in all nine provinces of South Africa and may work legally in all nine of them.

The tour operators were asked whether there is a distinction between remuneration for regional guides and for national tourist guides. Seven out of ten operators indicated that there is no distinction in remuneration between a regional and a national tourist guide. This acknowledgement was made after all ten agreed that qualifications and experience play a vital role in determining remuneration. The three operators that indicated that there is a distinction between remuneration for regional and for national tourist guides maintained that considerations of experience and knowledge were prime factors that influenced remuneration.

Table 3.4: Select remuneration of tourist guides

TOUR OPERATOR	Tourist guide with 1–2 years experience	Tourist guide with 3–5 years experience
Tour Operator A	R42 000	R72 000
Tour Operator B	R100 000	R150 000
Tour Operator C	R100 000	R140 000
Tour Operator D	R100 000	R160 000
Tour Operator E	R120 000	R140 000
Tour Operator F	R70 000	R100 000
Tour Operator G	R90 000	R120 000
Tour Operator H	R54 000	R54 000
Tour Operator I	R96 000	R96 000
Tour Operator J	R90 000	R90 000

Source: Interviews

Although most of the operators claim that the qualifications of the tourist guide do not influence the remuneration they are paid, the factor of work experience in the industry emerges as significant. Table 3.4 provides information collected from the ten tour operator interviews concerning the remuneration of tourist guides and the relationship of levels of remuneration to work experience. It is clear from table 3.4 that a wide range of remuneration for tourist guides exists in the South African tour operator economy. It was observed that the highest levels of remuneration are consistently linked first to years of work experience. In addition, there is a strong trend towards better remuneration in larger tour operations than small tour operators. The large and established tour companies give better recognition of experience in determining remuneration. Nevertheless, it is evident that there is no consistency in patterns of remuneration of tourist guides and no standardised formula to determine remuneration for services rendered or duties performed by the tourist guides.

The tour operators concur that different services rendered by the tourist guides influence the remuneration. It was considered by interviewees that types of service were not as important as the time taken for the tourist guide to perform the duty. An important set of findings from the interviews related to whether their company regards trip allowance as part of the salary or remuneration that tourist guides receive. Seven out of the ten interviewees considered that a trip allowance was an integral part of the salary or remuneration. This result provides evidence that remuneration of tourist guides is inconsistent as the length and duration of trips differ and for this reason it can be argued that the trip allowance and remuneration should also differ. It is significant that the three operators who indicated that a trip allowance is not regarded as remuneration were large operators, which offer higher and more consistent remuneration.

3.5.4 Working hours and benefits

From the interviews it was apparent that most tour operators are reluctant to pay overtime to tourist guides, whether they are permanent or freelance. Indeed, only one of the ten tour operators indicated that they pay overtime to their permanent and freelance tourist guides. This finding is interesting since more than half of the operators indicated that the average working day of a tourist guide is between 8 and 12 hours. Three of the operators indicated that

their working day was often more than 12 hours; only one interviewee stated that the working hours are between 4 and 8 hours. Of the working hours required, 4 to 8 hours are spent on the road (according to seven respondents); 8 to 12 hours on the road (according to one operator); and two operators indicated that the tourist guides working for them spend more than 12 hours on the road.

As mentioned earlier, only three of the ten tour operators employ permanent tourist guides. Of these three tour operators, two give their employees the benefits of medical aid, a pension plan, 15 days' leave, and an undisclosed number of days' paid sick leave, as prescribed by labour laws. This situation means that one tour operator employs tourist guides on a full-time basis, with no contract or benefits whatsoever. The question about benefits did not apply to the tour operators who employ only freelance tourist guides.

When the operators were asked to rate the type of accommodation offered to tourist guides on a trip, they all agreed that it was excellent and precisely the same type of accommodation that the clients or guests would stay in. This answer corresponds with that of the majority of the tourist guides, who rated the type of accommodation offered on their trips average or good (chapter 4).

Another question that was posed to the tour operators was to indicate the nationalities of the tourist guides working for them. All ten of the operators employ South African guides. Four of them employ German guides, and two indicated that they employ Spanish guides. Only three of the tour operators employ guides from neighbouring countries: Namibia, Botswana and Zambia. One operator admits to employing Italian tourist guides and another to utilising French tourist guides. Fortunately, the majority of the tour operators, nine out of ten, stated that the majority of their tourist guide workforce is South African. In only one case a tour operator employs more tourist guides from Botswana than from South Africa.

The interviewees raised a number of concerns specifically about tourist guides in the industry. One operator stated that tourist guides are not adequately trained, especially with regards to cultural sensitivity and differences. His company took the task on their shoulders to do in-house

training. They viewed it as a challenging task at its onset, but results are gradually becoming visible in the form of higher customer satisfaction and fewer complaints. A second concern raised by an operator is that freelance tourist guides want to charge tour operators more than double what they are worth or what the company can afford. Finally, one large tour operator voiced their concern about the lack of language ability of specialist guides. It was stressed that the ability to speak a foreign language fluently entitled tourist guides to demand higher remuneration.

3.6 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to offer an overview of the tourist guide sector in South Africa, a profile of the major tour operators, an investigation of the legal framework affecting work in tour guiding, and perceptions of tour companies of their employment of tourist guides. It was revealed that the existing data concerning tourist guides in South Africa is limited and that the Department of Tourism is currently seeking to improve this situation. What emerges clearly, however, is that there is a community of nearly 11 000 registered tourist guides working in South Africa. The vast majority of these guides are white males, followed by African males. These tourist guides operate mainly as independent contractors to the larger tour companies. In addition, many of them do freelance work for small tour operating companies, often established by tourist guides themselves.

The legislative framework of the BCEA provides the overarching context for determining the working conditions of South African tourist guides. It was observed, however, that certain issues or problems emerge with respect to its application to tourist guides. Issues of particular concern relate to, *inter alia*, length of working day, remuneration procedures, overtime, and benefits. The problematic nature of these issues was further highlighted in the interviews and responses offered by tour operators. The overall picture emerges that the larger and more established tour companies are those that offer more permanent and more stable employment opportunities, which are often linked to better working conditions in general, as specified under the BCEA. In smaller enterprises there is a much higher use of freelance or independent contractors often working on an irregular basis and with reduced (if any) benefits to those in

permanent employment. Further details on these work situations are provided in chapter 4, which analyses the findings from 66 interviews completed with South African tourist guides.

Chapter 4: TOURIST GUIDES IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.1 Introduction

Within the growing literature on tourism, as argued in chapter 2, relatively little attention has been given to tourist guides and the activity of tour guiding. The majority of works on tourist guides focus on themes such as the relationship between guides and tourists, the training of guides, and the role of guides as interpreters of tours. Important questions relating to the employment conditions of tourist guides have not come under scrutiny in the international literature. Moreover, with the exception of the investigation by McIntyre (2007), tourist guiding has been neglected in writings about South African tourism. It is against this background that the aim in this chapter is to examine the characteristics of tourist guides, their work conditions and perceptions of their employment as tourist guides. This discussion should be read in relation to and builds upon the material presented in chapter 3 concerning employment conditions for labour and the attitudes of tour operators towards the employment of tourist guides.

The purpose of this chapter is to present three sets of material:

- A discussion of the profile of South African tourist guides
- An analysis of their employment conditions
- A discussion of the perceptions of tourist guides towards their existing conditions of work

The chapter draws from a number of research sources. The most important source of material is 60 interviews that were conducted with tourist guides in Gauteng and Mpumalanga. These provinces are leading areas for tourist guides as was shown in chapter 3. This interview material offers a set of both quantitative and qualitative results about the characteristics of tourist guides, their employment conditions and the views of tourist guides towards their conditions of work. Supplementary material is drawn from an in-depth case study of the working conditions of one Pretoria-based tourist guide, who provided a diary of his working week. This qualitative material is woven into the broader analysis of the discussion on the employment conditions of tourist guides.

4.2. The characteristics of South African tourist guides

This section provides a profile of South African tourist guides based upon the 60 interviews. Issues that are examined are inter alia, gender, age, marital status, nature of household, education and work career.

Table 4.1: Gender of respondent

Sex	Quantity	Percentage
Male	46	77%
Female	14	23%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.1 shows that the majority of tourist guides in the South African tourism industry are men, who account for 77% of the total. The low representation of women in this part of the tourism industry is accounted for in part by the industry's perceptions of women. One female tourist guide from Nelspruit, Mpumalanga expressed the view that:

I have found the guiding industry to be unwilling to use or employ single female guides (especially as nature guides) as they say we can't work or drive the long hours required, and that a single woman can't live and work in the same place with single men. I wish this discrimination could come to an end, or be monitored, or something!!! Women do not always want to just work hotel/game lodge admin jobs! – *Tourist guide from Mmbomela, Mpumalanga*

Table 4.2: Age profile of respondents

Age	Quantity	Percentage
18–25	4	8%
26–35	14	25%
36–45	10	17%
46–63	20	33%
64 +	10	17%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.2 shows the age profile of the 60 interviewees. The average age of tourist guides was calculated as 55, which indicates that tourist guiding is a profession that is currently heavily weighted towards older persons. The age distribution shows that only one third of tourist guides are under the age of 35. The vast majority of tourist guides are in the age range of 45–64. It is notable also that tourist guiding attracts a number of people who work beyond the normal retirement age of 65.

Table 4.3: Marital status

Marital status	Quantity	Percentage
Single	17	28%
Married	31	42%
Divorced	3	4%
Living together	9	14%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.3 shows the marital status of the sample of tourist guides. It is evident that the largest segment of tourist guides are married or living with a partner. Given the age profile of the tourist guide population, these findings are not surprising.

Table 4.4: Nature of household

Size of family (Including children living with you)	Quantity	Percentage
1	26	43%
2	20	33%
3	1	2%
4 or more	13	22%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.4 examines the nature of the household of tourist guides. Fifty seven per cent (57%) of the respondents have children or spouses living with them. This correlates with table 4.3 above, which shows that 56% of tourist guides are either living with a partner or are married. A substantial 43% of the respondents have no dependants living with them; 22% of the tourist guides have four or more dependants living with them; and only 2% have three dependants.

Table 4.5: Highest secondary qualification

What is your highest school qualification?	Quantity	Percentage
Grade 9	1	2%
Grade 10	1	2%
Grade 11	1	2%
Matric	47	94%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.5 focuses on highest school qualification. It is revealed that most of the respondents in the survey (94%) had completed high school and obtained a matriculation certificate. Four per cent (4%) of the respondents finished Grade 10 and Grade 11; 2 per cent of the respondents completed only Grade 9.

Table 4.6: Post school qualifications

Highest post school qualification?	Quantity	Percentage
Guiding Certificate	13	22%
Diploma	24	42%
Degree	10	17%
Honours	7	12%
Masters	4	7%
PhD	1	2%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.6 reveals that 78% of the respondents obtained some form of tertiary education. In total, 42% completed diplomas, 17% obtained a bachelor's degree, and 21% have a postgraduate qualification. Of these with postgraduate qualifications, 12% have honours degrees, 7% master's degrees and 2% PhDs. Most of the respondents with tertiary qualifications obtained them in fields unrelated to tourism. Further, only 22% of the tourist guides obtained the guiding certificate as their only post school qualification. All the group of surveyed respondents have a formal qualification as tourist guide.

Table 4.7: Work career as tourist guide

How long have you been guiding?	Quantity	Percentage
Less than a year	6	10%
1–4 years	32	43%
5–10 years	14	23%
11–14 years	6	10%
15 years or more	2	3%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.7 shows the length of the work career as tourist guide in South Africa. It is evident that the majority of tourist guides have been working in that career for fewer than five years. It is significant that only 13 per cent of the sample have been working as tourist guides for a period of 10 years or more. Across the 60 interviewees, the average period that interviewees had been involved in tour guiding was 5.1 years. One of the factors behind the limited number of experienced guides who have been worked for 10 years or more was revealed in terms of the “unfriendly” working conditions that tourist guides experience. One veteran tourist guide explained:

I have been guiding for 14 years, and have many instances of unfair treatment by tour companies to relate. My observation is that some of the guides who succeed in the industry are very thick-skinned or otherwise lacking in any self-esteem and are, in fact, poor representatives at marketing South Africa as the wonderful destination which it is. A number of them drink or pop pills in order to handle the stress, and I even know of one poor individual who had a stroke while on tour, definitely as a result of being pushed (by the operator) beyond his limits. He has never fully recovered. – *Tourist guide from Johannesburg, Gauteng.*

The low numbers of veterans is an indication of the high staff turnover that is experienced in the tourism guiding environment.

It is evident from the above analysis that tourist guiding is a profession that is taken up by many people at different periods of their lives. The survey revealed that tourist guides were engaged in a diverse set of occupations before entering the business of tour guiding. It is significant that before entry into tourist guiding only a small fraction of interviewees (10 per cent) had been involved in the tourism industry. Examples were managers of game lodges, four-by-four driving instructor, nature conservationist, chef, editor of *Getaway* magazine, and student of nature conservation. The majority of current tourist guides entered the profession from a previous career that is unrelated to tourism. Among the diverse range of activities in which tourist guides had been involved in the past are pharmacist, auditor, beautician, security guard, draftsman, IT developer, veterinarian nurse, teacher, nurse, import-export manager, and personal assistant. Overall, the most common occupations prior to taking up tourist guiding were teaching and driving. A separate analysis was conducted of the group of tourist guides who had taken up tourist guiding after a formal retirement from a previous career. This group represented in total approximately one fifth of the sample. Once again, an extraordinary diverse range of work occupations had been undertaken. These included a professor of botany and ecology, civil servant, financial manager, logistics specialist, engineer, municipal councillor, electrical supervisor, financial developer, and managing director of a food processing company.

The interviewees offered a range of reasons for shifting their work into tourist guiding. The answers included "seeking a change in lifestyle", "utilising linguistic skills" and "exploiting entrepreneurial drive". Above all, the most common response was that the respondents had a common driving force behind their decision to become a tourist guides, namely a "passion for South Africa", "love of nature" and "the urge to travel".

4.3 The employment conditions of South African tourist guides

This section shifts attention to the actual work conditions of tourist guides in terms of nature of contracts, how work is obtained, working hours and benefits, and income.

Table 4.8: Classification of work as tourist guide

Under what category would you classify your current work?	Quantity	Percentage
Permanent	20	33%
Casual/freelance	40	67%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

An important finding is that two thirds of tourist guides operate on a casual or freelance basis and tourist guiding was regarded as permanent work by only one third of the interviewees.

Table 4.9: Irregular Work

How many days do you work on average per month?	Quantity	Percentage
1 to 4	14	24%
4 to 10	11	18%
11 to 14	8	13%
15 to 20	6	10%
21 to 24	9	14%
24 or more	11	18%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.9 shows the irregular nature of much work as tourist guides. It is evident from table 4.9 that over half of guides are working fewer than 14 days each month. Only one third of the sample interviewees are working on a regular basis for 20 days or more each month. A small number of guides are working 24 days or more a month. This strenuous work schedule was explained by one guide from Pretoria:

If you get work you do not say no because you are not sure if there is more coming. I have worked for 31 days in October. - *Tourist guide from Pretoria, Gauteng*

Table 4.10 Seasonality

What is your busiest time of the year?	Quantity	Percentage
Spring	14	23%
Summer	27	44%
Autumn	8	13%
Winter	11	18%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

In terms of the irregularity of tour guiding work, the issue of seasonality is a factor. For most tourist guides, summer and spring are the busiest periods for tourist guiding work, and generally speaking, autumn and winter are quieter periods. These variations can reflect regional differences in the tourist trade and may depend on the qualifications of the tourist guide and whether he or she is able to move between regions and provinces in order to maintain a constant income on an all-year-round basis.

Table 4.11: Frequency of Work

How often do you get work?	Quantity	Percentage
Daily	14	23%
Weekly	8	13%
Monthly	10	17%
Seasonal	14	23%
Annually	2	3%
Weekends	3	4%
Full time	9	14%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

According to table 4.11, almost a quarter of the respondents (23%) obtain work seasonally. A further 23% of the respondents obtain work on a daily basis. Only 14% of the respondents are employed full time. Thirteen per cent of the respondents are employed on a weekly basis and 4% only at weekends. Only a small proportion of the tourist guide community enjoy work on a full-time basis. The findings in table 4.11 underline once again the precarious nature and irregular pattern of work of South African tourist guides.

Table 4.12: Contracting of work

How many companies do you work for at any given moment?	Quantity	Percentage
1	26	43%
2	13	22%
3	8	13%
4	2	3%
4 or more	2	3%
N/A	9	14%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

It is evident from table 4.12 that the majority of tourist guides obtain work from more than one tour company. In total, 43% work only for one company as tourist guides at any given time. The survey reveals that 22% of the respondents work for two companies at any given moment. A further 13% of the respondents are employed by three companies at any given moment. Nine (14%) of the respondents indicated that the question is not applicable to their situation. This is because tourist guiding is considered as a part-time career. These findings indicate that most tourist guiding is undertaken on a casual or freelance basis. This can have positive or negative effects. The benefits of freelancing are explained as follows:

Freelancing for nine companies give me a benefit that I do not need an office. I can book out to do some competitive fishing. Work works on a first come first served basis. I do not hold auctions and accept any tariff offered. – *Tourist guide from Randburg, Gauteng*

On the other hand, the precarious nature of work as a freelance guide was revealed in the detailed interview conducted with one tourist guide. Peter, from Pretoria, stressed that: “The problem with being an independent contractor is that you are on call 24 hours and no job can be refused.” Indeed, Peter described a regular occurrence where his day is planned around his family, and then he receives a phone call from a tour operator at five o’ clock in the morning for him to do a tour, because the tourist guide that were supposed to do the tour called in sick.” Making a living as tourist guide is tough because if I turn down one of these operators it might be months before they contact me again, if at all for freelance work.”

The competition for work among tourist guides places them in a weak position in relation to securing contract work from tour operators. As Peter explained:

These operators do not care about the tourist guides; they have a whole pool of eager tourist guides to choose from, willing to work in whatever circumstances or for whatever remuneration they may receive. That is why if they contact you, even if you’re busy with another tour, you wangle your way in to meet their demands. If not, you do not hear from them again. In quiet months, as I just experienced, I drive shuttle for tour operators and private companies, just to try to stay afloat and not to lose my car.

Table 4.13: Length of contract

Length of contract	Quantity	Percentage
Per day	11	18%
Per trip	28	47%
Per season	1	2%
Per year	2	3%
Full time	14	23%
Other	4	7%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.13 reveals that almost half (47%) of the respondents indicate that the length of their contracts is determined mainly by the length of a tour or trip. Twenty three (23%) of the respondents stated that the period of their contracts is full time; 18 % specified that the length of their contracts is per day. Other tourist guides are engaged on a seasonal basis. In total 83 per cent of the sample indicated that their contracts with tour companies were of a short duration and contract renewal did not occur: the remainder – 17 per cent of interviewees – indicated that a contract renewal had occurred on at least one occasion.

The contractual situation of tourist guides was further explored in the survey interviews. It was revealed that almost half of the respondents (27 out of 60) sign some form of contract before they embark on a trip. The largest share of these contracts is for single trips or for a specific period. It is significant that for more than half of tourist guides the work they undertake does not have form of signed contract to govern that work. Not surprisingly, in those situations where tourist guides work under contract 84 per cent of respondents indicated that they read every contract carefully. The 16 per cent that indicated that they do not read every contract

carefully had various reasons for their attitude to contracts. Some said that it does not matter what it says: “If you do not sign it, you do not work.” Others simply said no, “because there are no contracts”. The contractual void and precarious conditions under which a large number of tourist guides find themselves was explained by one interviewee:

I have a personal story of – without doubt – very unfair treatment by a big German tour operator (the directorship of which has since been removed from him) and which I tried to solve via the CCMA. Only to be told at the hearing that the CCMA cannot represent me as I am not regarded as an employee. I could have taken up the issue with a lawyer, but did not have the means to do so.

I know that I fulfilled my contractual obligations to this particular operator to the T, but I was literally pulled from a whole series of tours with this company based on very spurious grounds. – *Tourist guide from Mpumalanga*

Table 4.14 Access to work

How do/did you get work?	Quantity	Percentage
Adverts in newspapers	2	3%
Through associations	7	12%
Websites (i.e. tourguide.co.za)	4	8%
Word of mouth	34	48%
Other	11	18%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.14 indicates that 48% of all the guides obtained work through word of mouth; 12% through associations; 11% by other means; and 8% through websites. Only 3% of the respondents found employment as tourist guides through adverts in newspapers. Overall, word of mouth is the strongest channel for obtaining employment in tourist guiding in South Africa.

Table 4.15: Marketing of guides

What do you do to promote/market your services?	Quantity	Percentage
Adverts in newspapers	2	3%
Through associations	8	13%
Websites (i.e. tourguide.co.za)	7	12%
Word of mouth	27	44%
Face to face	11	18%
Other	4	8%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.15 provides information on how tourist guides market their services as tourist guides. It is evident that the most important channel for marketing is once again by word of mouth. In addition, many of the respondents also try to promote themselves through face-to-face contact (18%) or through membership of tourist guide associations (13%). Finally, only 8% of the respondents use other means to promote themselves such as use of newspaper advertising.

Table 4.16: Remuneration of tourist guides

Income per annum (excluding tips)	Quantity	Percentage
R36 000–R 40 000	24	42%
R40 000–R100 000	18	30%
R100 000–R140 000	8	13%
R140 000–R200 000	2	3%
R200 000–R240 000	0	0%
R240 000–or more	7	12%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.16 shows the patterns of income that were received by the 60 interviewed tourist guides. It is evident that a wide range of remuneration was recorded across the spectrum from part-time guides to those in full-time work. Overall, the range of annual incomes is from R36 000 to a maximum of R240 000. It is significant that almost three quarters of guides earn an annual return of less than R100 000 from the activity of tourist guiding. A small segment, 12% of interviewees, earns R240 000 or more per annum. In interviews it was observed by some guides that a stable income was preferred to a high income:

I would easily drop my price if there is a long-term perspective to the work. Tariffs vary from R300 to R440 for a half day, R400 to R640 for a full day and R740 for sleeping out. We are not paid for preparation time and admin time after a long tour to do paperwork.
– *Tourist Guide from Lynwood Gauteng.*

By contrast, other guides pointed to the often poorly remunerated nature of regular work as compared to freelance work:

I was offered a permanent position as tourist guide at one of the big companies, but I had to turn it down. They expect me to be satisfied with R7 000 a month. Please that is an insult. Sure, it is a guaranteed income, but that is how much I make as freelance guide for a week's tour. – Peter

Table 4.17: Average working hours

As a guide, what are your average working hours per day?	Quantity	Percentage
1–4 hours	0	0%
4–8 hours	9	14%
8–12 hours	27	44%
12 or more	24	40%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

As is shown on table 4.17, the income earned from tourist guiding is often based on long working hours during the period of contracted work. It is evident that over 80 per cent of tourist guides work longer than the legally prescribed 8 hours per day and 40 per cent guides work more than 12 hours a day, often including weekends.

We normally work on weekends. This is also family time. There is no benefit or acknowledgement of time spent. If the plane lands at 22:00 on Saturday evening, that is it. – *Tourist Guide from Johannesburg Gauteng*

On long tours I accompany the clients from 07:00 till 21:00, at which point I excuse myself head to the room for a bath, wash clothing and prepare for the next day. I get into bed at 23:00 and rise again at 06:00. – *Tourist Guide from Mbombela, Mpumalanga*

Table 4.18 Time spent on the road

How many hours per day do you spend on the road?	Quantity	Percentage
1–4 hours	13	22%
4–8 hours	24	42%
8–12 hours	13	22%
More than 12	9	14%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.18 shows that 78 per cent of tourist guides spend at least 4 hours per day driving. In the case of 36 per cent of tourist guides, 8 hours or more are spent on the road on a daily basis.

Table 4.19 Average travel per year

How many kilometres do you cover per annum?	Quantity	Percentage
40 000 (164pd)–60 000 (198pd)	34	48%
60 000–70 000 (231pd)	10	17%
70 000–80 000 (264pd)	4	7%
80 000–90 000 (298pd)	2	3%
90 000–100 000 (331pd)	2	3%
100 000–110 000 (364pd)	0	0%
110 000–120 000 (397pd)	2	3%
120 000–130 000 (430pd)	1	2%
130 000 or more	4	7%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

As is shown on table 4.19, tourist guides travel extensively on an annual basis. It is shown that half of the respondents (48%) indicated that they cover between 40 000 and 60 000 kilometres per annum; 17% cover between 60 000 and 70 000 per annum and 7% between 70 000 and 80 000. About 14% of the respondents travelled more than 90 000 per annum.

Excerpt: 5-day tour Itinerary

Day 1

Meet guests on arrival at OR Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg (or any destination of their choice in either Johannesburg or Pretoria). It is important to note that times of arrivals and departure on trips vary from group to group. (2 to 3 hours on duty)

Take a plus/minus three hours' drive to Dullstroom. At Dullstroom, visit the Bird of Prey Rehabilitation Centre and do lunch at one of the restaurants in town. (Another 2 to 3 hours in Dullstroom)

After that head in the direction of Pilgrims Rest for the overnight destination. (Between 1 and 2 hours)

After guest have settled in you meet them for drinks and dinner (2 to 3) hours.

After supper you excuse yourself to do the day's admin and prepare for the following day (1 hour)

(14 hours day 1)

Day 2

After an early start (04:00) in order to get everything ready and check the vehicle inside and out, meet the guest at 07:00 for breakfast

We depart around 08:00 to the Blyde River Canyon, to visit The Three Rondawels, the Potholes and God's Window. After a morning of sightseeing, lunch at Pilgrims Rest the guests get an opportunity to explore the town. Before travelling to our overnight accommodation guests will experience a gold digging and panning demonstration

Arrive at the destination at around 18:00. While the guests refresh themselves

before supper, I have some time to do the day's administration. Check emails and prepare for the following day

Dinner at 19:00. Dinner normally finishes early since it is an early start the following day or at least I excuse myself at around 21:00 (16 hour day)

Day 3

My alarm goes off at 04:00. Go through the morning rituals, double check that admin and permits are ready, vehicle is clean and in operation. 04:00 Give guests a wake-up call and finish preparations

Breakfast at 4:44

Depart at 06:30

A few stops on the way, depending on the demographics of the group or the type of tour that they've selected

Lunch at Kruger National Park (depending on the group once again; and the type of package they choose will determine the gate through which we enter

After lunch, a scenic drive of leisurely game viewing on route to our rest camp

Arrive at the rest camp at around 17:00 (depending on the season), where the group will get an opportunity to settle in before we go on a sundowner drive

Dinner is normally served at around 20:00

The excitement of being in the bush and all the wild animals normally makes the guests want to stay up later and share this experience, with their newfound friend, their tourist guide

If all goes well, I can manage to escape to bed at around 22:00 (18 hour day)

Day 4

Meet the group at 04:00 for coffee and rusks (depending on the season again) before we head out for an early morning game drive

Return to the camp at around 10:30- 11:00 to enjoy a scrumptious brunch

After the brunch (depending on the season again) a siesta of an hour or two is taken by everyone, where the guest will relax in the swimming pool or take a nap or just wait for the hottest part of the day to subside

Between 14:00 and 15:00 armed with drinks and snacks, another game drive will be done

We'll be back at the camp at around 18:00

This is our final evening together, so it will be an extended dinner with farewell speeches. Normally this might carry on until late, but I'll excuse myself at around 24:00 pm. (17 hour day)

Day 5

Depending on the groups departure (if they need to catch a flight), we will depart at around 08:30. Once again, depending on circumstances an early game drive before departure might be a possibility

Lunch stop Dullstroom.

Drop them at either Pretoria or Jo'burg

Sometimes, I get a back-to-back tour, so after dropping off a group, I immediately pick up the next group to do the same programme or a different one. The lengths of the tours also vary, from a one day to a 10-day tour.

Source: In-depth interview with Peter, the tourist guide from Pretoria

An insight into the typical schedule of a tourist guide and the long hours of work can be obtained from a five-day diary that was provided by one tourist guide, Peter, from Pretoria. The information in table 4.19 relates to a real itinerary. It highlights the extraordinary long hours that tourist guides must undertake. It is clear that in all five days of the tour Peter works at least 12 hours per day and in one day as much as 18 hours (see excerpt above).

Table 4.20: Overtime

Are you paid overtime?	Quantity	Percentage
Yes	1	2%
No	46	93%
Sometimes	3	4%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.20 reveals that 93% of the respondents do not receive remuneration for working overtime. Only 4% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes receive remuneration for working overtime, and 2% indicated that they are paid overtime. Where overtime is paid, it is mainly those guides that are employed full time by a tour operator.

Table 4.21: Cancellation of tour

Do you require a cancellation fee from operators should a tour for which you are employed be cancelled?	Quantity	Percentage
Yes	9	15%
No	51	85%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Another aspect of the precarious work environment of tourist guides is revealed on table 4.21. This relates to payment or non-payment in the case of the cancellation of a tour. According to table 4.21, a total 85 % of the respondents do not receive a cancellation fee from tour operators when a trip is called off. Only 15% indicated that they do receive some sort of compensation from the tour operators when a trip is cancelled. However, the type of compensation and the amount of days prior to a trip on which compensation may be received vary and are not consistent.

Although tourist guides are not compensated in the event of cancellation by the tour operator, they are in a difficult situation if they themselves are unavailable for some reason to undertake a tour that has been pre-booked. For this reason, the majority of tourist guides have a 'buddy system' in place whereby an alternative guide takes the tour if the contracted or booked guide cannot fulfil that obligation. The survey showed 52% of the respondents have a back-up or buddy system in place in case of an emergency or illness in order to preserve their reputation with tour operators.

Table 4.22: Membership of a medical scheme

Do you belong to a medical scheme? If yes, please specify.	Quantity	Percentage
Yes	46	77%
No	14	23%
Cost to company	0	0%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.22 shows that 77% of the respondents belong to a medical scheme or have some sort of medical insurance. Nevertheless, medical aid is not a benefit that is provided by tour operators to tourist guides, except in a minority of cases of full-time work. For those tourist guides not covered by medical aid schemes, the major reason given was that such coverage was too expensive.

Table 4.23: Injury

Have you ever been injured while fulfilling guiding services?	Quantity	Percentage
Yes	13	22%
No	47	78%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

The issue of medical aid coverage is important in the context of potential injury at work as tourist guides. Table 4.23 shows that nearly one quarter of tourist guides have experienced a work injury while tour guiding.

Table 4.24: Paid Leave

How much paid leave do you receive annually?	Quantity	Percentage
4 days	0	0%
10 days	1	2%
14 day	7	12%
30 days	2	3%
Any other number	2	3%
Not applicable	48	80%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

In light of the irregular nature of tourist guide work, it is not surprising that few tourist guides obtain paid leave as part of their employment package. In total only 17 per cent of the sample of interviewees received any period of paid leave.

Table 4.25: Trip allowance

Is a trip allowance viewed as part of your salary?	Quantity	Percentage
Yes	6	10%
No	14	24%
Sometimes	4	7%
N/A	34	48%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.25 shows that 48% of the respondents indicated that a trip allowance is not applicable to their work situation and does not influence their salary. One quarter or 24% of the respondents stated that trip allowance is not considered part of their salary, while 10% said yes and 7% said sometimes.

Overall, a picture emerges that most South African tourist guides are engaged in precarious or irregular work which is contracted for (if contracted at all) on a short-time basis. It is evident that the tourist guide must undertake tours that involve often long periods of driving and long hours in terms of the working day. Levels of remuneration for the majority of tourist guides are relatively low as compared to other work opportunities. Importantly, for most guides there are no additional work benefits that are beyond the income that is received.

4.4. Tourist guide perceptions of their work conditions

The final section of the research sought to obtain a picture of tourist guide perceptions of their work conditions. The material presented in this section discusses responses from the 60 interviewees and includes rich insights from Peter, the interviewee who provided experiential insight into the lived-world of tourist guides. The overall findings below confirm that tourist

guides are unhappy with their present work conditions, a factor that explains the short duration of the working career of the majority of South African tourist guides.

Table 4.26: Assessment of working hours

Working hours are	Quantity	Percentage
1 – Very poor	6	10%
2 – Below average	30	40%
3 – Average	18	30%
4 – Good	4	8%
5 – Excellent	1	2%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.26 shows that half of the respondents are not satisfied with the working hours expected of them; 40% rated the hours they have to work as below average; and 10% said that they were very poor. A group of 30% respondents indicated that working hours were average. By contrast only 10 per cent were satisfied in terms of rating their working hours as good and only 2% are of the opinion that the working hours are excellent. The problem of difficult working hours was flagged by one interviewee:

I have watched so many of the best guides in South Africa walk away from their jobs because of the hours and remuneration. – *Tourist guide from Pretoria Gauteng*

Table 4.27: Assessment of remuneration

Compensation and remuneration is	Quantity	Percentage
1 – Very poor	29	48%
2 – Below average	20	33%
3 – Average	8	13%
4 – Good	3	4%
5 – Excellent	0	0%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

It is evident from table 4.37 that the majority of the respondents (81%) are not pleased with the compensation and remuneration they receive in the tourism industry. A total of 48% rated it very poor; while 33% said it was below average. Only 4% of the sample indicated that they believed that the compensation and remuneration they receive is good.

Table 4.28: Assessment of benefits: Medical aid

Provision for medical aid is	Quantity	Percentage
1 – Very poor	46	77%
2 – Below average	4	7%
3 – Average	8	13%
4 – Good	2	3%
5 – Excellent	0	0%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.28 emphasises one of the issues that need to be addressed in the tourist guide sector of the tourism industry. A large number (84%) of guides are unhappy about the lack of provision for medical aid; 77% indicated that the provision of medical aid is very poor; and 7% rated it below average. On the positive side, 13% indicated that the provision of medical aid is average, while 3 % indicated the provision is good.

Table 4.29: Assessment of Opportunities

Opportunities for freelancing are	Quantity	Percentage
1 – Very poor	10	17%
2 – Below average	24	42%
3 – Average	19	32%
4 – Good	4	7%
5 – Excellent	2	3%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.29 shows that most respondents consider that there are only limited opportunities for freelance tourist guides. A total of 59% of the respondents indicated that the opportunities for freelance tourist guides are few.

Table 4.30: Assessment of availability of permanent work

Availability of permanent work is	Quantity	Percentage
1 – Very poor	21	34%
2 – Below average	16	27%
3 – Average	16	27%
4 – Good	7	11%
5 – Excellent	0	0%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.30 reveals the negative perception of respondents of finding permanent work as tourist guides. For example, 34% perceive the availability of permanent work in this industry as very poor, while 27% said their chances are below average.

Table 4.31: Perception of overtime benefits

Willingness of employers to pay overtime is	Quantity	Percentage
1 – Very poor	46	77%
2 – Below average	6	10%
3 – Average	4	7%
4 – Good	3	4%
5 – Excellent	1	2%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Another contentious issue for tourist guides is that of overtime. Table 4.31 shows that in the opinion of tourist guides, 87% of the respondents are sceptical about the willingness of employers to pay overtime. In total 77% believe the chances are very poor.

Table 4.32: Perception of tour operators

Attitude of tour operators towards guides is	Quantity	Percentage
1 – Very poor	7	12%
2 – Below average	29	48%
3 – Average	17	28%
4 – Good	4	8%
5 – Excellent	2	4%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.32 reveals that 60% of the respondents believe tour operators' attitudes towards tourist guides are negative. Only 12% of the respondents indicated that the attitude of tour operators towards tourist guides is good or excellent.

Table 4.33: Assessment of cancellation payments

Willingness of tour operators to pay for cancellations is	Quantity	Percentage
1 – very poor	24	42%
2 – Below average	17	28%
3 – Average	17	28%
4 – Good	1	2%
5 –Excellent	0	0%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Table 4.33 reinforces the findings of table 4.32. A total of 70% of the respondents rated the tour operator on the negative side with regards to willingness to pay cancellation fees; 42% of the respondents rated the operators' willingness to pay cancellation fees as very poor; and 28% view the situation as below average.

Table 4.34: Assessment of permanent contracts

Willingness of tour operators to offer permanent contracts is	Quantity	Percentage
1 – very poor	31	42%
2 – Below average	8	13%
3 – Average	18	30%
4 – Good	2	3%
5 – Excellent	1	2%
Total	60	100%

Source: Survey

Finally, table 4.34 shows tourist guide perceptions were negative in respect of prospects for permanent work. In total 55 per cent of respondents were not positive on this particular issue. Overall, the above analysis discloses in quantitative terms the negative views which are held by tourist guides towards their existing conditions of work. The experience of being a tourist guide in terms of frustrations with work conditions is best expressed, however, through the words of Peter, the case interviewee of a tourist guide. Peter’s difficulties concerning the precarious nature of his tourist guide income are manifest:

The last couple of months since October have been difficult. Although the Soccer World Cup have been kind to the industry and especially the tourist guides, the goose that laid the golden eggs have flown and it’s back to reality. The schools opened two weeks ago and I had to go and beg, for postponement on my first instalment for my son’s school fees.

In addition, the possibility that his poor income from tour guiding might force him out of his preferred career is also apparent:

I love travel and people, but I do not know how long I will be able to try to survive in this industry. Do you know what it feels like, when you do not even have enough money to buy dog food? Or to be dependent on your wife and the in-laws for a roof over your head and something to eat because your salary is just so inconsistent?

Ultimately the multiple contradictions of life as a South African tourist guide are captured in this telling comment:

Frustration vs satisfaction. It is a way of being. On the one hand, you struggle to land a trip earn enough money and keep your second wife (soon to be ex) happy. Yet to a large extent you have managed to escape the rat race, with bags full of experiences at the end of the day.

4.5. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to provide an analysis of the characteristics of tourist guides and of their employment conditions. The analysis was based upon a total of 60 interviews with tourist guides in Gauteng and Mpumalanga and supplemented by material from a detailed case study of the working life of one Pretoria tourist guide. The findings highlight the precarious nature of work in the tourist guide industry of South Africa. Working hours and contractual arrangements in many cases exist in a questionable relationship with the conditions as set down in the BCEA. The difficult working conditions endured by tourist guides, combined with irregular and often poor remuneration, means that tour guiding is not a long-term career for many people. It is significant that that proportion of young guides in the sample was small. The majority of South African tourist guides are aged over 50 and many are engaged in guiding as a post retirement career. The result is that most tourist guides have been working as guides for five years or fewer. In terms of improving the quality of service in tour guiding the findings of this investigation point to a number of issues that the industry will have to address. Key challenges raised in these findings are explored in the concluding chapter of this study.

Chapter 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This research project represents a modest contribution to the limited literature relating to employment conditions and work in tourism. It was argued that the study related to current debates which are reflected in the 2011 National Tourism Sector Strategy concerning the importance of creating decent jobs and of decent work in the South African tourism economy. The specific focus of attention was tour guides. The survey of international literature showed that some attention has been given to tour guides in the existing body of writings. Nevertheless, existing work on tour guides (with one exception) has overlooked the question of employment and work conditions in tour guiding. These issues provided the context for this analysis of tour guiding in South Africa.

The specific aim of this research dissertation was to examine employment conditions and the perceptions held by tourist guides on identified employment issues against the backdrop of labour laws of South Africa. It was made clear that the Constitution of South Africa (RSA 1996 Chapter 2, Section 23) stipulates that every person has the right to 'fair labour practices', which include a reasonable job with certain criteria that need to be met, with realistic working hours and a decent remuneration at the end of the working week, month or contract. Further, the labour law (RSA 1996 Chapter 2 Section 23(1) of Act 108 of 1996 (as amended)) states that employees, even contract workers, must be employed with a contract (either as an independent contractor or with a fixed-term contract). Indeed, after three consecutive fixed-term contracts have been received from the same employer, the job is considered a full-time one and the status of the worker should change to that of a permanent employee.

The empirical research was conducted through structured interviews with tour guides and tour operators in order to determine their employment conditions and their perceptions of labour practices in tourism. The research analysed issues relating to job security, income and benefits as they apply to tourist guides in South Africa.

5.2 Key findings

The data concerning tourist guides in South Africa is not well developed by national government, so only estimates can be provided of the numbers and geographical operations of tour guides in South Africa. It was shown that there seems to be a lack of recorded documentary information on the history of tourist guides in South Africa, and information on training and education for the sector after 1994. This pointed to the imperative for field research with tour guides and tour operator enterprises. With the understanding that little to no material has been published with regards to employment in the tourism industry and the limited historical background obtained on tourist guides, the necessary step that followed was to obtain an overview of the tourism conditions in South Africa with regards to the employer the employee and the various labours laws, most importantly, the Basic Conditions Employment Act (BCEA of [1996] (2002)). It was argued that the BCEA does not apply to independent contractors. This poses a problem, since in terms of this provision, those guides who regard themselves as independent contractors are excluded from the protection of the act.

The research disclosed a number of aspects of tourist guides and of the precarious working conditions of tour guides in South Africa. Most tourist guides earn less than R100 000 per annum, but they also work 8 to 12 hours per day or more than 12. The working career of tourist guides seems to be on average five years, before they leave the industry and pursue a different career. Tourist guiding in South Africa is a male-dominated profession with the majority of the respondents being older than 46. There is clearly an undersupply of young entry-level tourist guides to the industry, and also a shortage of veteran guides to help set and maintain a certain standard. It is clear that most tourist guides in South Africa are overworked and underpaid. More than two thirds of the tourist guides do not receive remuneration for working overtime.

Importantly, in chapter 4, it is revealed that 70% of the respondents work as freelance guides, who fall under the category of independent contractors, thus forfeiting the protection of the BCEA. The majority of the respondents also indicated that consecutive contract renewal by the same companies does not apply to them; in fact, they often work without a contract. It was

evident that most tour operators contract tour guides on a per-trip basis rather than offer secure employment to tour guides. Some large operators even confess that tourist guides work for the company without a contract.

With regards to working hours and remuneration, it is evident that tourist guides can be considered overworked and underpaid compared with legal requirements. In addition, the remuneration structure is inconsistent and there are no formulae or regulations to determine remuneration for services rendered. Furthermore, with regards to paying overtime for services rendered, tour operators are reluctant to pay, regardless of whether the employee is permanent or freelancing. This insight aids the dissertation in the sense that not only the employee's opinion and perspective are examined but also the employer's. Overall, the research findings highlight the unprotected and precarious work environment of the majority of South African tour guides. The findings from interviews with tour guides reinforce this picture of the uncertain nature of work in South African tour guiding. The majority of tourist guides who participated in the survey rate their employers on certain aspects, for example, willingness of the tour operators to offer permanent contracts, the attitude of tour operators towards tourist guides, working hours and remuneration. On most of the questions that were asked, the tourist guides rated the tour operators as below average or very poor.

According to Basson (2009:69), the Minister of Labour in South Africa has the power to replace or exclude any of the minimum standards provided for in the BCEA in respect of any category of employees or any categories of employers (Section 50 of the BCEA). Basson (2009:69) explains that until 2009 the minister had made only one determination in terms of Section 50, that is, in the Code of Good Practice (GNR 293 of 28 February 2003). According to this determination, employees in the hotel trade are paid their ordinary daily wages for work on Sundays. Tourist guides are also affected by this code, because, by definition in the Tourism Act, tourist guides fall under the hotel trade. Although the GNR 293 might be considered insignificant, the high staff turnover and the dearth of tourist guides maturing along with the industry may indicate problems with conditions of employment and may constitute hurdles in the further expansion

of this economic sector. Amendments and changes need to be made with regard to the employment situation and the legislation protecting tourist guides.

The BCEA aims to advance economic development and social justice by enforcing and regulating the right to fair labour practices. In general the BCEA has established the minimum terms and conditions of employment.

The BCEA, which was introduced in 1997, aims to advance economic development and social justice by enforcing and regulating the right to fair labour practices. However, certain people or positions are exempted from this act and its legal protection, for example independent contractors who are not protected by the law. This research has shown that the majority of tourist guides working conditions are not in line with the requirements set by the BCEA concerning working hours, compensations and leave. Nevertheless, although they are aware of certain perceived injustices in the industry, due to the nature of the tourism industry, a majority of tourists guides act as independent contractors (sometimes of their own volition, but also because some tour operators refuse to appoint guides in full-time or fixed-term contracts), to sustain themselves, thus missing out on the privileges and protection provided by the BCEA.

5.3 Recommendations

The research findings of this investigation point to a number of policy recommendations which if taken together, might assist in improving the work conditions of tourist guides and thereby contribute towards creating decent work in this section of the South African tourism industry. By way of conclusion, these recommendations are offered:

- The amendment by the minister of labour with regards to overtime (GNR 293 of 28 February 2003) should be revised.
- A minimum wage or rate system for tourist guides should be created.
- Employers should make medical aid benefits available to tourist guides.
- Legislation should be revised to regulate length of periods tourist guides are expected to be on the road (to change the current situation where some spend more than 12 hours per day travelling).

- An environment should be promoted for tourist guides in which long-term employment and service are desired and encouraged. This may include an investigation into the use of independent and fixed-term contracts, and enforcement of a dispensation where guides receive at least some contractual protection.
- Contracts offered by tour operators to tourist guides should be evaluated and monitored.
- Tour operators in the South African tourism industry should be watched for fair labour practices
- Knowledge of fair labour practice should be actively promoted among tourist guide employers and employees.
- Tour guide associations of the various provinces should get together and consider the following recommendation that the tourism industry should be unionised so that employees receive the same rights and protection against unfair labour disputes that apply in other industries.
- Finally, the research suggests there is a need to create a platform on which tourist guides can be informed and guided, concerning their legal rights and claims as well as to standardise and professionalise tourist guiding as a career in South Africa.

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Annexure A

Questionnaire for guides

The information provided in this questionnaire will be kept confidential and your identity will not be revealed. The questionnaire is part of my research project at Wits University; I aim to determine the situation of tour guides and to what extent the labour law makes provisions for your requirements.

Please indicate with an X the option applicable to you / your choice. Some questions ask your opinion. Please provide it in short and clear sentences.

Your participation in completing the questionnaire is much appreciated.

Kind regards
Andries de Beer

Section A: Personal

Please indicate in the right hand block the category applicable to you

1. Age

18-25	
26-35	
36-45	
46-55	
65 +	

2. Sex

Male	
Female	

3. Income per annum (excluding tips)

R36 000 - R 50 000	
R50 000 - R100 000	
R100 000 - R150 000	
R150 000 - R200 000	
R200 000 - R250 000	
R250 000 – or more	

4. Marital Status

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Living together	

5. Please complete in the right hand block province of residence

Province	
Gauteng	
Limpopo	
Mpumalanga	
KZN	
North-West	
Free-state	
Northern-Cape	
Western-Cape	
Eastern- Cape	

6. Job Category

Freelance guide	
Permanent guide	

6.1

Site guide	
Provincial guide	
National guide	
Nature guide	
Cultural guide	
Adventure guide	

7. What is your highest school qualification?

Grade 9	
Grade 10	
Grade 11	
Matric	

8. What is your highest post-school qualification?

Guiding Certificate	
Diploma	
Degree	
Honours	
Masters	
PhD	

9. On which NQF level is your qualification?

NQF1	
NQF2	
NQF3	
NQF4	
NQF5	
NQF6	
NQF7	
NQF8	

Section B – History as guide

- 1 Please complete in the right hand block the provinces where you are registered as a guide**

Province	
Gauteng	
Limpopo	
Mpumalanga	
KZN	
North-West	
Free-state	
Northern-Cape	
Western-Cape	
Eastern-Cape	

- 2 Size of Family (Including children living with you)**

0	
1	
2	
3	
4 or more	

- 3 How long have you been guiding?**

Less than a year	
1-5 years	
5-10 year	
10 – 15 years	
15 years or more	

4 What did you do before you became a guide? – Please explain.

5 What influenced you to become a guide? – Please explain.

6 How many days per month are you not guiding?

1 to 5	
6 to 10	
11 to 15	
15 to 20	

7 Which languages do you speak?

IsiZulu	
IsiXhosa	
Afrikaans	
Sepedi	
English	
Setswana	
Sesotho	
Xitsonga	
Swati	
Venda	
Ndebele	
German	
French	
Spanish	
Other	

8 What do you do during the off-season? Explain briefly

SECTION C: WORK CONDITIONS

1. How do/did you get work?

Adverts in newspapers	
Through associations	
Websites (i.e. tourguide.co.za)	
Word of mouth	
Other	

Please specify other :

2. What do you do to promote/market your services?

Adverts in newspapers	
Through associations	
Websites (i.e. tourguide.co.za)	
Word of mouth	
Face to face	
Other	

Please _____ specify _____ other

3. How many companies do you work for at any given moment?

1	
2	
3	
4	
4 or more	

4. How often do you get work?

Daily	
Weekly	
Monthly	
Seasonal	
Annually	
Weekends	
Full time	

5. Length of contracts?

Per day	
Per trip	
Per season	
Per year	
Full time	
Other	

Please specify other

6. Under what category would you classify your current work?

Permanent	
Seasonal	
Casual/freelance	

7. How many days do you work on average per month?

1-5	
5-10	
10-15	
15-20	
20-25	
25 or more	

8. What is your busiest time of the year?

Spring	
Summer	
Autumn	
Winter	

9. As a guide, what are your average working hours per day?

1-4	
4-8	
8-12	
12 or more	

10. How many hours per day do you spend on the road?

1-4 hours	
4-8 hours	
8-12 hours	
More than 12	

11. How many kilometres do you cover per annum?

50 000(165pd) – 60 000(198pd)	
60 000 - 70 000 (231pd)	
70 000 - 80 000 (264pd)	
80 000 - 90 000 (298pd)	
90 000 - 100 000 (331pd)	
100 000 - 110 000 (364pd)	
110 000 - 120 000 (397pd)	
120 000 - 130 000 (430pd)	
130 000 or more	

12. Do you get paid overtime?

Yes	
No	
Sometimes	

13. Do you require a cancellation fee from operators should a tour for which you are employed be cancelled?

Yes	
No	

14. If yes state it below

____ Day(s) prior to the trip ____% of rate forthcoming
 ____ Day(s) prior to the trip ____% of rate forthcoming
 ____ Day(s) prior to the trip ____% of rate forthcoming
 ____ Day(s) prior to the trip ____% of rate forthcoming

15. What type of benefits does your employer offer?

Medical	
Paid leave	
Sick leave	
Pension	
Other	
N/A	

Please specify other

16. Do you belong to a medical scheme? If yes please specify.

Yes	
No	
Cost to company	

At own expense _____

16.1 If not, why not...

Too expensive	
Got savings plan	
Uncertain	
Not having a fixed income	
Other	

17. Have you ever been injured while fulfilling guiding services?

Yes	
No	

17.1 If yes, please state who paid your medical expenses _____

17.2 If the operator paid, to your knowledge did the operator claim from the "Workmen's Compensation Fund"?

Yes	
No	

18. How much paid leave do you receive annually?

5 days	
10 days	
15 day	
30 days	
Any other number	
Not Applicable	

19. How would you rate the type accommodation offered to guides in general?

Poor	
Average	
Good	
Excellent	
N/A	

20. Is a trip allowance viewed as part of your salary?

Yes	
No	
Sometimes	
N/A	

21. Do you receive any benefits from your employer for seasonal or casual work? If yes please specify.

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. Do you have a back up or buddy system in case of emergency or illness?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If yes, give a brief description please:

23 Do you sign contracts for every single trip or a general contract for a specific period of time?

CONTRACTS	Yes	No	N/A
Single trip	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General contract	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specific period of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain

24 Do you read every contract carefully?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If no, why not?

25 Do they pay some type of a retainer?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

25.1 If Yes, what is the approximate amount per month?

R1000 – R2500	
R2501 – R3500	
R3501 – R4500	
R4501 +	

26 How many times have your contract been renewed consecutively at the same company?

1	
2	
3	
3 or more	
Never	
N/A	

Section D

Please give your opinion on the following issues by marking with an X. Use the following scale:

- 5 is excellent
- 4 is good
- 3 is average
- 2 is below average
- 1 is very poor

1 Working hours are

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2 Compensation and remuneration is

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3 Provision for Medical Aid is

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4 Opportunities for freelancing are

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5 Availability of permanent work is

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6 Willingness of employers to pay overtime is

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

7 Attitude of tour operators towards guides is

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

8 Willingness of tour operators to payment of cancellation is

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

9 Willingness of tour operators to offer permanent contracts is

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. Do you have any recommendation in general regarding the tourism industry?

Annexure B

Structured Interview with Tour Operators

The information provided in this questionnaire will be kept confidential and you and your company's identity will not be revealed. The questionnaire is part of my research project at Wits University; I aim to determine the situation of tour guides and to what extent the labour law makes provisions for their requirements.

1. Do you employ guides?

Yes	
No	

2. How many permanent in 2009/10?

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

3. How many freelancers on a day to day basis in 2009/10 (average)

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

- 3.1 Are they contracted as

Independent contractors	
Fixed term contractors	

- 3.2 In case of a fixed term contract, what is the average period?

4. What do you consider to determine remuneration?

Qualification	
Experience	
Both	
Other	

If other please explain.....

4.1 Is there a distinction between remuneration for national & provincial guides?

Yes	
No	

If yes, which are remunerated better?

National	
Provincial	

4.2 Please explain the reason for the distinction

.....

4.3 Average annual pay for national and provincial guide with different years of experience?
(Permanent guides)

National Guide with:	
1-2 years experience	
3-5 years experience	

Provincial Guide with:	
1-2 years experience	
3-5 years experience	

4.4 Are contracted staff paid according to a different format formulated

Yes	
No	

If Yes select below

National Guide with:	
1-2 years experience	
3-5 years experience	

Provincial Guide with:	
1-2 years experience	
3-5 years experience	

5. Do you distinguish remuneration offered between different services for example transfers, half day-tours?

Yes	
No	

5.1 How do you determine remuneration for different services rendered.

.....

6. Annual income on average (if employed for a full year on freelance basis)(excluding tips).

R36 000 - R50 000	
R50 000 - R100 000	
R100 000 - R150 000	
R150 000 - R200 000	
R200 000 - R250 000	
R250 000 – or more	

7. Possible annual income for permanent guides (excluding tips)

R36 000 - R50 000	
R50 000 - R100 000	
R100 000 - R150 000	
R150 000 - R200 000	
R200 000 - R250 000	
R250 000 – or more	

8. Do you pay over time for

Permanent Guides	Yes	No
Freelance Guides	Yes	No

9. Do you pay cancellation fees to Freelance guides?

Yes
No

10. Do permanent guides receive any of the following benefits?

Medical	Yes	No
Pension	Yes	No
Paid sick leave	Yes	No

11. Average working hours per day for freelance guides?

1 - 4 hours	
4 - 8 hours	
8 - 12 hours	
More than 12 hours	

12. Average working hours per day for Permanent guides?

1 - 4 hours	
4 - 8 hours	
8 - 12 hours	
More than 12 hours	

13. How many hours per day does a freelance guide spend on the road?

1 - 4 hours	
4 - 8 hours	
8 - 12 hours	
More than 12 hours	

14. How many hours per day does a permanent guide spend on the road?

1 - 4 hours	
4 - 8 hours	
8 - 12 hours	
More than 12 hours	

15. Do the permanent guides receive paid leave annually?

Yes	
No	

16. If yes how much paid leave do they receive annually?

5 days	
10 days	
15 days	
Any other number	
None	

17. Please rate the type of accommodation provided for guides on trip

Poor	
Average	
Good	
Excellent	
N/A	

Give an example.....

18. Does your company consider trip allowance as part of the salary or remuneration that guides receive?

Yes	
No	

19. How often are contracts renewed for a guide and for which periods?

Fixed term	
Independent	

20. Tourist guides working either part time or full time for your company includes the following nationalities:

South Africans	
Zimbabweans	
Namibians	
Spanish	
Germans	
Kenyans	
Others	

Others.....

21. Which nationality forms the majority the majority of the tourist guides

.....

22. Any other comment/information about the employment of tourist guides, their remuneration and or benefits?

.....