

custodians

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Welcome to the fourth edition of our bi-weekly newsletter for 2025!

We take great pride in this new-year's initiative, designed to keep our members well-informed about everything happening within our office and at the EXCO level, along with the most relevant news in the professional hunting industry.

By providing you with a comprehensive bi-weekly newsletter, we aim to minimize daily news-bits via WhatsApp and offer a resource that you can save and refer back to for important updates.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition and encourage you to share any information you believe might interest fellow members.

Happy reading!

Editors picture: Nonkie and Adri



MEMBERSHIP

As a membership-based organization, we rely heavily on membership fees to perform our duties to the best of our abilities. Therefore, we kindly urge members who have not yet paid their 2025 membership fees to do so urgently or reach out to Nonkie to make payment arrangements.

Having said that, we also want to express our gratitude to all members who have already paid their fees—we greatly appreciate your continued support!

New members:

We are delighted to welcome Spirit of Africa Taxidermy and Kayleigh Birch to the Custodians family.

March Birthdays

On behalf of Custodians, we extend our warmest wishes to all members celebrating their birthdays this month! May this year bring you success, happiness, and be memorable.



Johannes Odendaal, Azwitamisi Nephembani, Petro Myeni, Jurie Wessels, Lindelani Mdlolo, Makena Ngoato, Sean Kelly, Nicolaas van der Merwe, Fritz Ganz, John Sam, Craig Brown, Charl le Roux, Andrew Robbins, Timothy Jandrell, Adrian Donian, Antony Scheepers.

RECOGNITION FOR PRIOR LEARNING – SHOULD PROFESSIONAL HUNTERS APPLY OR NOT APPLY?

RPL (Recognition for Prior Learning) offers you the opportunity to convert your PH School Director Certificate into a National Qualification (CATHSSETA Certificate).

While a national qualification is not currently a legal requirement to operate as a professional hunter—and it remains uncertain whether it will become a requirement in the future—it is ultimately a personal decision for professional hunters to seek recognition for their prior learning, in order to obtain a national qualification (certificate), either:

- to obtain a national qualification,
- to prepare for any potential future requirements for professional hunters to have such a qualification, or
- for any other personal reasons.

What does the RPL Process entail?
Custodians has entered into a Service Level Agreement with Eco Ranger, one of only three Assessors registered on the CATHSSETA database.

Phase 1: You can apply for RPL through Custodians.

You will need to provide the following documentation, for Eco Ranger to register you as a learner. (Please note that the term “learner” is used in this process in accordance with CATHSSETA regulations and industry standards. This term is not meant to undermine your training or extensive experience.)

- * Registration form (available from Nonkie);
- * Copy of your ID;
- * Matric certificate or highest qualification (or in absence thereof, an affidavit); and
- * PH Permits and PH School certificate

Phase 2:

Once Eco Ranger has registered a learner on the CATHSSETA system, he/she will receive the Phase 2 documentation from Nonkie to complete and submit.

Although it might appear intimidating at first, it basically entails you providing photos and documentation as proof of your experience, to be recognised for prior learning:

1. Firearm training certificate;
2. SAPS firearm competency certificate;
3. Rifle licences (ALL in one pdf).
Note: You can blot out the serial numbers
4. PH permits, even if it has expired, compiled into one pdf document;

5. Ten Hunting contracts with clients, or copies of PH registers, in one pdf document.
Note: The contact details of clients can be blotted out;

6. Photo Collection of ten photos with PH, client and trophy visible.
Note: Client identities can be blotted out if needed.

7 & 8. Photo evidence where you as a PH work in a team.
Note: This is one of the unit standards requirements. You can provide any information you have, e.g. recovering a trophy to prove the planning and execution of a hunting experience that meets the needs and requirements of the client, supports team work and the successful completion of the hunting experience.

9. Photo evidence where you as a PH use equipment and technology.
Note: The use and application of weapons as well as electronic communication and interaction with international clients require the use of technology within the context of hunting.

10. Draw up a SOP (Standard Operational Procedures) document.

Note: Nonkie will provide you with a template of a SOP form that can be transferred to your letterhead. It entails the correct procedures to be followed, from when the hunt takes place, to when the trophy is being dispatched to the taxidermy.

11. Dangerous Game provincial licence and photo evidence.

Note: This applies to the Dangerous 9: Big 5 (both rhinos); crocodile, hyena and hippo. It wouldn't matter when or how long ago it was hunted. Submit photos you have, even if it was for only one specie.

12. Hunting business brochure:

Note: Where a PH is not an outfitter, he can provide the information from his outfitter.

13. Client's feedback – maximum 10:

Note: You don't need to provide telephone numbers and email addresses. Feedback on website will also be acceptable.

-The next step:

Eco Ranger will contact you if they need any further information.

Cost:

Once-off R4,000, which includes your CATHSSETA registration, Portfolio of Evidence, assessment, moderation and national certificate.

Eco Ranger will only start the process once we've received full payment from you.

Is a national qualification (certificate) required in terms of legislation?

Currently – No.

In future?

There is still no clarity on whether the Departments of Labour (Skills & Trades) or Education (Qualifications) might take over the mandate from provincial nature conservation for the training of professional hunters in the future. The Department of Environmental Affairs has requested input from Senior Council and the other two Departments, but it is still outstanding.

Should this transition occur, it is uncertain whether PHs with School Director Certificates would be required to re-do their training, which could potentially extend beyond the current 10 days.

Why then, pursue RPL?

As mentioned at the beginning of this document, it is a personal decision. However, once you have successfully completed RPL and received the CATHSSETA Certificate, you will hold a national qualification (certificate) which cannot be taken away, much like your matric certificate.

NEWS

**GAME & HUNT ARTICLE: CUSTODIANS 2024
CONFERENCE**

For those who joined us at last year's conference, here's a chance to take a delightful trip down memory lane. And if you missed the event, don't worry—you can read all about it in the article published in the February edition of the Game & Hunt magazine. Enjoy the recap and catch up on all the highlights!

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US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICES: APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR

General Brian Nesvik has recently been nominated as Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. His nomination now moves to the Senate for confirmation.

As a lifelong conservationist, seasoned wildlife manager, and retired Director of Wyoming Game and Fish, General Nesvik brings decades of expertise in wildlife stewardship.

A strong advocate for sustainable use conservation, Nesvik has balanced wildlife conservation, hunting traditions, and habitat management throughout his career. – [SCI Article](#)



MPHO TJIANE APPOINTED AS SCI'S AFRICA LIAISON

Our warmest congratulations go to Mpho Tjiane on his appointment as Africa Liaison for Safari Club International. Mpho is well-known to all our members who regularly attend our annual conferences, as well as to others who have tapped into his wealth of knowledge while he worked in the biodiversity department at the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment.



With over 13 years of experience and a distinguished role as a CITES focal point for South Africa, Mpho has played a pivotal role in shaping policies. His deep knowledge of CITES compliance, trophy import/export regulations, and environmental legislation has been invaluable to the industry, and we have no doubt that his expertise will greatly enhance SCI's mission across Africa.

We wish Mpho every success in this exciting new chapter!



TOURISM NEWS

Trusted Tour Operator Scheme (TTOS)

The TTOS is part of South Africa's broader strategy to boost tourism, create jobs, and stimulate economic growth by making the country more accessible to key international markets.

TTOS is a collaborative initiative by South African Tourism and the Department of Home Affairs, designed to simplify and streamline visa and permit processes for international tourists, particularly from China and India. By partnering with approved tour operators, the scheme aims to enhance visitor experiences and bolster South Africa's appeal as a premier travel destination.

The Department of Home Affairs and South African Tourism will be organizing roadshows soon, to provide full details on the TTOS and create industry engagement opportunities. We will share the details with Custodians members as soon as we receive it.

Understanding the TTOS will be particularly important for hunting outfitters and safari operators who rely on international clients, particularly from China and India.

**How TTOS Works:**

1. Selection of Trusted Operators: Tour operators from South Africa, China, and India undergo a rigorous vetting process to ensure compliance with legal standards and operational excellence. In the initial phase, 65 operators were selected from 141 applicants.

2. Expedited Visa Processing: Tourists booking through these accredited operators benefit from a simplified and faster visa application process. Applications are handled by a dedicated team within the Department of Home Affairs, ensuring decisions are made promptly. Visas are issued digitally, eliminating the need for physical paperwork or in-person visits to South African missions.

3. Operator Accountability: Approved tour operators enter into formal agreements with the Department of Home Affairs, taking responsibility for their clients' adherence to visa conditions. This partnership ensures a balance between facilitating tourism and maintaining regulatory compliance.



Minister De Lille introduced the TTOS to stakeholders at the Tourism Trade Market held in Sandton on the 25th of February.

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