



Board of Investment
Mauritius

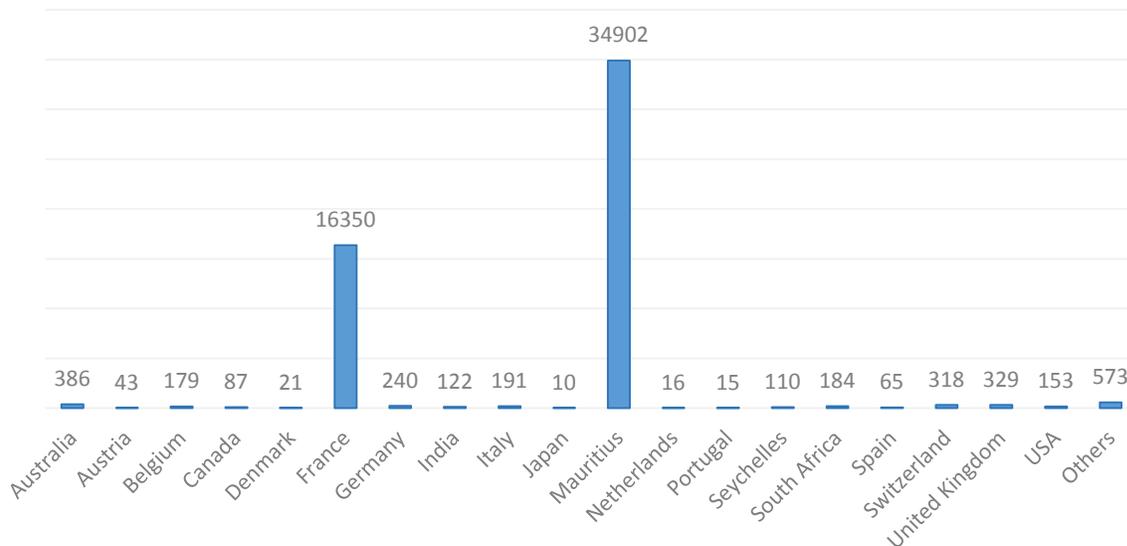


Tourism Development

Rodrigues

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MARINA

The tourism sector is an important pillar of the economy of Rodrigues. The country attracts, on average, around 70,000 visitors annually, with France and Mauritius representing the biggest share of tourists. The sector is also responsible for around 1,700 jobs, and an annual income accrual of approximately RS 200 million to RS 350 million.



Tourist arrivals (2014)

There are currently 132 properties accommodating foreign guests in Rodrigues, ranging from 4-stars resort and guest houses to *chambre d’hotes*, *gites* and lodges. The number of beds amount to 1690. The four main hotels represent a supply of 154 rooms, and average room occupancy rate for the past 5 years revolves around 50%.

Opportunities

One of the parameters that should be taken into account for the development of this sector is the fact that tourists visit the island mainly for holiday purposes, and on average stay for 7 days.

The RRA has forecasted a two-fold increase in the number of tourists visiting the country by 2017. In order to satisfy such an influx of tourists, the country would have to increase its number of accommodation units and beds, and uplift the product offerings.

Opportunities therefore exist in the segments below:

- [Small Boutique Hotels](#)

Given the fact that Rodrigues is home to many beautiful beaches and key places of interest, a significant untapped potential for tourism lies in the development of hotels. Following a previous policy decision by the authorities to preserve the landscape of Rodrigues, priorities are normally given to small hotels and structures such as Gites and tables d'Hotes. Such developments are also synonymous with the authentic traditional and peaceful lifestyle adopted by the local population, which is appealing to tourists preferring a simple, non-materialistic way of life for their holidays.

The regions which are most suitable for such types of projects are on the eastern coast, namely at Pointe Coton, St Francois, and Trou d'Argent, notably due to their unrivalled beaches. The south eastern and eastern regions are also emerging as a tourism development zone as they have highest concentration of public beaches. It is noteworthy that the latter regions are already home to three major hotel developments.

- [Eco-Tourism](#)

In the same spirit, projects having eco-friendly features, such as eco-lodges and sustainable fishing are also encouraged. Rodrigues hosts several species of endemic tropical flora and fauna within an un-spoilt natural environment ideal for tourists in search of eco-ventures. The four main eco-tourism sites are:

- The Gustave Legant Tortoise nature reserve, which breeds giant tortoises and the Rodrigues fruit bat;
- Coco island, located 1.5 km off the north east coast of Rodrigues, which is a bird sanctuary home to several species of birds;
- Caverne Patates, the longest cave and home to an impressive number of stalagmites and stalactites; and
- Grande Montagne, a natural reserve well known for its wide variety of endemic plants.

Additionally, sites such as Riviere Banane, English Bay, Grand Bassin, Passe Demie and South East Marine reserve are suitable for marine parks conservation projects.

- [Marinas](#)

In order to attract high-spending tourists, Rodrigues would have to uplift its accommodation offerings with the development of at least one marina. The marina would cater for the moorings of yachts and small boats, and provide luxurious villas for high net worth individuals. It would also consist of ancillary services, shopping mall, food courts, and marina facilities such as boat supplies, security, and repair facilities.

The authorities would have to embark on a project to identify potential sites for marinas. The stakeholders which would have to be consulted are the RRA, BOI, Ministry of Housings and Lands, Ministry of Tourism

and External Communication, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

The criteria such as coastal physical characteristics, accessibility and land space and marine ecological and environmental factors should be taken into account so that the marinas are developed with nominal environmental risks.

- [Sports Tourism](#)

There are three regions which cater for sports tourism:

- Mt Limon and Mt Malartic for hiking and mountain biking at more than 390 metres above sea level;
- Pointe Coton and Pointe Roche Noire for diving opportunities; and
- Mourouk for its watersports activities, especially kitesurfing due to its windy climate.

Other opportunities include big-game fishing competitions and regatta.

[On-going projects](#)

Splendour Investment (Rodrigues) Ltd is currently embarked on the development of a 76-rooms hotel and a restaurant under the Invest Hotel Scheme at Mourouk, Paté Reynieux, Rodrigues.

The 76 rooms for sale under IHS (estimated total construction cost of RS 245 million) will generate RS 418 million when sold.

[Constraints](#)

While the tourism sector of Rodrigues is set to flourish, there are currently some constraints which are holding back such tourism developments.

- [Allocation of lands](#)

The annual rental rates for the development of projects, such as hotel projects, are provided by the Government Valuation Office, which effects visit once in two years. Such delays would put several projects on hold for long periods of time.

It is therefore proposed that the annual rental rates be determined by zones, whereby Rodrigues is zoned and the rates determined in accordance to the zone and purpose of lease. Furthermore, there should be clear guidelines for application of State Land.

- [Guest Houses](#)

Investment in a new guesthouse or tourist residence by a non-citizen is currently restricted by several factors, notably by the requirement that the guesthouse or residence must contain at least 12 rooms and entail a minimum investment of RS 2m per room.

Such restrictions may be sensible for Mauritius, but they are hampering developments in Rodrigues. It is therefore proposed to review the minimum number of rooms to 6, with an investment of at least RS 1.5m.

LICENCES AND FEES

Tourism and related projects are currently guided by the Tourism Regulations 2007. In-line with the concept of Ecological Island, the Commission for Tourism encourages tourism ventures to embrace the green approach. The use of renewable energies, locally available raw materials for construction purposes, implementation of rain water harvesting and the setting-up of effective waste management systems among others, are fundamental features being considered by the RRA during evaluation of new tourism projects.

Promoters of tourism projects requesting industrial/commercial state land leases state should submit a full-fledged business plan to the Office of Invest Rodrigues. Project should obtain the green light of the technical committee and the Executive Council prior to lease procedures be initiated.

Despite the Tourism Regulations 2007 does not specify the number of rooms for hotel projects, however considering that the island is relatively small and that the annual influx of tourists is relatively constant, proposed tourism projects with number of rooms falling in the vicinity of 70 are considered incongruent with the local context.

Definition and Guidelines for Tourist Accommodations

(A). Hotel

A “hotel” means any premises where (a) lodging and sleeping facilities; (b) ancillary services and amenities; and (c) breakfast, meals and refreshments at reasonable hours, are provided against payment.

A hotel shall ensure that all the following guidelines are adhered to:

- 1) General guidelines: location and building, entrance and reception area, lounge, dining, bedroom, bathroom and toilet and kitchen.
- 2) Operational guidelines: garbage and pest control, house-keeping and general storage, operating hours, safety and security, water and waste water, staff, finances/accounts and insurance.

(B). Gîte

A “gîte” means premises which shall comprise of a maximum of 4 independent buildings each having up to 4 bedrooms, a living room, a dining room, a kitchen, bathroom and toilet, located within a radius of 100m from the owner’s residence provided for against payment and where personalized relationship with guests are ensured by the owner. A gîte shall ensure that all the following guidelines are adhered to:

- 1) General guidelines: location and building, entrance and reception area, lounge, dining, bedroom, bathroom and toilet and kitchen.
- 2) Operational guidelines: garbage and pest control, house-keeping and general storage, operating hours, safety and security, water and waste water, staff, finances/accounts and insurance.

(C). Chambre d'hôte

A "chambre d'hôte" means a special room (to a maximum of 4) for guests on a nightly basis with board and lodging in the house of the owner provided for against payment. A chambre d'hôte shall ensure that all the following guidelines are adhered to:

- 1) General guidelines: location and building, entrance and reception area, lounge, dining, bedroom, bathroom and toilet and kitchen.
- 2) Operational guidelines: garbage and pest control, house-keeping and general storage, operating hours, safety and security, water and waste water, staff, finances/accounts and insurance.

(D). Guest House

A "guesthouse" means any premises where lodging and sleeping facilities, and breakfast, are provided against payment. A guest house shall ensure that all the following guidelines are adhered to:

- 1) General guidelines: location and building, dining, bedroom, bathroom and toilet and kitchen.
- 2) Operational guidelines: garbage and pest control, house-keeping and general storage, operating hours, safety and security, water and waste water, staff, finances/accounts and insurance.

(E). Tourist Residence

A "tourist residence" means any premises, other than a hotel or a guesthouse, which offers sleeping accommodation to tourists, with or without meals, for a fee. A tourist residence shall ensure that all the following guidelines are adhered to:

- 1) General guidelines: location and building, dining, bedroom, bathroom and toilet and kitchen.
- 2) Operational guidelines: garbage and pest control, house-keeping and general storage, water and waste water, finances/accounts and insurance.

(F). Table d'hôte

A "table d'hôte" means part of a dwelling house which is used to provide primarily local cuisine, refreshments and drinks, against payment of a fee and shall include a premises where there is a designated space to receive guests in the house of the owner, operating in the rural areas and for which the number of guests shall not exceed 15 persons for the purpose of favouring good and personalized relationships and where the owner shall share the meal with the guests. A "table d'hôte" shall ensure that all the following guidelines are adhered to:

- 1) General guidelines: location and building, dining, bathroom and toilet.
- 2) Operational guidelines: insurance, water and waste water.

TOURIST ENTERPRISES AND LICENCE FEE

1. Tourist accommodation:

(a) Hotels:

	Annual Fee
(i) up to 15 rooms.....	Rs 5,000
(ii) 16 to 25 rooms.....	Rs 10,000
(iii) 26 to 50 rooms	Rs 15,000
(iv) 51 to 75 rooms	Rs 25,000
(v) 76 to 100 rooms	Rs 50,000
(vi) 101 rooms and above	Rs 75,000
(b) Gîte	Rs 2,000
(c) Chambre d'hôte	Rs 2,000
(d) Guest house	Rs 2,000
(e) Tourist residence	Rs 2,000

2. Places where food, beverages and entertainment services are provided, including:-

(a) Night-club	Rs 5,000
(b) Restaurant (including liquor and alcoholic drinks).....	Rs 3,000
(c) Restaurant (excluding liquor and alcoholic drinks)	Rs 2,000
(d) Table d'Hôte	Rs 1,000

B. Activity

Eco-tourism activities	Rs 1,000
Operating a boat house	Rs 1,000
Tourist guide, including those employed by a tour Operator.....	Rs 1,000
Horse Ride – per horse.....	Rs 500
Travel agent	Rs 2,000
Tour Operator	Rs 5,000

Car/Vehicle rental agencies:-

- (i) per bus/minibus Rs 2,000
- (ii) per car Rs 1,500
- (iii) per motorcycle..... Rs 700
- (iv) per bicycle Rs 250

Water sports/activities including:-

- (i) pleasure craft for private purposes – per craft. Rs 500
- (ii) pleasure craft for commercial purposes – per craft. Rs 1,000
- (iii) big game/deep sea fishing - per boat Rs 5,000
- (iv) scuba diving/diving centre..... Rs 2,000
- (v) Kite Surf/Wind Surf Rs 1,000

Licensing of Tourist Enterprises

- (1) no person shall run or carry on a tourist enterprise unless he holds a tourist enterprise licence.
- (2) No tourist enterprise licence shall be required where the person who uses a pleasure craft for commercial purposes is the holder of a pleasure craft licence in respect of that pleasure craft;
- (3) Any person who wishes to obtain, renew or vary the terms of, a tourist enterprise licence shall make a written application to the Commission for Licensing in such form and manner as may be approved by the Commission and upon payment of the prescribed fee.
- (4) On receipt of an application, the Commission may -
 - (a) inspect any installation, premises or facility relating to the application.
 - (b) require the applicant to furnish any additional information that it considers relevant;

(5) The Commission shall, after receipt of any additional information and after any inspection, issue a letter of intent upon payment of the prescribed fee, setting out the conditions upon which a tourist enterprise licence shall be issued to the applicant.

(6) The Commission for Licensing shall issue a tourist enterprise licence to the applicant where all the conditions specified in the letter of intent have been complied with and subject to –

(a) the payment of the prescribed fee; and

(b) such terms and conditions as the Commission may impose.

(7) Where the Commission agrees to renew, or vary the terms of, the tourist enterprise licence, it may do so on such terms and conditions as it may impose and on payment of such fee as may be prescribed.

(8) Any person who contravenes shall commit an offence and, shall, on conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding 5,000 rupees and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 1 year.

(9) In the case of a second or subsequent conviction, the offender under shall be liable to a fine not exceeding 10,000 rupees and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years.

Restriction on the issue of tourist enterprise licence

No tourist enterprise licence shall be issued to a person or legal entity who–

(a) (i) has, within the 3 years preceding the date of application, been convicted of any offence involving fraud or dishonesty;

(ii) is a body corporate of which any director or majority shareholder has been so convicted;
or

(iii) is a société of which a partner holding a majority of shares has been so convicted;

(b) was, within the 1 year preceding the date of application, the holder of a tourist enterprise licence which has been revoked by the Commission;

- (c) proposes to carry on or operate a tourist enterprise under a business name or trade name which
 - (i) by its nature, or use of it, is contrary to public order or morality;
 - (ii) is likely to deceive any person as to the nature of the enterprise;
 - (iii) is identical with, or confusingly similar to, or constitutes a translation of, a mark or trade name which is well known in Rodrigues for identical or similar services of another tourist enterprise.

Duration of tourist enterprise licence

A tourist enterprise licence issued shall be valid for –

- (a) 12 months as from the date of issue; or
- (b) such shorter period as may be determined by the Commission.

Renewal of tourist enterprise licence

- (1) An application for renewal of a tourist enterprise licence shall be made by the licensee within 3 months before the date of expiry of the licence.
- (2) Where an application for renewal is made after expiry of the licence but within a delay of 30 days, the Commission may renew the licence upon payment by the licensee of a surcharge of 10 per cent in addition to the renewal fee.
- (3) A licence shall lapse if an application for its renewal is made after 30 days from the date of its expiry.

Suspension of tourist enterprise licence

- (1) Where the Commission considers that the revocation of a tourist enterprise licence is not appropriate, it may –
 - (a) suspend the licence for such period as it may determine; and
 - (b) direct the licensee to take such corrective measures within such time limit as the Commission may specify.

- (2) Where the licensee complies with a direction issued under subsection (1) (b), the Commission shall restore the licence.
- (3) Where the licensee fails to comply with the direction, the Commission may revoke the licence.
- (4) Notwithstanding subsections (1), (2) and (3), the Commission may, pending proceedings for a revocation of a licence, suspend the licence forthwith where, in the interest of the public, it is urgent that the licensee immediately ceases to carry on or operate the tourist enterprise.

Variation or revocation of, or refusal to renew, tourist enterprise licence

- (1) The Commission may vary, revoke, or refuse to renew a tourist enterprise licence where –
 - (a) any information given to it by the licensee for the purpose of obtaining the issue of the licence is false in any material particular;
 - (b) the licensee, without lawful excuse, fails to–
 - (i) comply with a requirement of these regulations, or any standard, conditions, guideline or code of practice issued by the Commission or any direction issued under these regulations; or
 - (ii) pay any fee or charge levied in accordance with these regulations;
 - (c) the licensee is convicted of an offence under these regulations;
 - (d) where the licensee has acted in a dishonourable, improper, fraudulent, dishonest, or disorderly manner, or is engaging in a violent conduct on the premises to which the licence relates;
 - (e) the licensee ceases to occupy or manage the premises to which the licence relates;
 - (f) the premises to which the licence relates cease to be suitable for the purpose for which it was licensed;
 - (g) in the case of a body corporate, any director or majority shareholder has been convicted of an offence involving fraud or dishonesty;
 - (h) in the case of a société, a majority partner has been convicted of an offence involving fraud or dishonesty;
 - (i) where by reason of the assignment, sale, transfer or disposal of any interest or share in a company or a société, there is a change in the control of that company or société;
 - (j) any of the grounds specified under section 7(c) is present; or
 - (k) it is in the public interest to so vary, revoke, or refuse to renew the licence.

- (2) Where the Commission has reasonable grounds to suspect that any licensee has transferred or assigned his licence or is only nominally the licensee, the Commission may refuse to renew or may revoke the licence.
- (3) Before varying, revoking or refusing to renew a licence, the Commission shall, by notice in writing require, within such reasonable time as it may deem fit, the licensee to show cause why his licence must not be varied or revoked or must be renewed.
- (4) Where the Commission varies or revokes a licence, no refund of licence fee shall be made, nor any compensation paid in respect of the unexpired portion of the licence.

Restriction on transfer of tourist enterprise licence

- (1) Except with the written authorisation of the Commission, no holder of a tourist enterprise licence shall assign or transfer his licence.
- (2) Where the holder of a tourist enterprise licence, being a natural person, dies or becomes incapacitated or insane, his widow, heir or representative, as the case may be, may with the consent of the Commission, carry on his business for the unexpired portion of the licence, either personally or by an agent approved by the Commission, and that person shall comply with all the conditions specified in the licence and with the provisions of these regulations.
- (3) Any person who contravenes this section shall commit an offence and, shall on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding 10,000 rupees.

Production of tourist enterprise licence

- (1) Any person or legal entity who carries on or operates a tourist enterprise shall, as appropriate,
 - (a) affix the tourist enterprise licence in a conspicuous place on the premises where the profession, trade or activity is carried out.
 - (b) at the request of an authorised officer, produce his tourism enterprise licence or a copy thereof to that officer.
- (2) Where the licensee fails to affix the tourist enterprise license where the profession, trade or activity is carried out or fails to produce his tourist enterprise licence or a copy thereof following the request made the authorised officer may require him to produce his tourist enterprise licence within 5 days at the office of the Commission.

- (3) Where the licensee fails to comply with a requirement made he shall commit an offence and shall on conviction, be liable to pay a fine not exceeding 1,000 rupees.

Documents required for Tourism Enterprise Licenses

Copy of:

1. National Identity card
2. Five copies of architectural plans of building
3. Title deed/lease agreement
4. Copy of Trade License if applicable
5. Building permit
6. Five copies of location plan
7. Certificate of character