

BEAR BANGER STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Protocol for using Bear Bangers as baboon deterrents within the City of Cape Town

Purpose

To ensure awareness that all bear bangers are used in an effective and safe manner.

Scope

Field staff will assess the nature of the work to determine whether the surrounding area is clear to fire off a bear banger and will be aware and trained on the relevant Health and Safety hazards associated with the use thereof. This tool is a pyrotechnics-based setup with an explosive charge which, if not used correctly or with negligence, can lead to serious injury.

Definition

Pyrotechnics have proved very effective in dispersing bears without harming them. These bear scare cartridges travel down range and produce loud noises (up to 160dB) and visual effects. They include bangers, screamers and flaming whistlers. Bear scare cartridges can be projected from a variety of pyrotechnical launchers.

Staff Responsible

- Safety Reps/Area Managers
- Field Managers
- Supervisors

Procedure

1. Bear Bangers are never to be used within the urban area.
2. Only supervisors and rangers who have been instructed in the safe use of bear bangers are allowed to operate the bear banger. The use of the bear banger by any other staff member will result in disciplinary action being taken.
3. The bear banger launcher must be primed with the caps provided prior to use. To do this one must carefully pull back the firing mechanism until it is in the 'cocked' position. Insert the cap into its position in the launcher. VERY CAREFULLY, while pointing the launcher away from people/pets/houses un-cock the launcher by firmly grasping the firing mechanism and pulling the trigger at the same time. GENTLY PLACE the firing mechanism back into its original position resting on the inserted cap. The launcher must NEVER be carried in the 'cocked' position.
4. When the time comes to fire the bear banger, place the cartridge in the barrel of the launcher. Ensure that there are no people standing in front of you. Pull the firing mechanism back to the cocked position. Aim the launcher up at a minimum angle of 45 degrees and pull the trigger to fire the cartridge.
5. ALWAYS point the launcher away from yourself and other people when it is loaded with the cartridge.
6. NEVER keep the launcher in the 'cocked' position for extended periods.
7. ALWAYS be aware that the cartridge is a fire hazard. NEVER fire the cartridge into dense vegetation. NEVER fire a cartridge in bad weather conditions including strong winds, especially Berg winds.
8. NEVER fire screamers during the dry summer months.