

Media Release - 18 September 2001

Allegations Of Excessive Salary Increases For Kruger Staff Unfounded

Allegations of excessive salary increases for certain staff members in the Kruger National Park have been reported in one of the Sunday papers. The report quoted MWU Solidarity (a trade union no longer recognised by SANParks as its membership has dwindled from 11 to nine members) as the source for the report.

South African National Parks (SANParks) is appalled at the deliberate distortion of the facts by the Union. MWU Solidarity is determined to discredit Park management by disseminating false information. As a matter of fact, there has not been any salary increment at SANParks this year. In the restructuring process, some positions were downgraded, and others upgraded. In the few cases where positions were upgraded, the incumbents got a salary raise, and where positions were downgraded the incumbents had to take cuts in their salaries.

In similar vein, MWU Solidarity alleges that the fire that killed 23 people in the Pretoriuskop area of the Kruger National Park last week was a result of the restructuring within the Park. Responsible persons with information pertaining to the causes of the fire should provide this information to the commission of inquiry being set up to probe the matter. As the Chairman of the SANParks Board of Trustees has indicated publicly, an application has been made to the Mpumalanga Magisterial District to have a magistrate appointed to lead the inquiry into the causes of the fire. As soon as they are available, details would be made public for those who wish to make representations to the commission of inquiry.

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