

MEDIA RELEASE - 12 February 2002

SANPARKS FINANCES

Numerous newspapers have been reporting on 'financial woes' being experienced at South African National Parks (SANParks). SANParks would like to take this opportunity to reassure the public and SANParks employees that this is not, in fact, the case.

The media reports are based on the SANParks 2000-2001 Annual Report presented by the Auditor-General to parliament 10 days ago. SANParks presented its financial report to the Auditor-General around June last year. It is unfortunate that the cycle for tabling such reports to Parliament is long-drawn. The impression has been created that the crisis referred to is a current one.

SANParks has come a long way since the end of the financial year in 2001.

The organisational restructuring, under Operation Prevail, resulted in a significant reduction in operational costs. The government has also reinstated the grant for road construction and maintenance within parks. This was inadvertently discontinued some four years ago, during the restructuring of the National Department of Transport, which was responsible for the payments. Treasury also gave SANParks a once-off payment for income lost as a result of the Kruger National Park floods in 2000.

The above, coupled with a good tourism year, have to-date yielded very good results in terms of our cash flow position. The commitment shown by everyone at SANParks in working together to improve the way we run our business, also contributed to this healthy turnaround.

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