



WOFIRE NEWS

ALLEVIATING POVERTY • CONSERVING THE ENVIRONMENT • IMPROVING LIVES

Danishwa returns from Marion Island

Danishwa Zukelwa, HAT Officer based at Witfontein returned from Marion Island after a year and two month stint as a Conservation Officer on the island in early May 2014.

"The opportunity came to me after Marius Peters, Regional Manager: HAT in the Southern Cape asked me to write a motivation letter to explain why I should be afforded the opportunity to work on the island and learn from some of the best conservation minds in the area", she said.

"I had matric, good health, ambition and a keen interest in the conservation field".

After some training in Cape Town they set off to the island aboard the S A Agulhus.

"My work on the island included waste management, permit issuing, monitoring of fishing vessels, as well as collecting and drying plants", Danishwa said.

"My time on the island made me stronger, I learnt a lot about plants and myself. Before I was scared of almost everything, now I know I can do things on my own", she said.



Danishwa on her first day on Marion Island



Danishwa celebrates her birthday with colleagues on the island

"Everything is not back to normal, sometimes I am bored, but also miss the silence and solitude of the island. I would love to work as a Conservation Officer, if I can get a bursary to study", she said.

Before joining WoF, Danishwa from George was unemployed and today she is multi-skilled and well equipped to enter the formal job market.

Six year old saves aunt from fire death

When Lusheen Britz, Social Development Officer heard of a six year old boy from Robertson who rescued his sleeping aunt out of a burning bungalow, she decided to make a plan to ensure that he gets some help.

Says Lusheen: "We have heard that the boy pulled his sleeping aunt out of bed and saved her from a sure death and wanted to see how we can reward him for his bravery."

WoF visited the boy at school and took some blankets, food and clothes for the family who had lost everything in the fire. The cause of the fire remains unknown. When the boy Deniello Arendse sent the fire alarm, family and neighbours worked together to hose the fire down.



Fire fighters from Vrolijkheid Nature Reserve together with Lusheen Britz (SDO), Monde Maqula (AGM) and Albert Snyman (RM) rewarded a six year old boy, Deniello Arendse for saving his aunt from a burning bungalow

GM Message



Shane Christian

General Manager
Western Cape

Good day Colleagues

I hope this first edition of our Provincial WoF News finds you all content in your work environment and happy to be part of the WoF Western Cape family.

Colleagues, as an organisation we are in constant flux and develop to respond to the needs of government, our people and the market place. In his State of the Nation Address on 18 June 2014, President Zuma said: "The new phase of the EPWP will provide six million work opportunities by 2019 across the environmental initiatives such as Working on Waste, Working on Wetlands, Working for Water, Working on Fire and the Environmental Youth Services programme, in support of youth development." The signing of the latest seven year contract bears testimony to government's commitment and trust in our ability to deliver on these initiatives.

Going forward – The seven (7) year contract has brought major security thus ensuring long term jobs for all. The new contract also expects us to be more effective and efficient with our planning and execution. With this in mind we need to abide by the values of the company namely:

- Making a difference
- Accountability
- Excellence
- Teamwork
- Adaptability

Our current performance requires us to step up our game to enable us to be the best and above the rest.

As we have come to the end of yet another summer fire season at the end of May, I wish to thank you for all your hard work and continued commitment.

Many have described the summer fire season as quite, especially in comparison with the previous season. In total we have fought 106 fires, flown 607 hours and minimised the areas burnt to 32 344 ha.

WoF leads at Western Cape think tank to address youth unemployment



Trevor Abrahams, MD WoF explains how WoF implements job creation and skills development with previously unemployed youth whilst Rhoda Kadalie, Executive Director: Impumelelo looks on

"Unconventional thinking is required to solve our problem of youth unemployment and lack of entrepreneurship in South Africa" said Rhoda Kadalie: Executive Director of Impumelelo Social Innovation Centre.

Kadalie was speaking at a conference arranged by her organisation to address these issues in Cape Town amid the latest Stats SA report putting youth unemployment at 36.1% or 3.4% up in the six years from 2008 to 2014.

"The youth – those between the ages of 15 and 34 make up a total of around 7.4 million unemployed people in South Africa" she said.

Trevor Abraham, MD: WoF responded by sharing some of WoF's secrets in addressing this growing pandemic: "We take unemployed youth, put them through a boot camp, equip the youth with skills and Personal Protective Clothing and maintain an environment of strict discipline where everyone knows what's expected and have development paths available".

Kadalie confirmed that most of the parties present is critical in actually making the youth Employable as many do not possess the required soft or hard skills that is required in the formal job market.

Professor Michael Savage who also spoke at the event confirmed that successful youth training and development programmes in South Africa has the following seven trademarks in common:

- 1) it responded to the labour market i.e. identified a gap in the market place
- 2) it selects trainees carefully
- 3) it sets clear expectations
- 4) it provides extensive and professional training
- 5) it provides counselling/social development services and build personal relationship with participants
- 6) it creates pathways to employment
- 7) it constantly liaises with the industry and is well run as a business entity.

Abrahams said: "Contrary to what many companies say, the private sector also needs to respond to the needs of the country and government, like employment opportunities for youth whilst filling a gap in the market".

WoF had received two Impumelelo Awards, one in 2005 and again in 2010 for innovation, poverty reduction and improving the lives of the youth of South Africa.



Editors note

Good day Colleagues

Welcome to this very first edition of our quarterly provincial newsletter.

The WoFNews Western Cape aims to tell the stories of our team here in the Western Cape in a language that you understand.

We also want to share developments within WoF with both our internal and external stakeholders throughout the entire fire fraternity.

This edition focusses on the essence of WoF as a EPWP initiative of government and how it affects previously marginalised youth as well as how we as an organisation move

to ensure we deliver to government, our beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Please feel free to contact us with your news on email: liesl.brink@wofire.co.za or mobile: 071 298 1602

Liesl Brink

Editor



STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

Tuesday, 17 June 2014, from 19h00

Live on television and radio.

Together we move South Africa forward

Creating work opportunities for young people highlighted in State of the Nation Address

“Youth empowerment will be prioritised in our economic transformation programme” – President Zuma

Government intends to introduce further measures to speed up the employment of young people, consistent with the Youth Employment Accord.

This was said by President Jacob Zuma in his State of the Nation Address on the 17 June 2014 during the formal opening of the 5th Democratic Parliament of the Republic of South Africa.

“Government has since 2004 run the successful Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) which provides work opportunities and training for the unemployed. The new phase will create a further six million work opportunities by 2019”, President Zuma said.

The President also highlighted the fact that the Expanded Public Works programme’s environmental initiatives such as Working on Waste, Working on Wetlands, Working for

Water, Working on Fire and the Environmental Youth Services programme will also be upscaled up to 2019, in support of youth development.

Working on Fire to benefit in creating work opportunities for young people

This is certainly good news for those beneficiaries who are employed in the WoF programme and we can expect further growth of this programme over the next few years as more unemployed young people will be absorbed into WoF.

According to Trevor Abrahams, MD of Working on Fire, which is also part of the EPWP programme of government, this announcement by President Zuma is good news for all the beneficiaries in the programme and also points to the potential future growth of the programme over the next few years.

“The WoF Programme will play a key role in support of this announcement by President Zuma and all our beneficiaries can be rest

assured that they will continue to be part of this programme. We also anticipate a significant growth in WoF over the next 7 years and this will allow us to create even more work opportunities and further develop the skills of our beneficiaries”, Abrahams said.

Abrahams said, “The greatest achievement of the WoF programme is that it has changed the lives of the 5 000 participating in the programme today, as well as that of the estimated 25 000 other dependents who have indirectly benefited from this programme”.

“We are immensely proud of the fact that our beneficiaries continue to be drawn from the ranks of the unemployed, poor youth and that today through our skills and development programmes, they have become confident and highly motivated young men and women making up a disciplined and highly trained fire fighting force who are highly regarded by international experts”, Abrahams said.



Three top WoF body-builders hamstrung by cash

The Helderberg base boasts three top fire fighters that also doubles up as body-builders. They are Nomzano Phumangene, Nikelo Mpana and Sinazo Hlolo.

But it was Hlolo that recently did the team proud when she won a gold metal in a David classic fitness competition in Rondebosch.

“I am very proud of her” said Phumangene who is training Hlolo and Mpana to be body-builders and also helping other fire fighters at the base with their fitness and motivation”.

“Body builders require a change in diet and it is difficult for us to afford certain foods, pay competition fees and buy the outfits required.”

“If we can get a sponsor we will be able to participate in a major competition in Umtate this coming September – at the moment we can’t go because we can’t afford it” Phumangene said.

Youth excel at WoF

He has slept in a cold prison cell, dared to take a taxi to a place that he had never heard of before and got up at 4h00 to jog up a mountain: all to ensure that he gets a job at WoF.

Now 23 year old Zibele Mona, relishes in the opportunities presented to him at WoF. He had just returned from the first prescribed burning training that was offered to a HAT officer. He did get the job as a fire fighter with WoF in Piketberg in 2011, moved over to HAT in 2012, became a Crew Leader Type 2 and never looked back.

"HAT Officers do not normally burn, we cut alien plants, but now we will be able to when requested" said Mona and confirmed that he views himself as multi skilled thanks to WoF.

Mona heard of WoF whilst spending time at the Chrysalis Youth Academy where he received training in a high angle course, which qualified him for the HAT position.

"I now have a career and can provide for my family, who still lives in Khayalitsha" said Mona.

Jason de Smidt, Mona's Regional Manager, speaks of Zibele as "very fit, great character, and committed to grow and improve as a leader". He leads from the front and continually tries to learn more and more about his work. "It is a pleasure to work with him", Jason said.

Before joining WoF, Mona was unemployed and had no hope for the future. Now he is employable because of his multi-skills acquired at WoF.



Riversdale maak WoF trots

Die Riversdal span het onlangs stof opgeskop in die gesigte van hul kompetisie in die Marathon in Hessequa fun Run. Hier is the deelnemers en hul tye. Well done to all!

- 1) Leon Van Eeden 1st 00:36:20 9km
 - 2) Lou-Hein Kortje 2de 00:37:26 9km
 - 3) Dawid Francies 2de 00:38:11 9km
 - 4) Fiona Dreyer 2de 00:50:30 9km
 - 5) Jerome Esau 2de 00:58:59 15km
 - 6) Hanolizia Geduld 2de 00:58:47 9km
- Micheal Hendriks 9de 00:43:48 9km

Hulle het almal in oudersdom groep van 19-29 jaar gehardloop en het ook medaljes ontvang.

James de Kela
SCFPA Base Manager
Riversdale, Western Cape

Western Cape's fastest runner aims high

Rashieda Langar, 22 based at Sedgefield is the fastest female runner in the Western Cape. She impressed recruiters when she ran the 2.4 in 9.80 minutes in April this year.

"I used to do long distance running in school, but did not really get the opportunity to run in recent years," she said.

"My wish is to one day become a fitness coach" she said and added that she really enjoyed the month long training in Nelspruit from which she and her team mates had just returned.



Being fit does not only have to happen at the base

Pakama Signela likes to lift heavy weights and plays soccer. This Crew Leader Type 2 says she enjoys fitness and it is one of the reasons she is very happy at WoF. Originally unemployed from the Eastern Cape, she has made Riversdale her home and loves her work as a Crew Leader. In her off she plays soccer with her friends and even has a personal coach from the SAPS to mentor her.

She says that her fellow fire fighters supports her soccer, but that they are all rugby players.



Crew Leader course professionalises first line of management in WoF

“The objective of our recent Crew Leader training session was to serve as a refresher for current Crew Leaders, but also to professionalise this first level of management within WoF” said Ray-aan Majiet, Regional Manager: Metro WoF.

“The course was also attended by Base Managers and CapeNature, totalling around 80 people” Majiet went on to say.

“Issues covered ranged from soft skills including: how to speak respectfully to each other, the importance of time management and what it means to be professional”.

Also high on the agenda was expectations from both Base Managers and Crew Leaders, lines of communication, production and what it means to different parties as well as Payroll and Health and Safety.



Ladismith excels in Nelspruit

The Ladismith Team came back from their 25 day course at the WoF Academy in Nelspruit on 05 June 2014. They received a trophy as a reward for being the best team during the period of this course. The team members are grateful for the learning experience and are looking forward to implement the skills they have learned.

(Lusheen Britz, SDO)



All kitted out – Well done, Ladismith!



Albert Snyman (Regional Manager) and Julanden van Wyk (SCFPA Base Manager) helps to orientate new Ladismith recruits in preparation for the training in Nelspruit

New Working on Fire Bases - SCFPA



Julanden van Wyk (Sedgefield base manager)



Ricardo Pietersen (Ladismith base manager)



Japie Hendrikz (Senior base manager)

The SCFPA has acquired an additional two Working on Fire fire fighting teams, one based in Ladismith and the other in Sedgefield. The Base Manager appointed to manage the Ladismith firebase is Ricardo Pietersen. Ricardo was previously stationed as a Crew Leader at the Witfontein WoF base, managed by CapeNature. The Base Manager appointed to manage the Sedgefield base is Julanden van Wyk, previously a fire fighter at Witelsbos. These two new teams fall under the guidance and management of the SCFPA and are a welcome addition to their current teams. They are up and running and have already started with production.

Excluding the Sedgefield and Ladismith teams, the SCFPA has also acquired a WoF team that will be based in Mossel Bay. Recruitment for this team will take place in early July. Juliana Boesak has been appointed as the Base Manager for the Mossel Bay base and she will be the first female base manager in the WoF program. Juliana will be funded by the SCFPA.

This extension of the fire fighting force in the Southern Cape will prove beneficial to all parties involved and are a huge contribution to the SCFPA's resources, especially considering the Southern Cape region has a whole year fire season.

Currently the SCFPA has six bases and Base Managers. Each of the Base Managers was a fire fighter or a Crew Leader before being

promoted to a higher position. This proves that the WoF programme contributes to the upliftment and improvement of their fire fighters' careers. The SCFPA are also capacitating the base managers by constantly providing them with additional training.

The SCFPA has purchased trucks for every base which allows the fire fighters to be transported to wildfires or other work being done like controlled burns and creating or maintaining firebreaks.

Base Manager Promoted

In January 2014, Japie Hendrikz, Base Manager of the Goudveld fire base, was promoted to Senior Base Manager, overseeing all the base managers and Working on Fire (WoF) teams allocated to the eastern region of the SCFPA.

Japie's key task will be to manage the day-to-day operations of the four SCFPA firebases. Among other duties, this will include mentoring and motivation of the base managers, overseeing the administration of the fire bases and coordination of the SCFPA fire fighters when dispatched to wild fires. He will also maintain the operational preparedness of SCFPA fire bases as well as assist the area managers and extension officers with the planning and preparation of prescribed burns undertaken by the SCFPA.

In addition to the promotion, Japie is also funded by the FynbosFire Project to complete

a Higher Certificate in Veldfire Management. He started at NMMU on the 3rd of February 2014.

Sharon Pietersen, from the Goudveld team, was also promoted to assistant base manager.

NOTICE TO ALL SCFPA FIRE FIGHTERS: STUDY OPPORTUNITY!!

Please contact Elske le Roux
Operational Support Officer
Southern Cape Fire Protection Association
Email: opsupofficer.scfpa@gmail.com
For more information regarding the course below, please contact your base manager.

VELDFIRE MANGEMENT CERTIFICATE - NMMU GEORGE CAMPUS

Bursary criteria

- The individual has to be a normal fire fighter. Not a Crew Leader or a Base Manager
- Minimum of 1 year in the programme
- Individual must have passed matric and should meet the admission requirements for the course. School subject: Maths/ Maths Literacy is a must.
- Must be a fire fighter from a SCFPA team
- Send in a CV including supporting documents
- 1-2 page essay on why you are the best candidate for the course.

Early birds plan year end function in Eden

Officials from the Eden District Municipality, the Southern Cape FPA and Working on Fire are working together in close partnership to ensure integrated fire management in their area and the best outcomes for citizens, the environment and the rich tourism attractions under their guard.

The SCFPA called an early meeting to plan the launch of three new bases (Ladismith, Sedgefield and Mosselbay) in partnership with stakeholders as well as a year end function for fire fighters.



Pictured together are FLRT: Paul Gerber (SCFPA), Shane Christians (WoF, GM) Deon van Wyk (Eden District Municipality), Gerhard Otto (Eden District Municipality)
Front: Dirk Smit (SCFPA) and Elske le Roux (SCFPA)

Veldies get ready for structural job market

The City of Cape Town hosted the third toughest fire fighter competition in South Africa on 6 & 7 June to cement relations and collaboration across the fire fraternity in the country.

This year the Eden District's Senior Fireman, Emile Conrad for the second time in a row won the coveted title of being the 'Toughest Firefighter Alive' (TFA) .

Chadley Stride, a WoF veld and forest fire fighter, also based at George fire base however gave the structural fire fighters a run for their money. He competed in all four activities including: rolling up the hose, carrying 80 kg dummy for 80 kms, climbing up a tower and tall building.

Stride was one of four volunteers from WoF George base who entered the competition. Other WoFies there included: John Joseph, Adriaan Isaacs and Ryno Wildeman. Other participants that entered were fire fighters from different municipalities, Armed Forces, Ports Authority, Aviation and Working on Fire.



The HO team was there to support our competitors



Four WoF volunteers entered the competition and did us proud

"In 2007 we started the structural programme as a pilot to contribute to a career path for our veld and forest fighters and to fill a gap in the market where municipalities were unable to. We currently have a total of 230 structurals based at 31 municipal fire stations across the country" Sakkie van der Merwe: GM for the WoF structural fire fighters said.

"We are very proud of our fire fighters competing here today with so much passion and outperforming the structurals – they are now ready for the structural fire fighters market" said Wanda Siximba, Western Cape Regional Manager: structurals.

DEA conducts data verification in the Western Cape



"Have everything at hand and know your bases" are the words of advise from Ray-ann Majiet, Regional Manager: Metro WoF.

DEA recently conducted data verification at the Newlands base that included confirming the number of people at the base, ghost employees and all data. "The outcome of the audit was positive with many lessons learnt", said Majiet.

How to stay safe after of the fire season

Our base partners utilise the crews in fire prevention interventions such as firebreaks, when they are not fighting unwanted wild land fires, or implementing integrated fire management initiatives – such as making fire breaks and clearing fuel loads.

The fire fighters also work in local communities helping rural people and school learners to understand fire, and to appreciate the potential benefits of responsible custodianship of their environment.

All year round it is important for fire fighters and all personnel to actively promote and encourage safety in the office, at home and wherever one moves.

If you see an unsafe act about to occur, please actively aid to prevent it from happening. If you see someone is going to trip, rush to their aid or call out. If someone is ignoring a safety sign e.g. aiming to run on a slippery surface, call out and stop them from falling.

Driving is an activity that can be dangerous to others on the road when people are not crossing road at proper road crossings or animals like dogs or cattle in rural areas, also in suburbs cross the road anywhere.

Drivers should at all times have his/her legal licence

Stay within the speed limit at all times, always wear a safety belt if it is provided.

Passengers must not get into a moving vehicle; wait until it has come to a complete standstill before you get in or out of the vehicle.

It is an excellent habit to drive with your vehicle lights on at all times – so other drivers can see you clearly.

Never leave a candle or burner unattended at home or at work, or play with candles – make sure children know it is dangerous and what the consequences can be.

Keep clothing away from heating appliances such as a heater – it is very dangerous.

Take care in the kitchen or where cooking is done – accidents whilst cooking account for many fires in the home.

Elmarie Van Niekerk

False Bay Fire Awareness

The 05th of June marked World Environment Day. The False Bay team did a Fire Awareness Presentation at the Mfuleni Community Hall. Various stakeholders attended including CapeNature, Soil for Life, traditional healers, Community Developments Workers to name but just a few.

The False Bay Team impressed the audience with the set up of a Kiddies Awareness Corner whilst the adults were partaking in presentations that were being done. *(Rayganah Rhoda, CFAO)*



SDO promotes winter warmers in Mamre

The Mamre team was recently involved in a winter warmers (feeding kids) project where they assisted a community organisation in collecting canned food, clothes and any items that can assist during the winter season. Cash donations were also accepted. These items are distributed to the underprivileged children within the Mamre community.

As a province, we stand together in protecting our children from the cold this winter.

Glynis Bennett

Crags reaches out

The Social development buddies of the Crags team identified three households of elderly/disabled people who needed assistance in cleaning their yards and repairing/fixing their fences. One of the houses was a walk through for people from one road to the next road. The owners of the house knew the situation was unsafe but they just weren't physically strong enough to repair their fences and financially they couldn't hire somebody to do the job. The Crags team reached out during youth month and assisted these people. *(Lusheen Britz, SDO)*



George fire fighters become communication specialists

For one day five fire fighters from the George Base have swopt their beaters for pens when they attended a basic Communications Workshop presented by the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) at the George Municipal boardroom arranged by Liesl Brink, Communication Officer.



"The aim of the workshop was to equip Community Development Workers with the necessary skills to communicate with their communities but also with other government and community structures" said Louis Botha, Deputy Director: GCIS

We have involved WoF as a pilot because the young people employed by WoF are also very active in their communities and would hopefully become more socially integrated with other local structures.

The fire fighters who attended namely Jesmene Botha, Jozelle Daniels, Zayno Meyer, Jaqualine Jafta and Andile Mpumela all said that they found the workshop very informative.

"The workshop was a good initiative to build the social capital of our fire fighters and to become aware of other career opportunities in their area" said Sherwin de Kella, Regional Manager.