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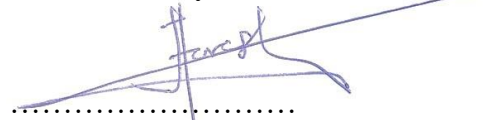
Chairperson
Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority
No-80, Galle Rd,
Colombo
00300

Dear Madam,

STANDARDIZATION OF 'NATIONAL TOURIST GUIDE LECTURER' CANDIDATES
SELECTING CRITERIA, TRAINING COURSE & LICENSING PROCEDURES IN
SRI LANKA

1. I have attached herewith a constructive individual report prepared by myself with reference to the above topic and
2. Indeed, this was prepared by me in last year and not forwarded due to political instability in the country.
3. This is forwarded for your kind consideration and necessary action please.

Yours sincerely,



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Capt. Harsha Govinda Koralearachchi BSc (Def) PG Dip Archaeology
Theoretical Instructor Pilot CAA SL Aero & Helicopter Airline Transport Pilot License
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National Tourist Guide Lecturer of Sri Lanka

Copy to

1. His Excellency the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
2. Honorable Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
3. Honorable Minister, Aviation and Tourism of Sri Lanka
4. Director of Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

STANDARDIZATION OF ‘NATIONAL TOURIST GUIDE LECTURER’ CANDIDATES
SELECTING CRITERIA, TRAINING COURSE & LICENSING PROCEDURES OF SIR
LANKA

(An independent constructive criticism report & proposal prepared by National Tourist Guide
Lecturer Capt. Harsha Govinda Koralearachchi)

01. Introduction

This constructive report was prepared by a qualified National Tourist Guide Lecturer in Sri Lanka (NTGL), Capt. Harsha Govinda Koralearachchi qualified with BSc (Def), PG Dip in Archaeology, qualified theoretical knowledge instructor Airline Transport Pilot Licensing of Aero Plane & Helicopter and commercial pilot of Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka, Approved theoretical knowledge pilot instructor of European Aviation Safety Agency, Founder of Ravana Aviation Academy, Master Degree Researcher to be established Aviation Archaeology in Sri Lanka (*Registered at Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology in University of Kalaniya*).

This report is based on an external observation of a qualified NTGL from course No- 052, batch in year 2019 of Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM) with good intention and good faith for respective authorities involved and for the betterment of the tourism industry in Sri Lanka.

Furthermore, there is no intention of harming or blaming to anyone.

“National Tourist Guide Lecturers” is the beacon of professionalism in the industry, an Ambassador who promotes National heritage, and an indirect protector of National interests, and security of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

What I identified was that “National Tourist Guide Lecturers” producing mechanism of Sri Lanka must be streamlined under following areas:

- *Selecting Criteria*
- *Training Criteria & Examinations procedures*
- *Licenses issuing criteria & renewal procedures*

I have prepared this report based on experience and observations that I have come across during the NTGL training course conducted by SLITHM and subsequently following the procedures adopted at NTGL licensing section of Sri Lanka Tourist Development Authority (SLTDA).

02. National Requirement to be a trained professional of 'NTGL' of Sri Lanka

To cater the growing demand and the uprising requirement in the tourism industry in Sri Lanka, the multi-disciplinary professionals' active involvement as NTGL's to the tourism industry highly is required for the country at this juncture. The respective training institutes and the licensing authority have to follow and adapt the world's recognized standard productive and practicable procedures, to ensure efficient output to the nation.

Here is the world standard licensing authority conducting procedures for issuing respective license as follows:

- **Eligibility**
 1. *Age*
 2. *Education certification*
 3. *Medical certification*
 4. *Security Clearance*
- ***Knowledge Test (Written Examinations)***
- ***Skill Examinations (Practical Examinations)***

03. Aim of the report

To establish an International standard mechanism to produce a NTGL while addressing the national requirement of the tourism industry in Sri Lanka and uplifting the standard of NTGLs.

04. Objective of the report

- a. Identify the nonstandard procedures adopted at SLITHM and SLTDA from beginning to end of producing NTGL of Sri Lanka (from training course to issuing licenses)
- b. Uplift the national procedures, in compliance with the international standards.

05. Observations & critical analyses

I have made critical unjustified observations from the year 2010, as an applicant for the training and license of NTGL at SLITHM. There I have faced a lot of unjustified situations and being a pilot, I was disqualified several times due to the lack of standard selection criteria for NTGL training course. It was clearly identified by me that national interest of field of tourism has not been identified by the respective associated authorities in Sri Lanka. However, I was able to change the selection criteria of NTGL training program by writing to His Excellency the President, Prime Minister and subject minister in the year 2015. At last with determination and courage of myself in the year 2019, I was able to get selected for the NTGL training program, batch No- 052, group "A".

The observation made here with the experience of my self and conducting interviews with my coursemates, lecturers of SLITHM, senior NTGLs at SLNTGL's Association who followed this course at SLITHM.

05.1 Nonstandard selection criteria of candidate to NTGL training course

- a) *Candidate from other than the tourism field*
- b) *Experience candidate from tourism field*

05.1, a) - candidate from other than the tourism field

Critical analyses

I have not seen the composition of the NTGL training course candidates representing from potential fields which are actively associated with the field of tourism in Sri Lanka, for example Ayurveda or indigenous medicine representing professionals.

There are many potential fields' representatives who are waiting to have this national license in order actively involved in the tourism field, and also to contribute in different areas to improve the tourism in Sri Lanka.

Suggestion

Education qualifications for the selecting criteria must be upgraded to a minimum qualification to degree or a general diploma certificate, associated field of tourism such as Zoology, Botany, archaeology etc...

Recommendation

Professional slots allocations for identified tourism potential fields in Sri Lanka and maintain the minimum requirement of respective above field trainee's composition at NTGL training course

05.1, b) - Experience candidate from tourism field

Critical analyses

This is another important point, which must be considered in order to standardize NTGLs in the field of tourism in Sri Lanka. There is a lateral path to be eligible to apply for an NTGL for a licensed chauffeur guide lecturer in the present criteria.

Suggestion

There must be a promulgated selecting criterion for chauffeur guide lecturer license holders to be eligible to apply for the NTGL training course screening examination

Recommendation

Applying rate of unprofessional chauffeur guide lecturers must be controlled, by introducing a following nature of conditions.

- a. Minimum 5-years' experience in tourism field in Sri Lanka or
- b. Any special higher academic qualification such as a diploma or
- c. A special recommendation given by one of the identified and qualified professionals from the field of tourism in Sri Lanka

05.2 Nonstandard training course & adapted examination procedures to graduate for issuing license as NTGL of Sri Lanka

- a) Non availability of approved syllabus for NTGL training course at SLITHM
- b) Unprofessional lecturers utilized as visiting lectures of NTGL training course at SLITHM
- c) Non availability of standard written examinations criteria at SLITHM to evaluate the candidate's knowledge
- d) Non availability of standard practical examination sessions at SLITHM for candidate's skill evaluation

05.2, a) Non availability of approved syllabus of NTGL training course at SLITHM

Critical analyses

Non availability of approved syllabus for NTGL's training course will lead to following repercussions.

- NTGL's knowledge will not be matched with the national interest of Sri Lanka
- NTGL will refer nonstandard literatures, where these information may not be matched with the national interest of respective site or national event of Sri Lanka.
- There will be a lot of unreliable information and unacceptable interpretations leading to unsustainability of the tourism industry and may lead to instability of the respective sites associated religious communities or social communities

SLTDA must ensure the national interest to be fulfilled with standard knowledge of course completed NTGL candidate before issuing the respective trade license.

Suggestion

What I observed and experienced main loop is UNAVAILBITY of approved syllabus for NTGL training course at SLITHM.

- Approved syllabus must be prepared and implemented for the NTGL training program
- In this syllabus, history and monument information are very sensitive, therefore this information must be approved by the responsible government institute in Sri Lanka. I would like to propose Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya as one of them.
- In this syllabus, at least five (05) top listed endemic categories of Sri Lanka must be included.

Note - More information will be provided, if these suggestions are valuable for you.

Recommendation

Legitimate knowledge providing Sri Lankan national interest information must be obtained and get approved through the respective institute in Sri Lanka such as the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology for History and Monuments of Sri Lanka. Likewise, legitimate information/ course contents related to other fields should be prepared and get approved through respective other institutions for an approved training syllabus of the NTGL training course.

05.2, b) Unprofessional lecturers utilized as visiting lectures of NTGL training course at SLITHM

Critical analyses

Nonprofessional lecturers are conducting lectures at the NTGL training program. Most of them have not prepared relevant handouts or tutorials for the students before or immediate after the lectures. It shall be highly considered that NTGL training program is very sensitive comparing with other Sri Lankan government authorities' licenses, because this is included with every aspects of promoting Sri Lankan national image to the world based on knowledge and experience of National Tourist Guide Lecturer.

Suggestions

There must be professional lecturers to cover the approved syllabus of NTGL training course at SLITHM.

Recommendation

A visiting lecturers' pool should be maintained by SLITHM. They can be selected from SLINTGL and academically qualified professionals from other tourism or associated formations and required Sri Lankan heritage identified fields' expertise, for example history and monuments lectures from Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology. Likewise, other fields' representative institutes' lecturers are required to be utilized in order to cater and maintain the standard of this training course.

05.2, c) Non available of candidate's knowledge evaluation standard written examinations criteria at SLITHM

Critical analyses

NTGLs' candidates have to know his or her knowledge standard with justifiable way, then it will help candidate to improve their weak areas in an appropriate manner. Unless this area functions in a standard way, it will lead to produce nonstandard National Tourist Guide Lectures who are highly detrimental to the stability of the industry.

Note – There is an inefficient analog teaching management system which is being practiced at SLITHM

Suggestion

Following areas have to be standardized throughout the course

- I. Mock examination (after each and every important session of the training course)
- II. Submission of assignments (with in the promulgated time period)
- III. Module examination (according to the periodic time table)
- IV. Final examinations

Recommendation

Digital or analog Learning Management System (LMS) shall be introduced for SLITHM

05.2, d) Non available candidate's skill evaluation standard practical examination session at SLITHM

Critical analyses

This is the area which has to be highly concerned in this training course. The reason is that finally NTGLs would perform their duties in the field, based on the incorrect guidelines, inputs given by the skill evaluation committee at SLITHM.

Note – Present practicing way of the session is unprofessional, since it is based on the sense of memory and the gut feeling of the knowledge of the candidate.

Suggestion

I would like to suggest that the following areas are to be included to the training program

- I. Individual Presentation – STORY TELLING SKILL
- II. Group Presentation - one of the isolated sites
- III. Virtual Tour Skill Test – same destination, tour line – (LIBRARY REFERANCE)
- IV. Actual Tour Skill Test – same destination, tour line – (with reference to the approved CHECK LIST)

Recommendation

The approved legitimate knowledge CHECK LIST of site or National event of Sri Lanka has to be introduced to the training course of the NTGL. The candidate has to perform his or her explanation and interpretation of the site or national event of Sri Lanka based on that CHECK LIST.

05.3 Nonstandard procedures for issuing an initial license of the NTGL of Sri Lanka

Documents have to be submitted to obtain license by the applicant

- I. Birth certificate
- II. Identity card copy
- III. Police report
- IV. Medical report
- V. Education certification

Critical analyses

Above certifications are requested by the SLTDA to issue a license, upon the NTGL candidate gets through the written and practical examinations at SLTHM. This is nonstandard procedure adapted to issue NTGL licenses by the SLTDA.

The reason is that if the candidate does not pass the medical examination, what will happen to him after spending considerable amount of money and time?

Other way around if the candidate will not pass by the regional police station, what will be the repercussion? definitely candidate will not get the license from SLTDA, but how it can be justified by the SLTDA after completing all the training sessions of NTGL course, the spend time and money. This will be led to producing unprofessional NTGLs by the government authority. This process is detrimental to the tourism industry of Sri Lanka as well.

05.3, iii) Police report

Critical analyses

The security clearance of the NTGL is not only concerned the police certification, I am believing that NTGL is a very much sensitive job title in Sri Lanka, because if SLTDA issues NTGL license to an unidentified terrorist minded citizen of Sri Lanka, who may harm or do unjustified action against the tourist or guest during any tourist seasons in Sri Lanka, it will lead to collapse entire tourism industry unexpectedly. The best example is the Easter attack on 21st of April 2019 and hypothetically, if one of those terrorists from pool of NTGLs, who was qualified and NTGL license issued by SLTDA???

WHAT WOULD BE THE REPERCUSSION OF TOURISUM FIELD IN SRI LANKA?

Suggestions

All the NTGL candidates will go through proper security clearance established by the government, there are five individual institutes scanning all the citizen to recommend by the Ministry of Defense as follows

- I. CID – Criminal Investigation Department
- II. TID – Terrorist Investigation Department
- III. POR –Permanent Resident details, ID issuing office
- IV. Regional Police – Current police certification
- V. SIS – State Intelligent Service

Recommendation

This security clearance must be requested by the SLTDA officially from the Ministry of Defense. The candidate needs to fill the security clearance application form which is facilitated by the SLTDA.

05.3, iv) Medical report

Critical analyses

This certification is very important to identify the NTGL's fitness standard as an ordinary performing citizen in Sri Lanka. But What I identified is that presently it is a certification just only to hand over without any standard medical examination criteria specified by the SLITHM.

The valid reason behind this certification is to ensure a healthy NTGL to perform job role in an ideal way to cater the demands of the guest.

Suggestion

Following medical examinations are suggested for the initial medical certifications of the candidate of NTGL

- I. Eye sight / vision examination
- II. Hearing examination
- III. Verbal performance examination
- IV. Limbs strength and their functions

Recommendation

I would like to recommend that the above initial medical examinations are to be done in any government hospital or approved medical institutes of SLTDA.

06 Conclusion

I am forwarding this information in a constructive way as a qualified National Tourist Guide Lecturer and a citizen of Sri Lanka as my profession and social responsibility. Further, I wish to contribute my conceptual knowledge and practicable experience gained in other fields such as Military, Civil aviation and also being a multi-disciplinary educationist.

I strongly believe that respective authorities will take this information as a nationalistic requirement to bridge the gaps highlighted through this report, and ensure an effective tourism industry in Sri Lanka.

My contact details are as follows and you may contact me at any time whenever requires for any further clarification on the above.

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