

Could you fight a big fire on your land?

IN the past, veld and forest fires in and around Plettenberg Bay have been disastrous - and they happen all too often. Fires start small but can rapidly flare up and spread. A call to Plett Fire Department, due to distance, may bring help too late or could be very expensive.

All rural landowners, whether in residence or absent, are legally bound to both prevent and combat fires on their land. Battling fires requires a team effort

with fire-fighting equipment and experienced team leaders ready to go into action.

For these reasons, many rural landowners in Bitou belong to their local Fire Management Unit (FMU) that has the equipment, experienced team members, and a network of communication that enables them to respond quickly and effectively.

The annual cost of membership is low because FMUs - and Plett Fire Department is one, too - are operated by

volunteers drawn from the region.

FMUs are coordinated and supported by the statutory Southern Cape Fire Protection Association (see www.scfpa.co.za). Members also gain FPA membership, and both FMUs and FPAs are non-profit organisations assisting their members at rates aimed at covering direct expenses only.

The oldest unit in Bitou, the Plett South FMU (formerly the Plett South FPA), has operated continuously and suc-

cessfully since 2002. Its constitution can be downloaded from www.scfpa.co.za and its area has been increased to include all private land south of the N2, between Robberg Road in the east to the Harkerville Sasol filling station in the west.

If you own land in this area, please attend the unit's AGM at Tharfield Estate (F36 off Plett N2) at 6pm today, April 23. E-mail fpaplettsouth@vodamail.co.za or phone 083 460 7802 to find out more about the Plett South FMU.



YOU WANT THEIR NUMBERS... ON SPEED DIAL: These Plett Fire volunteers assisted during the recent CemAir launch - as your local fire department could not possibly always be first on the scene, landowner membership to local Fire Management Units is imperative and you can find out why at the Plett South FPU meeting tonight at 6pm - Photo: Russell Honeywill