



# Southern Cape Fire Protection Association

Dear member,

We would like to thank you for your loyal support and welcome all new members to the SCFPA. We are aware that some personal details may change and/or farms may be sold or bought and we kindly request that you contact our offices to make us aware of these changes. It is very important for us to have updated information in case of an emergency and for invoicing. Please see the last page of the newsletter for our contact details.

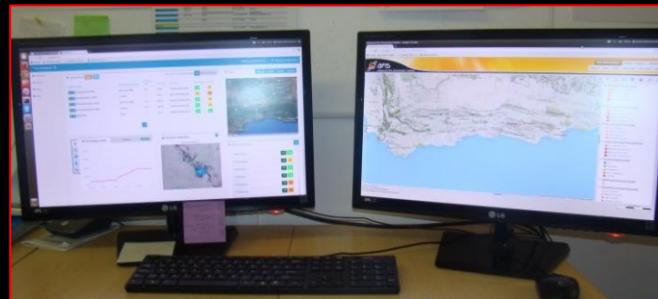
A kind notice to members, membership and joining fees are excluding VAT. Please take note of your invoice for the correct amount payable and use your account/membership number as reference. Thank you to those who have already paid the membership fees for this year. Please note that the cut-off date for the payment of outstanding membership fees is the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2014, after that date, members will be resigned and will lose their membership. This is only applicable to members that were invoiced at the beginning of 2014. It is important to know that fees do not only go to firefighting on your property or to the presumption of negligence clause in the Act, but it contributes to the safety and awareness of a larger area.

## NEW TECHNOLOGY

### Advanced Fire Information System (AFIS)

Great news! The 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Advanced Fire Information System (AFIS) software has been installed at our Knysna office. In the past, the software was very similar to the online free version but the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation software allows for so much more functionality and updates every 15 minutes, which increases our early warning capacity.

The most important function is the ability to identify the member if a fire is to occur on his/her property and contact them as soon as possible. Other useful tools have also been included such as; fire alerts, the capability to draw reports for fire danger index, active fires and burned areas for specific dates and areas. Weather forecasts as well, are more accurate.



Above: AFIS Field Terminal



Above: Firebreak exemption certificates

## SUCCESS STORY

### FIRE BREAK EXEMPTION

Two firebreak exemptions have been approved in the Victoria Bay and Glentana areas and are the first in the Southern Cape Fire Protection Association region. These exemptions are between two FPA members, which share a common boundary and are valid for 3 years. We would like to thank the deputy director

from DAFF of the National Veld and Forest Fire Oversight, Mr. Luke Radebe, as well as the respected local fire brigades for their hard work in making this a reality.

## PAST EVENTS



Above: SCFPA & Eden Fire and Rescue personnel at 10th Fire Symposium

## FIRE SYMPOSIUM

The SCFPA personnel attended the 10<sup>th</sup> Fire Management Symposium on the 9 and 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2014 at NMMU (George Campus).

As stated in the Fire Symposium flyer, one of the aims of this symposium is to transfer technical knowledge to fire managers and this year's event focused on controversial legal matters, environmental impacts of fires, new technology as well as interesting fire management concepts.

Paul Gerber, the SCFPA's managing director and DAFF fire advisor for the Southern Cape region, also gave a presentation on the history, successes and the way forward for the SCFPA. A stall was also set up to create awareness and promote the SCFPA.

## GEORGE AGRICULTURAL SHOW

The SCFPA, in conjunction with Eden fire services, set up a stall at the George Agricultural Show that took place from the 21<sup>st</sup> until the 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2014. To promote awareness, firefighting equipment and clothing was displayed, as well as many awareness materials. Together with Eden DM, we won first prize for the best stall at the show. On the second day, a very entertaining presentation was given by Eden fire department and the SCFPA Working on Fire teams, where they performed a drill and extinguished a fire with a water drop from the Working on Fire Huey helicopter.



Above: First prize certificate



Above: School visit to stall

## FYNBOS FORUM

The Fynbos Forum is a platform where researchers, managers, landowners, and a range of other organisations meet to discuss environmental issues and present research results to ensure the conservation and sustainability of the Fynbos ecosystems.

Danie Gräbe, SCFPA Extension Officer, gave a presentation at the forum regarding fire prevention and suppression through integrated fire management.

A stall was also set up by the SCFPA to create awareness relating to veldfires and the Southern Cape Fire Protection Association's responsibility.



Above: Stall at Fynbos Forum

## NEW BASES AND PERSONNEL

The SCFPA welcome a new Working on Fire team and base manager, Juliana Boezak, to the organisation. The new team is based in Mossel Bay and Juliana Boezak is the first female base manager in the WoF program.

Currently, the SCFPA manage eight WoF teams, which if fully capacitated, makes up 200 firefighters. The teams focus mainly on prevention work, such as creating firebreaks, assistance with controlled burns, etc. but they can also be called out to help fight wildfires when needed.



Above: Mossel Bay WoF base opening



Above: Norman Malatji

## SCFPA FIREFIGHTER BURSARY

A wonderful and exciting opportunity has been given to one of the SCFPA's WoF firefighters, Norman Malatji, to study for a Higher Certificate in Veldfire Management at NMMU (George Campus) next year. This full bursary is provided by the SCFPA to uplift and increase Norman's knowledge about veldfires and provide him with an excellent opportunity to exceed in his career ahead.

Norman stated in his essay, a requisite for the application, that he has been with WoF for almost two years and that they have given him the opportunity to learn about fires and therefore has grown a massive interest in wildfires. Norman is part of the WoF team based in Crags near Plettenberg Bay.

## INCREASE IN LAND MANAGEMENT

We would like to thank all the members who have contributed to land and veld management by successfully completed prescribed burns, which includes block burns and stack burns, as well as firebreaks and alien removal.

Teamwork between landowners, SCFPA and the fire brigades has paid off as we have seen less prescribed burns to get out of control. Due to the above mentioned, this has also sparked a new benefit for SCFPA members. Eden DM has awarded 50% discount on all prescribed burns and wildfires in which they assist, to paid-up members of the SCFPA.

These burns and firebreaks give us as the SCFPA and fire brigades another tool to work with, as we know these areas are relatively safe. We would like to advise other SCFPA members to make an effort to increase the fire management of their property where possible.



Above: Karatini stack burn - 23/10/2014

## NEW SCFPA EMPLOYEE: QUAD COPTER DRONE

At the 10th Fire Management Symposium at NMMU-Saasveld (George Campus), a presentation and demonstration was given by SteadiDrone and since then, we have been passionate to obtain a drone with such quality that they can provide. Thanks to SteadiDrone, this sponsored/donated quad copter drone is now part of the SCFPA's family. Again, the SCFPA, together with this new partnership, is jumping ahead with Integrated Fire Management.

This Drone will help us, as an FPA, to do more for our members throughout our ±4 million Hectare area of responsibility. With a field monitor and GoPro giving live streaming footage to the Incident Commander on the ground, tasks like sizing up a fire, look-out for spot fires, identifying hot spots with mopping-up, firebreak inspections, alien infestation inspection etc., is possible. We would like to thank Duran and his team at SteadiDrone that made all of this possible.



Left: Danie Gräbe shaking hands with Duran de Villiers, the director/owner of SteadiDrone

## MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

The SCFPA is growing rapidly and from the start of this financial year, the membership has grown with 32.62%, giving us 3353 members in total. It is difficult to say what specific actions have attributed to this growth but the increase in employees and awareness campaigns is most certainly a factor.

It is wonderful to witness this growth as it contributes to safety and an improved management of the Southern Cape area, concerning veld and forest fires.

### Accumulative Membership Growth



Above: Accumulative Membership Growth

## TRAINING

### GEF TRAINING

Fourteen accredited short learning courses have been sponsored by the GEF FynbosFire project for FPAs and the organisations affiliated with them. In the Southern Cape region to date, 112 individuals, including SCFPA personnel, have received training in 9 different courses namely veldfire behaviour principles, integrated fire management principles, risk analyses, fire danger index systems, community risk reduction, fire ecology and conservation, prescribed burning, basic incident command system and urban interface management. These training courses will lead to better, increased knowledge in the area of veldfires and help improve managing the high risk in this region.



Above: Integrated Fire Management Course presented at NMMU Saasveld campus



Above: FDI systems course presented at DAFF office in Knysna

### ONE-DAY BASIC WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION COURSE

One of the many benefits for SCFPA members is the one-day basic wildfire suppression course provided to members and their labourers. This course deals with the basics of wildfire firefighting and what to do in case of a wildfire on your property (fire line safety). During 2014, 264 individuals were trained in different regions of the Southern Cape namely Avontuur, Bitou, Oudtshoorn, Knysna, Langkloof, Mossel Bay, Griqua and Zoar.

A training day in the George area is also scheduled to take place before the end of the year.



Above: Zoar 1 Day Basic Wildfire Suppression Course

### WILDFIRE EXTENDED ATTACK SIMULATIONS

The purpose of these simulations is to promote better coordination and cooperation between partners during a wild fire incident and to exercise the Incident Command System (ICS) during such an event. Three simulations are scheduled to take place before the end of the year and will be presented by Ben Potgieter. We would like to thank Cape Pine and SANParks for sponsoring these sessions and all the other organisations that will be involved.

### AVIATION RADIOTELEPHONY BASE OPERATOR COMPETENCY COURSE

The SCFPA will be hosting a Base Operators Competency Course from 13 to 14 November 2014. This course has been, on request from the SCFPA, developed specifically for Fire Fighting personnel who will be assisting Air Operations during veld and forest fires. The course has been accredited by the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA). This entails that when a person has successfully completed the theoretical part and evaluation that the person will be issued with a certificate, which will grant him/her permission to talk via VHF Radio Frequency to Air Resources allocated/dispatched to firefighting operations.

# CHECKLIST OF STEPS TO BE TAKEN DURING THE FIRE SEASON

## Early warning systems:

- be aware of weather conditions associated with high fire danger in your region (temperature, wind speed, direction and relative humidity)
- know what radio station will carry news of veldfires

## Communications:

- compile a list of phone numbers you may need during a veldfire
- Make sure your property can be easily located by the fire brigade

## Buildings:

- remove hanging baskets with dry material from the building
- check gutters and roof comers for the accumulation of leaves
- remove inflammable materials such as woodpiles that are in close proximity to buildings
- store fuels and paints in a single place away from the house

## Garden:

- keep lawns short and green
- cut grass and other vegetation under screening trees
- remove dead leaves and dry vegetation and litter from the garden

## Equipment:

- store fire beaters, rakes, spades, buckets, hoses, mops and other firefighting equipment in a single easily accessible place
- check pumps on a daily basis when fire danger is high

## Survival plan:

- rehearse family emergency evacuation plan
- include your pets in your evacuation plan
- ensure that all your family members and staff know about how to stop, drop and roll if their clothing catches fire
- establish a safe meeting place for your family outside your house
- store protective clothing for the entire family in one easily accessible place
- ensure that sufficient drinking water is available

## Water supplies:

- check water levels in reservoirs and water tanks daily when the fire danger is high
- attach hoses to taps when the fire danger is high

## EMERGENCY NUMBERS:

Eden emergency fire line – 044 805 5071

Paul Gerber  
SCFPA Managing Director

082 805 5840  
SCFPA Western Region:

Charl Wade                    Philip Wilken  
Area Manager                Extension Officer  
079 485 5320                079 697 8706

SCFPA Eastern Region:

Dirk Smit                    Danie Gräbe  
Area Manager                Extension Officer  
072 785 2742                082 936 7780

Western Cape Working on Fire Dispatch:

Riversdale - 071 350 4804

George - 082 312 9461 / 044 805 5199

Eastern Cape Working on Fire Dispatch:

Port Elizabeth - 071 351 4365

Please visit us our website at [www.scfpa.co.za](http://www.scfpa.co.za)

**Facebook page: "Southern Cape Fire Protection Association"**

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**Twitter: “Southern Cape FPA”**



❖ **For any further information, please feel free to contact:**

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