

TOOTABI

• HUNTING SAFARIS •

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contacts: Africa Hunting Forum LLC, California, USA.

Website: www.africahunting.com

Telephone: +1 (714) 470.1102

E-mail: info@afriahunting.com

Re: South Africa; Tootabi Hunting and Safaris (Pty) Ltd – What is the wounded policy, and billing issues.

<http://www.africahunting.com/threads/south-africa-tootabi-%E2%80%93-what-is-the-wounded-policy-and-billing-issues.22865/>

June 16, 2015 – Paterson, Eastern Cape – Africa Hunting Forum, Special Interested Members, Future and Past Clients of Tootabi Hunting and Safaris (Pty) Ltd. Responding on allegations of *billing issues* and *wounded policies* of a 2015 Safari Client.

Tootabi Hunting & Safaris and Management consider this incident as very serious and therefore decided that a media release on the event of happenings were required to let supporters, and concerned parties know exactly what the stance of happenings are.

We are unfortunately very dependent on the internet and technology and being away from office (on hunts in the bush) with limited access to internet (cell phones), supporting documents, computers and resources makes it extremely difficult to respond if all paperwork and documentation isn't readily available on the spot and in the bush whilst hunting. Albeit I have seen all the posts and followed it cautiously it was beyond my reach to respond earlier as I only returned to camp and office today.

In response to Mr Royal D Mowery or (*Royal27*) as known on Africa Hunting.com's allegations that we billed him incorrectly we happily respond, elaborate in categorization of:

1. Wounded Trophy Fees
2. Apparel/Merchandise Fee
3. Observer Days

Wounded Trophy and Fees Associated

Professionals involved in the organizing and facilitating the discussed Blue Duiker (*Philantomba monticola*) hunt for Mr Royal D Mowery in the month of May 2015 was:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1. Professional Hunter | - | Mr Lammie Ferreira |
| 2. Hunter/Client | - | Mr Royal D Mowery |
| 3. Facilitating Outfitter | - | Mr Jeff Ford |
| 4. Hunting Facilitator | - | Mr Adrian Ford |
| 5. Tracker | - | Mr Attie Nieveldt |
| 6. Dog Handlers | - | One |
| 7. Hunting Dogs | - | 2 |
| 8. Back Up tracking dogs | - | 1 |

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Herewith Tootabi Hunting & Safaris' responses to the debate about whether the Blue Duiker was hit or missed and why we justify that Mr Mowery was charged for the animal.

As readers would know that I (Loodt Büchner) wasn't there myself and I only went by what I was told by the Lammie Ferreira (*Professional Hunter*), Mr Royal D Mowery (*the hunter*) and Mr Adrian Ford (the *Hunting Facilitator*). According to them the animal was wounded and we charged the hunter accordingly. Normally if there is no blood then there is no charge, but if an animal displays a reaction that is out of the “norm” it could tell us the animal was hit or injured, as I am sure every hunter have witnessed this before.

We have seen this time and time again on other game as well, where an animal is shot high and drops to the ground or stumbles without a trace of blood. Think of gut shots and how little if any blood is shown on a large animal such a Kudu for example. Therefore we as an organisation feel it is up to the Professional Hunter and the Client to voice their opinions at the time of the hunt and the day thereof to determine what has been wounded or hit and what not. In this case the hunter has never, not once voiced his concern over whether he disputed the fact that he wounded the animal.

The policy of no blood no charge, does not take into account the behaviour of the animal at the time of the shot, which in many instances tell us a lot about the shot. The policy should be flexible to a certain extent in that it doesn't get abused and twisted to the advantage of one over the other.

With regards to hunting Blue Duiker, in some cases, no blood or hair has been found or only hair has been found and the animal has been found up to 100meters away dead. So even finding hair without blood could constitute a wounded animal. This has happened before as the animal was hit high in the shoulder and everyone was sure from the behaviour of the Blue Duiker that it was hit. Such a tiny animal hardly bleeds and often only one pellet makes contact. To be honest, I have never heard of Mr Adrian Ford as being dishonest or calling a shot a hit when it was a miss. We have in all the hunts our Professional Hunters included and conducted together ever experienced any problems with.

We as an organisation don't want this to become a battle of one word against the next as it will be fruitless as I (Loodt Büchner) did not witness the event for myself and we are going on the word of all parties that were present.

This is an unfortunate case but the only way it will be solved in the future is if the client takes responsibility and addresses his concerns there and then, which we really encourage them to do. If there is any reasonable doubt, it would and should be addressed immediately. At the end of the day we are only human and matters can very often only be solved at the time of the incident face to face.

Regarding a refund: The farmer was already notified that the animal was wounded by the time this thread on AH reached us. We are terribly sorry this happened. The farmer has already been paid in full for the Blue Duiker and attached is a snapshot of letter of proof that he received the money for it:



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To whom it may concern.

In May 2015 Mr Jeff Ford and Mr Adrian Ford brought clients to my farm to hunt Blueduiker. Later that day they informed me that the client had wounded a Blueduiker but they could not trace it. As is normal practice they subsequently paid me in full for the wounded animal.



Robert Mc Garvie

This is why we could not offer a discount on the animal as I can't go back and ask the farmer for our money back, but might have been able to offer options if this had been brought to our attention on the day or at least a day after the event. The Organisation is however looking at various options that can be installed to resolve this matter with the client in a way that would be acceptable to him. Tootabi Hunting and Safaris (Pty) Ltd further agree that we will sort this matter out with our client and that we would compensate a good portion of this animal back to him.

Face to face confrontation is often the only way to bring understanding to all parties discussed (*Client, Land owner, Professional Hunter, Outfitter and any other parties involved*). We feel that the client/hunter should feel at liberty to voice his opinions no matter what the circumstances and should feel comfortable to discuss matters earlier at the time of the event. All clients should address their concerns at the time as it is very difficult to do anything 3-4 weeks after an incident occurred. However we are still doing our best to come up with a suitable solution to the dispute.

Apparel/Merchandise Fee

In efforts to track items and make sure we have stock control items are tracked by invoicing them and knowing where they are going too. On our accounting software (Pastel) we need to amend that dollar value depending on what the client hunted and or what the scenario was whether it was his first and or for example 5th item he/she requested. The matter was discussed with the client, and has been removed and resolved shortly after discussion per telephone. There should have been a no charge for the merchandise to the client.

Observer Days

Mr and Ms Mowery were booked into our lodge from 08 May 2015 – 21 May 2015. See proof of flight itinerary below:

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A FR 08MAY LV JOHANNESBURG      610A  SOUTH AFRICAN 401W OK BREAKFAST
      AR PORT ELIZABETH          750A                      08STOP 320
      MILES 554  ELAPSED 1.40
      DEPART TERMINAL B          SEAT  AT CHECK-IN

A TH 21MAY LV PORT ELIZABETH    1255P SOUTH AFRICAN 410T OK SNACK
      AR JOHANNESBURG           230P                      08STOP 320
      MILES 554  ELAPSED 1.35
      ARRIVE TERMINAL B         SEAT  AT CHECK-IN
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Mr Mowery was billed 4 days additional to the 10 days which was included in the original Chasing Dreams Package (which consisted of Two (2) Travel days, Six (6) Hunting days and Two (2) Sightseeing days) leaving him with a 14 days safari which had to be invoiced upon the amounts that was agreed upon before the commencement of the safari on May 8th 2015 and reflected below in a snapshot.

5002 - Observer/Per Day	4.0	\$ 220.00	61.10%	0.00%	\$ 342.32	\$ 342.32
5002 - Observer/Per Day	4.0	\$ 180.00	0.00%	0.00%	\$ 720.00	\$ 720.00

The first "5002" entry was for Ms Mowery and the second "5002" for Mr Mowery.

In conclusion to the entire concern we would like to add the following;

We made mistakes and should have given it more thought. The lesson learned was that after such an incident the organization and or employees thereof need to consult with the hunter/client and get everything cleared out and have everyone content and happy.

All extras on the bill that were wrong (merchandise) we have corrected and hope that Mr Mowery is content therewith. At this point we have learned that we need to put more attention to especially invoicing and making sure clients are content with and understand what is being charged on their invoices.

A big thank you to each and every very important member and **contributors** to this forum and post for sharing their ideas and how they, see it, would have handled it and discussions there on. It gives insight, wisdom and knowledge that no money can purchase. I (Loodt Büchner) have read through each and every comment and have noted down facts of importance to ensure that the same errors or scenarios never play off again.

Further we just wanted to use this opportunity to thank you (including all friends, hunters and valued AH Members) for bringing all of this to our attention as we value feedback from our clients, because feedback is the breakfast of champions.

Please accept my sincere apologies for this and for all the inconvenience and distress this has caused all of you including Mr and Ms Mowery as this incident was totally uncalled for and this is not how we would like our valued clients to be treated.

We always strive to be friendly and helpful and go the extra mile for customers as you all know, service delivery is a challenge wherever we go, but this does not have to be the case in the hunting industry as we as an industry have always strived to be better and to have superb levels of service all the time. And when we drop the ball, we expect our clients to let us know and that is why we appreciate the feedback so much.



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Please rest assured, we have addressed this with all parties concerned and will be in further negotiations with Mr Royal D Mowery as well.

From hereon we can only improve and we hope to see you in the African Wilderness with the Tootabi family soon.

Kind regards and many thanks,

Loodt Büchner
International Relations Manager | South Africa
T: +27 (0) 42 235 1450 | M: +27 (0) 84 475 0007 | loodt.buchner@tootabi.com

