

City Press

Rhino poaching case of former park ranger and state vet postponed again

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Landela and Motshotso were arrested on July 27 2016 for the possession of two rhino horns, a rifle and ammunition.
Photo: Laila Majiet/City Press

NEWS

The trial of a former Kruger National Park ranger and a state veterinary technician accused of rhino poaching has been postponed to November 22 because the court dates of the accused's legal representative clash with another trial.

The ranger, Rodney Landela, and state vet Kenneth Motshotso appeared in court on Tuesday for the trial, which was meant to run until Friday.

Landela and Motshotso were arrested on July 27 2016 for the possession of two rhino horns, a rifle and ammunition.

READ: [Former Kruger ranger and state vet to face the music for rhino poaching six years later](#)

SA National Parks spokesperson Isaac Phaahla told City Press that they were disappointed by the postponement.

“As law-abiding citizens, we have to respect the law, which says that everyone is presumed innocent until proven otherwise.” Phaahla said:

[The accused can] exercise their constitutional rights to a free and fair trial.

He added that the time would come for the trial to run to its course.

On the day of the two men’s arrest, three gunshots were fired in the Kruger Park, which alarmed rangers and set them off to investigate.

The rangers saw two men escaping in a bakkie, leaving a white rhino carcass behind. A team of rangers pursued the vehicle. Landela, who was left behind, had allegedly instructed Motshotso to drive off.

READ: [War on rhino poaching – a never-ending bloody battle](#)

After a while, Motshotso returned. Rangers traced his tracks and found that he had driven off to hide horns and a hunting rifle.

Landela was a star ranger, having climbed the ranks from field ranger to section ranger, and finally regional ranger before his fall from a 15-years career.

The pair were released on bail in December 2017.