

Establishment of Wildlife Protection Units



Unit Establishment

A Wildlife Protection Unit comprising between 10–16 personnel will be established for each of the four Conservation Areas. In each area, this unit or units will typically work out of a main operational base and from field bases. The number and location of these field bases will vary from area to area.

The unit will consist of an appointed leader employed by The Tashinga Initiative, whose task will be to train and bring up to the correct standard, a co-leader from the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority. These personnel will direct the Patrol Commanders who will be responsible for Patrol Teams. Funding and information flow channels are shown over the page.

Transport

Vehicles are urgently sought to support the operations of existing Wildlife Protection Units (Victoria Falls, Sebungwe and Lower Zambezi Valley (Mana Pools Conservation Area)) and further proposed units throughout the four Conservation Areas. Each unit should have its own dedicated 4x4 vehicle, typically a Toyota Landcruiser Pickup 70 Series. This vehicle has to be fitted with specifics to suit the need for which it is intended. Vital Driver Training will be implemented and Drivers specifically allocated for this task. The unit vehicle component will include spares, tyres, tools, fuel, accessories, radios, and service package. In addition, each TTI WPU Leader (4–6) will have his own dedicated

vehicle fitted out to suit his specific requirements.

Due to the need to patrol on both the Zambezi River and on Lake Kariba some units will need a patrol boat for operational duties on the water and to carry men for deployment on riverbank/lakeshore “sweeping” duties. The boat component will include spare tanks, hoses, emergency repair kit, radios, trailer, and housing.

It is well recognised that the most cost efficient and effective form of transport for commuting, administration and patrolling of these rugged and remote areas that comprise most of The Tashinga Initiative Conservation Areas, is the light aircraft. Specifically, tried and tested models are the Cessna 185, the Cessna 206 or the Supercub. Use of a helicopter is required from time to time. For all aircraft needs this Project intends to outsource a hire-and-servicing contract to an experienced agency, using pilots with sufficient bush-flying experience.

Equipment

All units will need personal gear, field equipment, specialised equipment and radio communications. Some of these, or components of them will need to be considered consumable and will need replacement (e.g. uniforms, boots, batteries etc). More details are found below.

Personal:

The personal kit comprises hat, cap (both with badge), shirt, trousers, overalls, jacket, belt, socks, boots, raincoat.

Field:

Field equipment comprises 2-man tent, mosquito-net, bivvy, backpack, head-torch, penknife, water bottle, set of handcuffs, rechargeable battery supply, professional first aid kit.

Specialised:

GPS, camera, metal detector, WPU Leader satellite phone, binoculars, dart-gun, for use by a specialist in wildlife veterinary work, for the removal of snares from animals living with their injuries. Further specialized equipment would be ground-to-air radios, [\(continued on page 2\)](#)

for Wildlife Protection Unit members to communicate with any aerial recce unit.

Communications:

Hand-held VHF radios, vehicles to be equipped with mobile base set, antennae to be placed, and the installations or refurbishment of radio communications repeater links where necessary, fixed cell terminals or fixed satellite phones, VSat installations at base station.

For further information on the proposed structure for the Wildlife Protection Unit email: lynne@thetashingainitiative.org



Wildlife Protection Unit Trainee's on a mapreading exercise.



New recruits on the parade ground.