

## PRESS RELEASE

**AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA and BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA**

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### **AA and BirdLife South Africa: Working together for safe conservation**

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The Automobile Association (AA) has partnered with BirdLife South Africa to contribute to the conservation of South Africa's birds, their habitats, and biodiversity. Through the partnership, the AA is providing its customers an opportunity to contribute to conservation in our country.

"All our AA Armed Response customers will be able to contribute to BirdLife South Africa – and to their conservation efforts – through their monthly subscriptions. All customers will pay the same reasonable price for the service but a portion of that will be paid to BirdLife South Africa should the customer wish to support this cause," says Mr Willem Groenewald, AA CEO.

Mr Groenewald says the AA is excited about supporting an organisation such as BirdLife South Africa as its conservation partner.

"Naturally, all bird watchers who want to be safe while enjoying their favourite pastime can do so with the peace-of-mind of having personal armed security available to them through AA Armed Response. If they do, then they can also donate a portion of their low monthly subscriptions to BirdLife South Africa, so it's a double win for them," says Mr Groenewald.

BirdLife South Africa says its conservation efforts which support the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources are reliant on donor funding and financial support from the public and that the partnership with the AA will provide much-needed funding for the organisation's important work.

"We believe what we are doing is preserving our country's natural heritage, and we want people to enjoy and value nature with as much freedom as they can. Funds gathered through partnerships such as those with the AA are extremely important as they keep our efforts going, and also ensure we are able to tackle new projects which are key to us to protecting our environment. I think it also highlights the AA's commitment to conservation, which is wonderful," says Mr Mark Anderson, CEO of BirdLife South Africa.

AA Armed Response is a location-based security solution, offered by the AA, which provides immediate coordinates of the user's location to a call centre when activated using a smart phone or wireless panic button. More than 180 professional security companies throughout South Africa are contracted on the service and the closest security provider to the user's location is dispatched to provide armed assistance.

"This solution is intended to provide peace-of-mind to users – or to family members who gift it to other family members such as parents or guardians who sign up children to the service. But, more than this, it is a service which can be activated to actually provide security to someone in distress. It is, essentially, like having a private armed security officer in your pocket at all times. Through our partnership with BirdLife South Africa, we are paying it forward for conservation by making it easy for anyone to contribute to this worthy organisation," explains Mr Groenewald.

The service costs R35 a month with an optional once-off purchase of R460 for the wireless panic button linked to the App on the smartphone available at <https://www.onlineshop.aa.co.za/collections/security/products/aa-wireless-bluetooth-button>. Interested customers can also send a message to the AA's WhatsApp number on 011 799 5699 with the word "Bird" and one of our consultants will contact them with more information.

And, it's easy to sign-up for AA Armed Response for yourself, or a loved one, and support conservation all in one transaction. Simply visit <https://www.aa.co.za/armed-response-birdlife> and follow the prompts, or download the AA Armed Response directly onto your smartphone. It is available in the Huawei App Gallery, on the iOS App Store, or the Android Play Store, and use the code "**BirdLife**" when you register.

AA Armed Response is pre-loaded on all new Huawei P4 smartphones.

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### **Word Count: Words**

#### **About The Automobile Association of South Africa**

*The Automobile Association (AA) has been the trusted champion of the South African motorist and traveller for over 85 years. Along with our AA Accredited Sales Agents located countrywide, the AA offers access to over 50 benefits on 1 card as well as other travel and mobility services that extend far beyond 24-hour roadside assistance - from technical and legal advice, to emergency rescue services, roadside security and a mobile app suite. The AA offers specialised apprenticeships to help motor industry players build in-house skill, and short skill courses for individuals.*

*The Automobile Association of South Africa is a member of the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and the Alliance Internationale de Tourisme (AIT).*

**For more information please visit [www.aa.co.za](http://www.aa.co.za) or [aasa.mobi](mailto:aasa.mobi), or contact:**

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#### **About BirdLife South Africa**

*BirdLife South Africa BirdLife South Africa is the country partner of BirdLife International, a global partnership of conservation organizations that strive to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity, by working with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources. BirdLife International partners operate in 113 countries and territories worldwide. BirdLife South Africa relies on donor funding and financial support from the public to carry out its critical conservation work. BirdLife South Africa strives to conserve birds, their habitats and biodiversity through scientifically-based programmes, through supporting the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources and by encouraging people to enjoy and value nature.*

**For more information please visit [www.birdlife.org.za](http://www.birdlife.org.za), or contact**

BirdLife South Africa at

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or 011 789 1122