

# The Star

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## Abuse at OR Tambo airport alleged

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FOR THE past 30 years, Karl Ammann shot his world-famous wildlife photography on a Nikon. At the weekend, he resorted to covertly snapping a picture with his BlackBerry in order to capture evidence of his detention and deportation from OR Tambo International Airport.

Ammann was detained on Saturday after landing on an SAA flight from Kenya because his passport lacked a page free of stamps, a requirement for entry into the country.

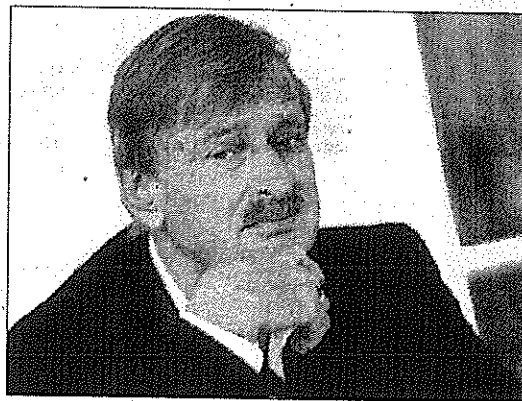
By the time he was released to fly back to Kenya on Sunday night, he was alleging abuse at the hands of the private security company that held him at the airport.

"I was told 'you have absolutely no rights in here'," said Ammann.

Analytical Risk Management International (ARM) is subcontracted by the airport to detain anyone in political limbo or who must be deported.

This is not the first case of alleged misconduct under the airport and ARM's jurisdiction.

In 2010 and 2011, the Supreme Court of Appeal heard cases involving immigrants detained in ARM facilities. Also in 2010, the



**INCENSED:** Karl Ammann, who came to South Africa for a conference, was detained at OR Tambo International Airport and then deported.

PICTURE: CINDY WAXA

non-profit Lawyers for Human Rights fought to gain access to a man detained in those same facilities while being denied access to legal representation for 44 days.

ARM's standard operating procedure is to take away everything a detainee is carrying - including a cellphone, money and identification - then to complete the necessary intake forms that ensure respect for a person's religious and dietary restrictions.

However, at this point Ammann's ARM handlers tried to get him into a cell.

"I resisted. They pushed me. They kicked me," he said.

Feroz Gany, director of ARM's aviation security division, said: "During our admission procedure (Ammann) became very aggres-

sive, grabbing a female officer by the uniform and threatening to hit her."

Both Gany and Ammann claimed that CCTV captured an alternative side of the story.

However, ARM did not make the footage immediately available to The Star at time of publication. Calls and e-mails to the airport and Department of Home Affairs had not elicited comment, despite several requests over the past two days.

Although the Immigration Act allows for detention of up to 30 days and an additional 90 days with a warrant from the magistrate's court, David Cote, head of the strategic litigations unit at Lawyers for Human Rights, said there were concerns over privatising of airport detention.