

## **MEDIA RELEASE - June 10, 2003**

### **Not worth speeding in the KNP**

New speed measuring equipment has made speeding in the Kruger National Park a hazard to your bank balance.

Included in the KNP Protection Service's list of hi-tech equipment are Ladar and other devices, which can accurately measure the speed a car drives before the driver has any knowledge that he has actually been tracked.

"I want to assure motorists that we are going to crack down on those elements who insist on speeding on the KNP's road network," says Protection Service head, Mr Prego Reddy, "we will adopt a zero-tolerance attitude and there are no excuses for speeding in the KNP."

This has become necessary over time as drivers within the boundaries of the KNP constantly ignore repeated requests to stick to the speed limits, which are 50km/h on tar and 40km/h on dirt roads (unless otherwise indicated).

These low speed restrictions are there for a reason, says the Kruger National Park's head of Conservation Services, Dr Freek Venter.

"There are many reasons for speed restrictions in a conservation area like the Kruger National Park, but possibly the most important is the safety of not only the motorist but also the various animals," he said.

Reasons for speed restrictions:

- Most birds and mammals will be able to avoid an oncoming vehicle if it is driving slowly but if it is driving fast, they won't be able to get out of the way in time.
- In many instances, the animal does not "see" the road as a potential hazard and will move in any direction if frightened. During the rutting season, an impala ram might not notice the potential hazards of an oncoming vehicle and will move towards females, even if they are on the other side of a road. If a motorist keeps to the designated speed, he or she might be able to avoid this animal.
- As a vehicle accelerates, so too does its road noise (or road rumble). This noise will often frighten or "spook" an animal and it will jump or dash away from the noise, often into the road. The slower the vehicle travels, the quieter it is and the less chance it will have of "spooking" animals.
- As a car increases speed, the driver's attention moves way ahead of the vehicle. At high speed, the driver's attention is quite far ahead and the driver will not be able to see small animals darting across the road or react in time.
- Lastly, but no less important, is the atmosphere of the bushveld, which is shattered when a speeding car rushes past. It is a known fact that less animals are found on the busier roads of the KNP because of the fact that motor vehicles drive slightly faster on these roads than the other tourism roads.

These new speed-measuring devices will be used on all roads within the boundaries of the KNP and harsh fines will be issued to anyone caught speeding, whether they are members of the public, staff members, contractors or other people currently working in the KNP.

***(Click on the photos for a larger view)***



Staff members of KNP Protection Service pose with their vehicles and equipment. From left are (front) assistant traffic officer Solomon Setaphala, traffic officer Lufuno Khavhatundwi, traffic officer Dawie Botha, protection services



While KNP Protection Service head Mr Prego Reddy looks on, traffic officer Mr Dawie Botha takes aim with one of the KNP's Ladar speed measuring devices.



While traffic officer Ms Lufuno Khavhatundwi (center) prepares to use a Ladar speed-measuring device, KNP Protection Services chief Mr David Nethononda (left) and assistant traffic officer Mr Solomon Setaphala (right) observe.

chief David Nethononda, Coin Africa Security project manager Siphon Nxumalo, Protection Service head of department Prego Reddy, (back) security staff Willie Boshoff, January Ubisi, Prince Mashele, Freddy Mayindi, Solomon Hlatshwayo, Ruel Nkuna, George Chauke, Orith Mogane and Rector Mogalaane.

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Issued by: Raymond Travers, Media Relations Practitioner, Kruger National Park. Contact: Tel: 013 735 4116, cell: 082 908 2677 or email: [raymondtr@parks-sa.co.za](mailto:raymondtr@parks-sa.co.za)

Enquiries: William Mabasa, Public Relations and Communications Manager, Kruger National Park. Contact: Tel: 013 735 4363, cell: 082 807 3919 or email: [williamm@parks-sa.co.za](mailto:williamm@parks-sa.co.za).