

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Commercial Services Program



# Standards, Evaluations, and Rate Approval (SERA) Update

Concessions Management Advisory Board  
March 2010

# SERA Scope and Strategy



- Addressing all aspects of SERA
- Prioritizing Services
- Conducting benchmarking
- Considering opportunities in context of legal requirements and other obligations
- Collaborating to obtain input and perspective
- Piloting to test and ensure field applicability
- Phasing implementation

# SERA Schedule



## Summer/Fall 2009

- NAICS Classification
- NPS, Industry Benchmarking, and Research
- Concession Specialist Rate Administration Survey

## Winter 2010

- NPHA Letter Response and Update Meeting (1/18)
- Concessioner Rate Administration Survey
- First Draft Standards
- Pilot 1 – ZION (week of 2/8)
- NPS Workgroups
- CMAB-hosted Concessioner Workgroup 1 (2/18)

## Spring 2010

- Pilot 2 – YOSE (week of 3/28)
- CMAB Meeting
- CMAB-hosted Concessioner Workgroup 2
- Updated Rate Administration Guide
- Pilot 3 – GRTE (May/June)

## Summer 2010

- NPS Workgroup Revisit
- CMAB-hosted Concessioner Workgroup 3
- Draft Phase 1 Standards
- Internal Review and External Reviews

## Fall 2010

- Phase 1 Standards and Implementation Plan
- Rate Administration Recommendations
- Concessioner Review Update and Implementation Strategy

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# Classifications and Standards

# Classifications and Standards



- Classifications

- Use National American Industry Classification System (NAICS)
- Established based on industry standards and need to differentiate services and level

- Standards

- Based on NPS, concessioner, and industry benchmarking
- Address unique aspects of NPS operations
- Consider facilities, personal property and services
- Address environmental, risk management, and public health

# Benchmarking



Services									
	NPS		Industry						Other
<b>Lodging</b>	NPS 48	O&M Plans	Concessioners	AAA	AH&LA*	Best Western	Choice (Ascend, Comfort Inn)	IHG (Holiday Inn)	US Army, Forest Service, International
<b>F&amp;B</b>	NPS 48	O&M Plans	Concessioners	AAA	Sodexo	Envision Strategies	Zagat's	Subway	
<b>Retail</b>	NPS 48	O&M Plans	Concessioners	HMS Host	EMS	National Retail Fed.	Retail Institute		

Programs									
	NPS		Industry				Certifiers & Associations	Other	
<b>Environmental</b>	Audit Prog. (EPA)	O&M Plans	Concessioners	AAA	AH&LA	Industry Operators	Green Seal, Green Globe	US Army, Forest Service	
<b>Public Health</b>	NPS 83 (Food Code)	O&M Plans	Concessioners	AAA	AH&LA	Industry Operators			
<b>Risk Management</b>	NPS 50 (NFPA)	O&M Plans	Concessioners	AAA	AH&LA	Industry Operators	NY State Insurance Fund		

# Classifications and Standards



## Facilities

- Building Exterior
- Public Areas
- Rooms
- Fire Protection Systems
- More

## Personal Property

- Bedding
- Linens
- Furniture
- Hangers
- More

## Services

- Bell Service
- Reservations
- Maintenance
- Wake-up
- Linen Reuse
- More

STANDARDS	Basic	Midscale	Upscale	Grand Collection
Internet Access	Not required	Wired or wireless available in all rooms. Fees may be charged in accordance with local markets	Same as midscale, except high speed internet access is available, wireless access	Same as upscale except wireless is required.
Noise Insulation	No soundproofing requirements	Soundproofing preferred	Level of soundproofing is adequate to muffle outside noises and normal sounds in adjacent units and public areas	Same as upscale
<b>D. Guest Room Bathroom</b>				
Floor Coverings	All bathroom floor coverings shall be non-slip, clean, well-maintained and free of defects, dirt, smudges, mildew and hair. Floor coverings may be lenolium, painted concrete, or resin.	All bathroom floor coverings shall be non-slip, clean, well-maintained and free of defects, dirt, smudges, mildew and hair. Floor coverings may be decorative tile, ceramic, stone, or terra cotta	All bathroom floor coverings shall be non-slip, clean, well-maintained and free of defects, dirt, smudges, mildew and hair. Floor coverings may be marble, or granite	Same as upscale
Wall Coverings	Basic - basic drywall, basic materials in design, pre-fab modular paneling, dated ceramic tile and wallpaper	Midscale - decorative wall treatments such as drywall with textured and painted finish, decorative vinyl coverings or select grade wood/stone, wood or	Excellent quality wall coverings such as ceramic tile, marble, granite or other decorative items	Same as upscale

# Considerations



- Historical properties
  - Industry standards versus NPS facilities
- Native American handicrafts
  - NPS requirements
- Bedding and linen standards
  - Level of detail
- Television and interpretation standards
  - NPS mission
- Reservation system standards
  - Industry standards versus current practice
- Reservation policies and food quality standards
  - Industry standard versus NPS consistency

# Pilots



- Three locations selected based on services offered, classifications and facilities
- Activities include:
  - Inspections, interviews, testing
  - Review of facilities and operations against draft standards
  - Identification of gaps and cost impact analysis
  - Preparation of facility-specific action plans
  - Field data collection for rate administration

# Pilot 1 – Zion



- Results

- Standards were generally on-target for class
- Most gaps were relatively low-cost or planned

- Outcomes

- May be opportunities to streamline some standards
- Standards must reflect the overall facilities/services
- Classifications allow for a range of quality (which may be reflected in rate)
- Sometimes park-specific interests may conflict with interests in meeting a standard

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# Rate Administration

# Rate Administration



- Input and analysis is ongoing
  - NPS and concessioner surveys
  - NPS Policy and Industry benchmarking and field studies
  - NPHA and independent concessioners
- Issues
  - Defining “comparability”
  - Level of effort for comparability analysis
  - Timeliness of rate approval
  - Core menu scope creep
  - Mark-up versus competitive market declaration (CMD)
  - Advance rates and deposits

# Rate Administration Strategy



- Continue to obtain input (e.g., surveys, pilots, workgroups)
- Update the Rate Guide
  - Incorporate 2009 policy clarifications
  - Update and streamline language
- Address specific short-term opportunities
  - Advance rates and deposits
  - Application of core menu (F&B)
  - CMD use (merchandise)
- Develop recommendations for program changes and implementation

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# Concessioner Review Program

# Concessioner Review Program



- Addresses
  - How to conduct evaluations (i.e., forms and systems, evaluation process, evaluators)
  - How to assign ratings (e.g., unsatisfactory to exceptional)
  - How to use the evaluation and rating results
- Activities to Date
  - Contractor benchmarking study
  - Input from workgroups
  - No specific recommendations yet

# Concessioner Review Program



- Considerations
  - Enhanced objectivity and professional approaches
    - Mystery shopper
    - Non-park reviewers
    - Visitor satisfaction input
  - Enhanced scoring to reflect “beyond satisfactory”
  - Ways to reward for good performance
- Strategy
  - Continue to obtain input
  - Test standards ranking and scoring through later pilots
  - Develop recommendations and implementation plan

# Conclusion



- Significant ongoing activity
- Obtaining input throughout process
- Using iterative process including field testing
- Meeting interest of the law for less burden and more industry-like process where possible
- Considering unique NPS issues and costs

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