

Yachties stranded by bungle at the bank

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A FRENCH yachting couple are today stranded high and dry in Richards Bay after they were robbed by an auto teller machine.

The two travellers survived an overland Africa safari only to fall victim to a local banking bungle when their visa account was debited for R500 – but, alas, no cash.

The nightmare worsened this week as the Standard Bank refused to credit the yachties, Fabrice Girardeau and Sondrene Kuhn munch, with any money for the withdrawal.

“They told us we had to contact our bank in France and get an official fax proving the debit, before they could do anything,” Mr Girardeau said .

“But we have already sent them two faxes ... it is costing us a lot of money to phone France all the time.”

Mr Girardeau said bank officials had admitted responsibility for the July 29 error and had promised action within two days – but that was nearly two weeks ago.

“We are supposed to crew a yacht out of here on Wednesday, but we know that if we leave without this money then we will never see it again.”

John Zanone, manager of Richards Bay Standard Bank, said he was unable to comment.

However, he encouraged the couple to make an appointment to see him.

Meanwhile, they have been forced to hitch-hike between the bank and yacht club to try to resolve the bungle.



HIGH AND DRY: Fabrice Girardeau and Sondrene Kuhn munch.

PICTURE: ALAN COXON