

CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP AND BACK TO BASICS CAMPAIGN – WORKING ON FIRE

Working on Fire, is an award-winning Expanded Public Work Programme, which resides under the Department of Environmental Affairs and is implemented by Working on Fire (PTY) LTD. It has a rich history in creating work opportunities for the youth in South Africa by implementing integrated fire management practices and services. With our 14th Anniversary upon us, we reflect on our history and all our achievements and lessons learnt.

Looking into the future, it is clear we must work together if we want to ensure the programme is sustainable and continues to excel in delivering its objective of creating work opportunities for South Africa's unemployed youth, while saving lives, protecting the environment and restoring dignity among our personnel.

We would like to provide you an update on recent appointments and changes within the organisation to bolster the leadership within Working on Fire:

1. Mr Trevor Abrahams has been appointed as Managing Director, Working on Fire effective 09 May 2017. Mr Abrahams, served as Executive Chairman and then Managing Director (MD) between 2009 - 2014 and has remained committed to the programme and served as a Director on the Working on Fire Board.
2. Mr Piet van der Merwe recently joined as the new Working on Fire: Executive Operations. He will be responsible for the strategic objectives of the following departments: Aviation, Dispatch, Ground Operations, High Altitude Teams and Commercial Services. Mr. van der Merwe previously served as the MD of Working on Fire between 2006 – 2011.
3. Mr Abrahams has reconstituted the Working on Fire Executive Committee (EXCO) with the following members; (i) Sandiso Ntsomi, Executive: Finance, (ii) Piet van der Merwe, Executive: Operations, (iii) Jacob Mkhonto, Executive: Human Capital Management; (iv) Ancil Lee; Executive: Information Technology;(v) Winston Smit, Deputy Managing Director; (vi) Jacob Singo, Executive: Occupational Health & Safety and (vii) Luthfia Cader, Executive: Communications.

The EXCO endorsed this bulletin at its first meeting on 12 May 2017, in Nelspruit and welcomed Mr Abrahams and Mr van der Merwe back to WOF, both who have contributed in building the WOF programme in the past.



Newly Constituted WOF EXCO at first meeting in Nelspruit, 12 May. (L-R) Sandiso Ntsomi (Finance), Jacob Singo (OHS), Ancil Lee (IT), Trevor Abrahams (MD), Piet van der Merwe (Operations), Luthfia Cader (Communications), Winston Smit (Deputy MD) & Jacob Mkhonto (HCM)



To address a few of our issues recently raised by participants and management, EXCO has reaffirmed their commitment to the “Back to Basics” campaign within Working on Fire, which was called for in the WOF strategy meeting in January 2017.

We would hence like to take the opportunity to reaffirm the following:

4. The Working on Fire (PTY) LTD wants to reassure participants that while it implements the Working on Fire programme (an EPW Programme which resides under the Department of Environmental Affairs), all employment contracts for WOF employees will be offered for the duration of the DEA contract, which ends in March 2021.
5. Firefighters will resume working 7 days a week during the 5 months of the fire season and 5 days a week during the 7 months for the off season. Please note that teams may be released by base partners during “blue” FDI conditions over weekends during a fire season.
6. Public Holidays are paid days at the current daily rate when a participant is given off for that day or paid double if participants are required to work on a public holiday. Any outstanding monies owed due to participants will be paid once we finalise the assessment process.
7. To meet its contractual and safety obligations, it is imperative for Working on Fire operations to have Firefighters that are qualified through our Basic Training Programme and our Annual Yellow Card Training Camps. If not, we will have a workforce who cannot be utilised during the fire season, making Firefighters redundant.

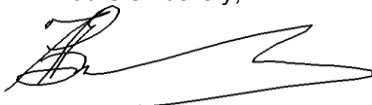
The Ministerial Determination defines required training as an important component of EPWP.
Section 17.5 states:

“A worker that does not attend required training events, without good reason, will have terminated the contract”.

8. We are reviewing the 2017/2018 budget and while there are constraints we are committed to retaining staff and will strive to ensure that future planning avoid prospects of job losses for WOF management.
9. To succeed, we must work as a team and as one team. Every team member must take responsibility and play their part, as we cannot afford to have us fall short of our goals and fail in providing the much-needed relief this programme provides to the unemployed youth in our country. We can only do so if we apply ourselves diligently, in a disciplined manner and treat each other with the respect we would want accorded to ourselves.
10. Going forward, we will not accommodate unwarranted cases of indiscipline. Nor will we accept anyone in WOF being treated with disrespect or cases of an abuse of power. We will deal with all such cases with firmness and fairly in accordance with the WOF disciplinary policies.
11. However, we cannot run a programme such as WOF solely or predominantly based on a disciplinary policy. We need the commitment for all in WOF to reach the programme’s objectives. I have met and spoken to many in the WOF family and I am assured that we have an overwhelming groundswell of goodwill and commitment among our personnel to do the right thing and reach even higher levels of achievement for the programme.

I thank you in advance for your support and co-operation.

Yours sincerely,



Trevor Abrahams
Managing Director: Working on Fire (PTY) LTD