



# WOFIRE NEWS

Saving Lives • Protecting the Environment • Restoring Dignity

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Working on Fire



Working on Fire - WOF TV News Channel



@wo\_fire

## Getting ready for winter fire season



Working on Fire - All hands on deck as the Winter Fire Season looms

Working on Fire teams throughout the country have been hard at work during the last few months preparing for the 2018 winter fire season. Most provinces have already completed their annual Yellow Card Training Camps which are aimed at ensuring that all firefighters are fit and ready for active duty in the upcoming fire season.

The 2018 community fire awareness campaigns will be launched nationally in the coming month. These campaigns



## Provinces conclude Yellow Card training

As the winter fire season looms, teams across the country are putting final touches to their preparations. Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North West and KwaZulu-Natal teams have attended Yellow Card Training Camps (YCTCs). The YCTCs are aimed at assessing the teams and firefighters' readiness to be deployed to the fire line. On completion, the firefighters are issued with Yellow Cards which qualify them to work on the fire line this winter fire season.

The camps focus on the mental and physical fitness of firefighters, equipment inspections which included personal protective clothing, practical implementation of Integrated Fire Management practices such as line construction, and strengthening teamwork, for example through the 10 km route march.

These firefighters have been issued with their Yellow Cards and are ready to tackle fires across the country. Other provinces will be conducting their YCTCs later this month.

aim to teach communities to be fire safe and to prevent unwanted veld and forest fires by raising awareness of the risks of fires. The campaigns empower those at risk to take responsibility for

reducing the risk and impact of fires in their communities.

Teams across the country have been conducting fuel load reduction, fire awareness activities in schools and

communities, and reaching out to a wider audience through radio broadcasts.

We urge all our firefighters to be vigilant on the fire line and wish them a safe winter fire season.




# FREEDOM DAY 2018

**The year of Nelson Rohlhlhla Mandela:** Towards full realisation of our freedom through radical socio-economic transformation

Working on Fire, through its various training and development programmes, has contributed towards the socio-economic upliftment of its participants.

Many former participants have found work outside of the programme in the formal employment sectors such as the police, the army and nature conservation agencies across South Africa.

Working on Fire has changed the lives of the 5000 participants in the programme today, as well as that of the estimated 25000 other dependents who have indirectly benefited from this programme.



#Mandela100

#FreedomMonth

#FreedomDay

#BeTheLegacy



# Editorial

Dear Readers

We are pleased to share with you our latest WOFIRE Newsletter.

Our newsletter has undergone a revamp with the focus on improving your reading experience and also to stay in touch with trends in the media industry.

However, we are continuing to tell the "Good Story" of Working on Fire and how this programme continues to save lives, protecting our environment and also restoring the dignity of our young participants.

Happy Reading!!!

## MD Message:

### Working on Fire - A good story to tell

**Trevor Abrahams**



The Western Cape fire season is quickly drawing to a close, as parts of the drought-ravaged Western Cape get much-welcomed rain. Our focus now shifts to preparing our firefighters in the northern provinces for the upcoming winter fire season.

Yellow Card Training Camps have been ongoing during April in our northern provinces and these were aimed at ensuring that all our firefighters are safe, fit and ready to be on active duty during this upcoming fire season.

I want to reiterate that all participants are required to attend compulsory Yellow Card Training in terms of Working on Fire's 'Best Operating Practices' (BOPs) and the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act. This is not negotiable.

Yellow Card Training is compulsory and only participants that pass the relevant training will be allowed to attend fires.

Failing to attend the mandatory Annual Yellow Card Training without good reason will lead to the termination of a participant's contract (Section 17.5 of the Ministerial Determination for EPWP Workers specifies that a worker who does not attend required training events, without good reason, will have terminated the contract).

I want to congratulate all our firefighters who have already successfully completed their training camps and on behalf of the Executive Committee and Management, I wish to extend our best wishes to you all for a safe fire season.

Working on Fire is committed to respecting the rights of all employees to join a union of their choice. It is important to recognise that these rights and obligations are enshrined in our laws. It is important that WOF firefighters understand what they can and cannot do in terms of these laws. Unprotected and wildcat strike actions and work stoppages are not protected by the law and WOF

# 13 years of working with fire and still going strong...

## Luthfia Cader - Working on Fire Communications Executive

Working on Fire Communications Executive, Luthfia Cader, was born and brought up in Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town, raised by loving parents who taught her and her siblings to work hard for what they wanted. Throughout her 13-year career at Working on Fire, Cader has lived by this strong work ethic.

Following a gap year after completing her matric, she received her first introduction to environmental work as an intern at the South African National Biodiversity Institute's Protea Atlas Project. This was followed by a move to Ukuvuka Operation Firestop, where she acquired valuable experience and skills in office and finance administration, as well as a healthy respect for the devastating power of wildland fires.

In 2005, she began her long service at WOF when she was appointed to the post of communications liaison officer. Here she developed skills in internal communication and website and newsletter content development. After three years in this role, she was promoted to Fire Awareness Manager where she also served for three years before rising to the position of Manager: Advocacy, Social Development and Communication in 2011.

Cader has also added value as a Board member of WOF between 2010 and 2017. She was appointed to the Executive Committee when she began serving as the Communications Executive in April 2015. Given her vast knowledge of the programme, various colleagues have dubbed her the 'WOF Encyclopaedia', 'Hard Drive' and 'Honorary Firefighter'.



*Well respected throughout the ranks from management to firefighters, many at WOF credit Cader with helping to mould them into the people they are today. Cader takes a different view, saying that if people were able to move up the ranks, it was because they worked hard and were determined to grow.*

As an example, she cites the appointment of 16 former firefighters in 2013, who she had to train as fire awareness officers within six months. She believes she and her management team could not have done it if they hadn't found people who were willing to be invested in and build on what they learned. Always proud of her association with the WOF family, she describes WOF as a "group of people that come together to serve others, that has no comparison."

Although admittedly a workaholic, she enjoys her time off with activities such as cooking, supporting community initiatives, coordinating family events, reading and listening to music. She and her husband, Maruwaan, frequently play host to relatives' children and greatly enjoy their role as favourite aunt and uncle.

will take the appropriate action where employees are guilty of misconduct in this regard and will strictly observe a 'no work no pay' rule.

I hence wish to caution firefighters who heed the calls of others to refuse to attend the Yellow Card assessments, ostensibly because of demands which have not been met. The CCMA has defined the WOF programme as an essential service, which means that strike activity by such workers are not protected in terms of the Labour Relations Act and hence are illegal.

### EPWP participants' 2018-2019 wage increases

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) has released the 2018/19 wage increases for EPWP workers and there will be some 4,395 EPWP employees in Working on Fire Pty Ltd who earn different rates, depending on their training and skills.

DEA has ensured that these wage rates, which are above the minimum EPWP rates in recognition of the training and qualifications of our firefighters, are harmonised across all the DEA's Natural Resource Management programmes (WOF, WFW, Working on Forests, Working on Oceans, etc.)

It is important to emphasise that the EPWP programmes are fundamentally poverty relief initiatives by government and must not be viewed as permanent employment. We recognise that the

general economic climate does not provide enough permanent jobs. However, many of our firefighters have succeeded in graduating from WOF to permanent employment, where their WOF experience and training serve as important assets in securing such jobs. WOF will increase its efforts to assist firefighters to find jobs in the formal economy in the years ahead.

The question is: "What are your plans for your future and what are you doing to realise your dreams?"

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Working on Fire is on Social Media |



Working on Fire is on YouTube (Working on Fire TV News)



Working on Fire is an Expanded Public Works Programme which resides within the Department of Environmental Affairs.





# Firefighters undergo refresher training for fire season



WOF firefighters upon receiving their Yellow Cards

Working on Fire firefighters are continually trained to be able to suppress veld and forest fires. Close to 600 firefighters in Mpumalanga successfully concluded this year's advanced firefighting refresher course known as the Yellow Card Training Camp, in preparation for the 2018 winter fire season. Hosted at the Nelspruit Academy from 3 – 13 April 2018, the camp saw scores of firefighters participating in 2,4 kilometre runs, push-ups, pull-ups and advanced firefighting techniques, which included a fire walk.

Yellow Card Training Camps ensure that all firefighters are fit and ready for active duty during each fire season.

"I am immensely proud of you," said Assistant General Manager Ovie Sehlabela, addressing firefighters at a passing out parade in Mpumalanga. "You have shown and continue to convey your commitment to saving lives and protecting the environment."

Sehlabela urged vigilance during the fire season and advised firefighters to become change agents in their communities.

"You guys are experts in this field. Please go back to your communities to inspire and teach people about fire prevention," she said.



Lebogang Maseko, Mpumalanga Communication Officer

# Limpopo firefighters gearing up for fire season

It's that time of the year when WOF firefighters across Limpopo are preparing themselves for the Yellow Card Training Camps (YCTCs). The YCTCs are held annually to prepare the firefighters mentally and physically for the winter fire season.

"The reason we take our firefighters through the Yellow Card assessments is because we want to emphasise their personal safety among other precautions. Fighting wildfires is unpredictable and needs one to have a sharp mind," says Tlou Mabitsela, the Limpopo South Regional manager.

The Lephalale Team is one of the Limpopo teams that have started preparing themselves for the YCTC. When they are not out implementing



Lephalale firefighters doing a route march as part of the Yellow Card Training Camp preparations

integrated fire management systems, the team is occupied with physical training at the base to get their bodies into shape.

"Apart from training we also give each other moral support and work on the weak points of the team. Teamwork plays a major role at WOF, so in strengthening our teamwork we know we can conquer anything," says Tshepho Kgakoe, the Lephalale Base Communications Representative.

The Limpopo YCTC will take place from 2 – 9 May 2018.



Matema Gwangwa, Limpopo Provincial Communication Officer



Gauteng General Manager Stephen Boyes congratulating firefighters for obtaining Yellow Cards during a passing out parade

# High pass rate at training

At the recent Yellow Card Training Camp held at the Agricultural Research Council's Roodeplaat youth centre, 372 Gauteng firefighters succeeded in obtaining their Yellow Cards.

General Manager for Working on Fire in Gauteng, Stephen Boyes, told firefighters during the passing out parade that their safety was his number one priority, and that he did not want to see any firefighter perish or injured on the fire line or in the line of duty.

The General Manager congratulated and wished every firefighter a safe winter fire season and said he was satisfied with the fitness levels and readiness of the firefighters.

"The participation of firefighters during this camp was good and heart-warming. It is all systems go come fire season. We are ready. The pass rate is good," says Boyes.

Tankiso Motloun, a Crew Leader for the Suikerbosrand Team, says it was a refreshing and exciting training assessment, for which the team had prepared well. "We are now ready for the fire season, come the 1st of June. I am pleased with the performance of my team. They did very well. We trust that all crew members will continue to comply with safety regulations at all times."



Parapara Makgahlela, Gauteng Provincial Communication Officer

# Firefighters help residents recover after shack fire

Working on Fire firefighters from the Riversdale Team in the Western Cape recently assisted when fire swept through Enkanini, an informal settlement outside the town.

Upon arriving at the scene, the firefighters ran from house to house to warn people of the fire and helped to evacuate residents who were still trying to salvage what they could.

The firefighters were able to extinguish the fire alongside members of the Hessequa Fire and Rescue Services and various residents who assisted, limiting the number of burnt structures

to just over 20. The team went a step further and later collected clothing and food items to help the families who had lost everything in the blaze.

Burnett Heskwa, Crew Leader for the Riversdale Team, says, "I went to visit the community after the fire to spend time with them and ask them how they were. They said that they really appreciated us helping them out of their homes and the donation of food and clothing."



Lauren Howard, Western Cape Provincial Communication Officer



WOF Riversdale firefighters assist the Hessequa Fire and Rescue Services in containing a blaze in the Enkanini community



# Communities taught to be fire safe



Working on Fire continues to spread the message about being fire safe

The Working on Fire programme in the Eastern Cape continued to show its commitment to protecting the environment and saving lives by minimising the number of fires the province experienced during the 2017 winter fire season. Community Fire Awareness Officer Thulani Mkhosi has been conducting FireSafe workshops since the start of the year in communities at risk of fires.

Mkhosi empowered more than 20 community members in Upper Rhabula near Stutterheim on how to be fire safe.

“We are trying to reduce the numbers of fires in the province by giving FireSafe workshops in communities so that they are able to prevent fires and know what to do in case of fires,” Mkhosi says. “This is also done to get communities ready for the upcoming winter fire season which will start in June.”

## North West teams ready for winter fire season

Firefighters’ physical and mental fitness – check; equipment inspections – check; personal protective clothing inspections – check; individual equipment operation assessments – check; First Aid kit inspections – check. Yes, North West has been declared fit and ready to tackle the coming winter fire season which officially starts in June.

Rain did not dampen the spirit of firefighters from the North West Working on Fire teams as 600 firefighters from 17 teams attended the Yellow Card Training Camp from 9 to 22 April.

Partners and stakeholders such as the local municipality, Potchefstroom Fire Protection Association, North West Umbrella Fire Protection Association (NWUFPA) and the South African Police Service attended the closing ceremony and witnessed the readiness of our firefighters.

While the camps were aimed at refreshing the firefighters’ skills and ensuring that they were mentally and physically ready for the winter fire season, the North West General Manager, Noluvuyo Mashologu, emphasised the importance of firefighters’ safety on and off the fire line. She thanked the

## Controlled burns aims to reduce the risk of fires

Working on Fire firefighters in the Southern Cape assisted the Southern Cape Fire Protection Association (SCFPA) in managing controlled burns at the Vermaakliheid Nature Reserve and Protea Village, clearing close to 400 hectares of veld.

“The SCFPA facilitates the process with various departments to make it possible for landowners to do more controlled burns, optimise the management of agricultural land and reduce the risk of fires. The landowners work closely together with the SCFPA and fire brigade services in the thorough planning and execution of controlled burns.

He urged community members to make sure that they remove fuel loads near their houses and properties to prevent runaway fires from destroying their homes and properties.

Following the workshop, attendees vowed to start building firebreaks in their areas to prevent fires from spreading.



Nthabiseng Mokone, Eastern Cape Provincial Communication Officer



All teams participated in various activities which tested their fitness, readiness, personal protective clothing and equipment

firefighters for their efforts in ensuring the province and its communities were prepared for the fire season.

Addressing the gathering, NWUFPA chairman Dr Kobus Roux said, “I want to thank everyone on behalf of the community, landowners, Fire Protection Associations and state institutions for your unselfish and brave actions in keeping our environment safe and beautiful. Your work must be appreciated much more. On behalf of the NWUFPA, I want to reiterate our full commitment towards the programme, staff and firefighters and wish everybody a safe and successful fire season.”



The WOF Riversdale Team assisting the SCFPA with a controlled burn at the Vermaakliheid Nature Reserve

Many of the landowners don’t have the capacity to conduct the controlled burns themselves, therefore they make use of the SCFPA resources and Working on Fire teams available to them,” says Philip Wilken, SCFPA extension officer in Riversdale.

Controlled burns are carried out at local, provincial and national levels in order to create a sustainable and well-balanced environment, reduce wildfire damage and promote the beneficial use

of fire. Controlled burns are essential for biodiversity and some agricultural practices, and are a common strategy in fire risk reduction, reduction of dense vegetation, ecological rejuvenation of fynbos, preparation of land for agriculture, rejuvenation of grazing fields and the reduction of alien vegetation.



Lauren Howard, Western Cape Provincial Communication Officer

## Zero tolerance to killer fires

Fire awareness education becomes vital for communities as the winter fire season draws closer, says Lerato Mokwena, who says one life lost is one too many.

“As community fire awareness officer, I say zero tolerance to killer fires this winter fire season,” says Mokwena.

She is currently conducting more follow-up workshops with communities. Mokwena says it is futile to educate and not check the impact of the training.

“I am emphasising the importance of safety and the precautionary measures to be implemented. We do care about the people,” she says.

She says WOF will be collaborating with municipalities’ public safety departments to roll out the winter fire awareness campaign in mid-May. The purpose is to ensure people stay safe from the dangers of fires.



Lerato Mokwena raising fire awareness in communities

Mokwena says that although they have already hit the ground running to ensure the maximum safety of the people, the West Rand region required more attention. Already with the good rains, there are extra fuel loads across the province. She says as a busy and dangerous fire season is anticipated, the fire safety message is all the more important.



Parapara Makgahlela, Gauteng Provincial Communication Officer

## Semaneng community members empowered

In preparation for the upcoming winter fire season in Limpopo the WOF Provincial Community Fire Awareness Officer, Sello Mathhare, has been hard at work conducting FireSafe workshops and presentations in various communities across the province.

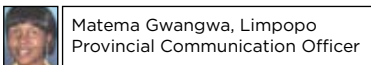
“During the month of April we’ve been educating the communities about the importance and dangers of wildfires around the theme of mines,” says Mathhare.

Semaneng is in a mining community and those in attendance were educated about the fires that might occur due to explosions. They were also educated about taking care of themselves and the environment, and what precautions to put in place to ensure their personal safety and the safety of their properties.



Sello Mathhare conducting a FireSafe workshop for the community of Semaneng village

“The support and attendance have been great and we believe that together we will be able to fight and reduce the unwanted fires,” says Mathhare.



Matema Gwangwa, Limpopo Provincial Communication Officer



# Firefighters pay homage to Mama Winnie

The global community mourned the death in April of the late struggle stalwart Mama Winnie Nomzamo Madikizela-Mandela. An official memorial service was hosted on 11 April 2018 at Orlando Stadium, located in the township that she called home, followed by a funeral service.

WOF female firefighters in Mpumalanga paid their own homage to her by committing to serve the country through the implementation of Integrated Fire Management (IFM) services.

This commitment came as more than 600 firefighters based in Mpumalanga successfully concluded this year's Yellow Card Training Camp on 13 April 2018, hosted at the Nelspruit Training Academy.

Addressing participants, Ground Operations Manager Thabiso Mohale said, "the struggles Mama Winnie fought and those that we are fighting are completely different, but we ought to take over the baton from her and do our best."

In the same way that she championed the disadvantaged, Working on



Female firefighters, led by Ground Operations Manager Thabiso Mohale, pay tribute to struggle icon Winnie Nomzamo Madikizela-Mandela

Fire prides itself in being a leading Expanded Public Works Programme that has created more than 4 000 job opportunities and imparted skills and training to unemployed youth in

disadvantaged communities throughout South Africa.



Lebogang Maseko, Mpumalanga Communication Officer



WOF kids playing with their parents and listening to the SDP

## KwaZulu-Natal hosts WOF Family Values Picnic

Hloniphile Ndlovu, the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Practitioner, hosted the first Working on Fire family picnic with the Richmond Team. This is a project where all participants are invited to bring their children to the base or a nearby park for a 'Family Values Picnic', or a visit to a museum or educational site in the area.

Ndlovu says, "The objectives of the Family Values Picnic were the development of participants' personal well-being, strengthening the family structure, encouraging participants to talk and spend time with their children, creating effective social role modelling and generating a positive spirit in society."

Ndlovu encouraged participants to keep a 'Work on a Family' file, firefighters shared information about their family histories and their children made drawings to illustrate the information. Children also played games with their parents, and they also had a financial intelligence session and a sexuality talk.

"I had great feedback from both participants and their children. They enjoyed all the sessions, especially the games. The children are motivated to save their pocket money and parents are willing to support them in their goals," Ndlovu says.



Nompilo Zondi, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Communication Officer

## Values workshops aim to increase discipline and integrity



Selaelo Mathokwane conducting a workshop with Free State participants

Working on Fire Social Development Practitioner (SDP) Selaelo Mathokwane has been on a mission conducting various workshops with Working on Fire participants throughout the Free State. The aim of these workshops are to teach participants the Working on Fire values and how to align themselves with these values and to incorporate them into their daily lives.

The Working on Fire values are Accountability, Teamwork, Excellence, Adaptability and Making a Difference. By applying these values Working on Fire in the Free State aims to

be the top-performing EPWP with participants that encompass all the values.

Mathokwane says, "As Working on Fire employees we should be able to live our organisational values, not only at work but also in our personal capacities. My hope is that these workshops will have a positive effect on our participants and that through this, we will have an increased level of discipline and integrity in all of our teams."



Wayne Mokhethi, Free State Provincial Communication Officer

## Participants excel in the Three Mountains Challenge

Participants from Working on Fire Free State recently competed in the Three Mountains Challenge, a multi-stage cycling and trail running event that takes place annually in the small town of Clocolan in the province. This gruelling race takes place in four stages over four days. It includes a night race/prologue and three day stages.

Lerato Chaotsane finished in second position in the ladies' race, while Ntwaki Lebakeng finished fourth in the ladies' running race. Manuel Ratseki participated in the men's race and ended in third position while Molefi Salemane finished second in the men's combo racing which includes cycling and running.

Regional Manager David Mofokeng says, "I'm very proud of the



Molefi Salemane from Clocolan Base

achievements of the participants in this race. People come from all over the province and country to compete in this race and for them to still do well in these races shows that they truly have talent and a passion for the sport."



Wayne Mokhethi, Free State Provincial Communication Officer





Newly appointed GOM's message

## Newly appointed GOM's message for coming fire season

Armed with five years' experience in the programme, Antoinette Busisiwe Jini is the newly appointed Eastern Cape Ground Operations Manager (GOM).

Jini, who joined the programme in 2012 as a Regional Manager in Mpumalanga, is the first woman GOM in the province and is ready to take on the challenge as the province prepares for the winter fire season.

Jini says some teams are busy with fuel load reductions while others are conducting fire awareness in schools and in communities to educate people about being fire safe and ready for the fire season.

"Most fires happen during fire seasons as a result of people leaving stoves unattended or candles near curtains and throwing away cigarettes without putting them out completely," she says. "We are utilising radio stations to encourage people to be vigilant during this fire season."

She says, "We will also top up Eastern Cape teams after approval and we will maintain the good relationships that we have with partners."



Nthabiseng Mokone, Eastern Cape Provincial Communication Officer

## Crew Leader coaches local youth athletes



Thuso Mongale accompanied by the youth he is currently mentoring

Thuso Mongale, a Type 1 Crew Leader from the Clocolan Base in the Free State, has been kept busy with a project to uplift the youth of his community. Mongale is a seasoned long-distance athlete and has been transferring his wealth of knowledge in athletics to local youth. He has been coaching young learners aged nine to 14 years in athletics and his labour is bearing fruit.

Malehloa Salemane from Hlohlolwane Primary School in Clocolan, who is being mentored by Mongale, was selected to participate in the prestigious National Championships where she competed in the 1200 m race for girls under 11 years

of age. Malehloa made it to the finals and finished in 8th place with a time of 4 minutes 29 seconds.

"I decided to mentor the youth in my community in athletics because I have learned a lot from running which made it easy for me to pass my Crew Leader course. I thought it would only be fair to pass this positive activity in my life on to them. My hope is that athletics will improve their lives the same way that it has improved mine," says Mongale.



Wayne Mokhethi, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State

## Participants improve skills to exit programme

Simon Mathala and Jan Madisha of the Leeuwnfontein Team are preparing for their positive exit from the programme after doing security training. The friends have known each other for years.

"We used to save money together for our training. We did firearms and are currently busy with our driver's licences. They say the training gives them hope for a better future.

Madisha says unemployment is weighing heavily on young people like him. He says the programme gave him hope and the ability to feed and clothe himself.

"I know that I will find an opportunity to advance my goals one day. My colleague and I have charted this process of upskilling ourselves because material conditions at home are dire and need to be fixed now and urgently," says Madisha.

They agree that they have learned much in the programme, and it is only by pushing themselves harder that they will break the cycle of poverty.

They have been applying for security officer positions at various companies.



Jan Madisha of the Leeuwnfontein Team has completed security training

"We regret having done this security course so late. Had we had foresight of the future we could have paved the way for new participants to come in," says Mathala.



Parapara Makgahlela, Gauteng Provincial Communication Officer

## Former firefighter has made progress at Working on Fire

'The Working on Fire programme developed me into the woman I am today'. These are the words of Nokwanda Makuzeni, who was recruited as a firefighter and is now a Type 3 Dispatcher in the Eastern Cape.

Makuzeni joined the WOF programme in 2010 at Qumbu Base. A year later she was sent on the Crew Leader Type 2 Course which she passed.

"I became the leader of my team. Though it was not easy, I worked hard and I became one of the best leaders," says 33-year-old Makuzeni.

In 2013 she was transferred to the Hogsback Team where she worked well with her team. "As a leader, I supported

my crew members during fitness tests, during fires and when conducting fire awareness in schools and communities," says Makuzeni.

Makuzeni says all the skills she learned as a firefighter and Crew Leader led to her getting the position of Type 3 Dispatcher in the provincial office.

"I advise firefighters to work hard, be patient, have goals and use the skills acquired from the programme to better themselves outside the programme," says Makuzeni, who celebrates seven years of success in the programme.



Nthabiseng Mokone, Eastern Cape Provincial Communication Officer



Nokwanda Makuzeni is currently a Type 3 Dispatcher at the provincial office



# Former firefighter finds employment at SANParks



Nomawabo Saul thanks the WOF programme for the skills she acquired

Nomawabo Saul, a former firefighter from Tsitsikamma Base in the Eastern Cape, thanks the Working on Fire programme for the skills she acquired. Saul was recently employed by SANParks as an Environmental Monitor.

“Getting this job made me so happy. I want to thank WOF as I am where I am today because of the programme,” she says.

Twenty-eight-year-old Saul is originally from Qumbu but due to the lack of job opportunities in the area joined the programme at the Tsitsikamma Base, more than 300 km away in the western part of the province.

“I joined the programme in 2016 as a firefighter after dropping out of college due to financial problems,” says Saul.

A few months after joining the programme she was selected to be the Base Communications Representative (BCR) for the team.

“That was an amazing opportunity for me as it helped me to be a better person when it comes to communications skills, presentation skills, writing skills and being a better photographer. Some of these skills are helping me in my current work,” says Saul.

She advises firefighters to work hard, be patient and always have a goal in life as that would take them far.



Nthabiseng Mokone, Eastern Cape Provincial Communication Officer

At Working on Fire we remain committed to restoring dignity to disadvantaged communities across the country by equipping unemployed youth with the skills and experience to better their chances of gaining permanent employment outside the programme.

Recently, 10 former firefighters employed by Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife celebrated the completion of their training at a passing out parade that took place in Midmar, Howick.

After passing the fitness requirements, the former participants went through a 13-week intensive training course. They will now be deployed as field rangers at various bases where they will continue to protect the environment, only now with the focus on the animals that habitat it.

Ntombifuthi Gumede, a former Type 2 Crew Leader from the KZN Mbazwana Base, says she is grateful to the programme.

“I know I am where I am today because of Working on Fire providing me with the necessary skills and experience over the years,” says Gumede.

# Former firefighters are now field rangers



Former firefighters at their Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife passing out parade

The achievements of the field rangers will motivate other WOF firefighters in the province to never give up on their dreams. The KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Management wishes all

WOF alumni all the best in their new careers.



Nompilo Zondi, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Communication Officer

# WOF communication skills are coming in handy

Former firefighter and Base Communications Representative for the Heidelberg Team, Sibongile Zwane, is now a call centre agent in Pretoria. Zwane joined the programme in 2014.

She says, “I enjoyed presenting fire awareness to learners and kids at crèches. That was the biggest contribution I made to communities. Educating and communicating with people excites me.”

This made her see the positive impact she made in the lives of community members. The WOF programme helped her be where she is today and gave her hope for a better future. The communications experience she gained through fire

awareness activities as a BCR sharpened her skills for her new job, as part of her responsibilities is to communicate effectively and efficiently with clients.

“I got the confidence to communicate with people when I started engaging various communities, schools and crèches in fire awareness activities,” says Zwane.

At times she has to deal with difficult clients but with the communications skills she acquired she is able to resolve their problems.



Parapara Makgahlela, Gauteng Provincial Communication Officer



Sibongile Zwane is currently a call centre agent in Pretoria

# WOF welcomes new firefighters

Working on Fire’s key objectives remain job creation and skills development for the marginalised youths across the country. Our team based at the Sasol Plantation in Secunda has welcomed nine newly trained and appointed firefighters, who also attended the advanced firefighting refresher course that was held at the Nelspruit Training Academy in April.

The new recruits underwent extensive firefighting training and were certified fit and ready to be deployed during the fire season.



Newly trained firefighters pose for a snapshot

“These young men are from different marginalised communities who have joined the programme to take the lead in environmental awareness and conservation,” says Joseph Ngobeni, the Base Manager at Sasol.

Ngobeni notes that the partnership between WOF and Sasol spans a period of 10 years and continues to grow.

“This team has been housed at the Sasol Plantation since 2007. Some of our participants have since left the programme, securing formal employment with Sasol,” he says.



Lebogang Maseko, Mpumalanga Communication Officer

# BLOW THE WHISTLE

ON UNETHICAL ACTIVITIES  
IN YOUR WORKPLACE



Do not tolerate unethical  
behaviour **in your workplace!**



Be a part of the solution!  
**Not the problem!**



Your identity will  
**remain a secret!**



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