



# WOFIRE NEWS

RESTORING DIGNITY • SAVING LIVES • PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

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*High risk areas to be monitored*



Firefighters at Emlwane Farm fire

The KwaZulu-Natal Utrecht team responded to a call of a fire at Emlwane Farm on 16 July. The team fought the fire for almost four hours before it was finally suppressed. According to the team's Base Communication Representative, Zamani Nkosi, the fire was the second the team had responded to since the start of the fire season.

The cause of the fire is still unknown and the team plans to keep a close eye on high fire risk areas.

Content supplied by KZN Base Communication Representatives

## Limpopo firefighters battle first major wildfire in province

Firefighters in Limpopo were dispatched to fight a wildfire that was threatening the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) plantations in Soekmekaar as well as the neighbouring farms. The fire started on Friday, 22 July 2016, outside the DAFF plantation and jumped into the nearby plantations.

"Our ground and aerial resources battled these fires in the plantations. I want to thank the Letaba Fire Protection Association for availing their resources to contain the fire," said Sam Maepa, the General Manager for Working on Fire in Limpopo.

Nelson Nemukula, Deputy Director-Commercial Forestry at DAFF, told WOFire News: "We worked very closely with the WOF firefighters as well as the farmers from the surrounding areas and that contributed to the fire being suppressed before the further damage was caused. We lost about 300ha due to the fire."



**Matema Gwangwa**, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo



## KZN Teams go all out to prevent fires

A number of teams from the province have been putting in fire prevention measures at communities they have identified as high fire risk areas. The aim is to ensure these areas

experience fewer or no fires at all during this fire season. The Utrecht, Ingogo, Kokstad and Normandien teams have been constructing firebreaks, and conducting line construction

and fuel load reduction at Buffels Hoek mountains, Emlwane Farm, Highlands Farm at Harding, Balele Game Park and Neck Farm. The teams will continue conducting

prevention activities and fire awareness workshops to ensure communities are ready for this fire season and know what to do in case of a fire.



Content supplied by KZN Base Communication Representatives



# Editorial

## Dear Readers

Thank you for taking time to read this, our July WOFire News Newsletter.

We are pleased to dedicate this edition to all the participants and management in WOF who participated in various activities including several community upliftment events in support of the 67 Minutes for Mandela Campaign.

This newsletter is all about our participants. We encourage you to send us your stories, however big or small.

Happy reading!

## MD Message

Llewellyn Pillay



We are currently in the midst of the winter fire season and have seen quite a reduction in fires compared to the same period in previous years.

A number of factors have contributed to the significant drop in fires thus far this season.

We have seen much better preparedness through the various partnerships between local authorities, land owners, Fire Protection Associations and community members. Through our engagement with these sectors there has been a much more vigilant implementation of our Integrated Fire Management plans. Fire prevention measures put in place included prescribed burning, fuel load reduction, community fire awareness campaigns and early warning detection systems.

From our perspective, the partnerships between landowners, FPAs and local fire authorities have worked well this year and, with the recent launch by the Minister of Agriculture of the National Veld and Forest Fire Working Group, a lot more will now be done to ensure compliance with the provisions of the National Veld and Forest Fire Act.

The rain experienced in some of our northern provinces, while welcomed by our farming communities, does create conditions conducive to increased fuel loads, which could pose a fire risk later on during the drier winter months. I want to urge our firefighters to remain vigilant throughout these next few months and to stay safe on the fire line.

Let me also thank all our participants and management for their contributions during the recent Mandela Day activities. I am profoundly proud of the fact that in all our provinces we contributed to 'living the Madiba legacy' by doing various community-related activities.

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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 of the Department of Environmental Affairs.



Our premium news products, WOFire News and WOF TV, have the single objective of being informative!

They are there to keep our participants informed about what's happening in WOF across the country.

WOF TV News and WoFire News are dedicated to the hard work of our participants and aim to focus on their stories, not only in relation to their work in WOF but also how they have grown and developed in the Programme.

Furthermore we feature many stories of participants who took responsibility for their own lives and also extended their compassion to others.

Readers are welcome to send us their stories in their home language and we will assist with translation and editing.

Email your story to **news@wofire.co.za** or submit them via your local Provincial Communication Officers, Regional Managers, Base Managers or Crew Leaders.

## Eastern Free State teams do their part to prevent unwanted fires

The Eastern Free State was hit hard by fires in previous fire seasons which has resulted in teams going the extra mile to prevent such fires. The Bethlehem, Golden Gate and Clarens teams are conducting daily fire prevention activities, including constructing firebreaks and doing fuel reduction. The aims of these activities are to prevent runaway fires from damaging property and to protect the environment by limiting the spread of these fires.



Limakatso Khalianyane, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State



# Working on Fire partners with Municipality to reduce fires

After responding to a shack fire near their base, the Modimolle participants took it upon themselves to bring about change in the community.

Working on Fire, together with Modimolle Municipality, embarked on a door-to-door fire awareness campaign at the Phagameng informal settlement in Modimolle. The objective was to educate community members about the impact of fire and how they could prevent shack fires and protect their homes.

Since the start of the fire season, the Modimolle Team has responded to two shack fires in Phagameng informal settlement. At the first fire that occurred at the beginning of June, the firefighters and a community member rescued two children between the ages of four and six years. The second fire was reported just a week after the first. In both incidents, the WOF participants were alerted by the unusual smoke they saw coming from the informal settlement.

“As Working on Fire, our key objective is to save lives and to protect the environment. We might be the veld and forest firefighters but if there’s a fire taking place near us we will always respond and assist where we can irrespective of the type of fire,” says Letters Lehutso, a Type 1 Crew Leader at Modimolle Base.


More than 13 shack fires were reported to the municipality since the start of the fire season.

Upon investigation it was discovered that almost all the fires were caused by negligence. This prompted WOF to join hands with the municipality to prevent more fires.

“We have been fortunate so far that no lives were lost in all the shack fires that have been reported. We managed to visit about 55 households in Phagameng in one day to distribute the message of fire awareness to the communities. We will continue to educate them about the fires until we get to zero fires in this community,” says Sarah Skosana, Disaster Management Officer at Waterberg District Municipality.

During the door-to-door campaign community members were given the emergency numbers to call to report shack fires. Residents can call Waterberg Disaster Management Control Room at 0800 111 660 or Modimolle Fire Department at 082 807 8152. Both numbers are manned by 24-hour operators.

“I am grateful for the assistance that the WOF firefighters gave me when they rescued my shack which was burning. May they keep up the good work,” says community member Cecilia Ngoepe.



**Matema Gwangwa**, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo



WOF firefighters doing door-to-door fire awareness at Phagameng in Modimolle

## North West puts fire prevention measures in place

It has been a month since the fire season started. The North West firefighters have been assisting landowners to prepare firebreaks as required by law on their boundaries where there is a reasonable risk of veldfire, to protect their land and other property and farms, and minimise the risk to lives and the environment.

The teams were hard at work constructing these firebreaks throughout the province even before the beginning of the fire season to prevent the possible spread of wildfires.

Molemane Base Communication Representative (BCR) Botshelo Marosane says they have been busy at the Molemane Game Reserve preventing possible wildfires from spreading around the game reserve and neighbouring farms.

Tsholofelo Moumakwa, a BCR from Castello Base, says they have created firebreaks and have done block burns over the



Castello and Molemane Teams hard at work doing firebreaks

past weeks in the central region to assist landowners to comply with the Veld and Forest Fire Act.



**Patricia Maanelo**, Provincial Communication Officer, North West

## Nebo Team helps stakeholders to be FireSafe



Nebo Team in Limpopo creating firebreaks at St Rita's Hospital

Working on Fire participants from the Nebo Team are working hard to ensure that the stakeholders from their area are FireSafe during this winter fire season.


When they are not doing fire awareness education at the schools and in the communities, the Nebo Team is helping landowners to prepare for the winter fire season. As part of the preparations, they created fire belts, firebreaks and block burns, and did manual fuel load reduction.

One of their Integrated Fire Management projects was to ensure that St Rita's Hospital was FireSafe and compliant with the Veld and Forest Fire Act. They created firebreaks for the hospital and educated hospital employees on how to identify fire risks at their homes and how to prevent fires.

“We are working hard to prevent veld and forest fires and this year we believe that the number of fires in our area will drop significantly,” says Katlego Thipe, the Base Communications Representative of Nebo.

The team has been working closely with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to create fire belts at the nearby plantation and also to remove unwanted fuel around the plantation.

Since the start of the fire season, no fires have been reported in their area, which shows the fire awareness education the team has provided is helping.



**Matema Gwangwa**, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo

## Mitchell’s Plain learners now FireSafe

Western Cape False Bay Team’s Base Communications Representative, Babalwa Mphabaniso, coordinated a fire awareness session at the Weltevreden Recreation Centre.

Twenty-five learners are now FireSafe after learning about the importance of in-house safety during the fire awareness lesson.

“The lesson was very clear and the children could share their input during the session. Very well done to the firefighters,” says Veronica Hendricks, Principal of the Weltevreden Recreation Centre.

Community fire awareness activities will continue throughout the province during the off-season. These activities aim to teach communities how to be FireSafe and to prevent unwanted veld and forest fires. They also raise awareness of the risk of veld and forest fires and empower those at risk to reduce the risk and impact of fires in their communities.



BCR Denslin van Wyk conducting a fire awareness session



**Lauren Howard**, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape



# Base Communication Representatives received training throughout country



## Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape Communication Cluster trained 33 firefighters from the province to become Base Communications Representatives (BCRs). These young men and women will serve as links between management and their bases.

The training took place in Langeni in the East region and Van Stadens in the West region, from 26 to 30 June. As in other provinces, the BCRs were equipped with writing, presentation, photography and social media skills. They were also taught to capture and update statistics at base level on a database and how to conduct school and community fire awareness activities.

One of the BCRs from the Joe Gqabi Team, Asanda Mbonzana, said after the training that she feels ready to use the skills obtained from the training.

“Even before I became a BCR I loved taking pictures of our activities at the base and

presenting when we conducted fire awareness so the training has developed me and given me more knowledge,” explained Asanda. She also thanked WOF for developing their skills above and beyond firefighting.

The BCRs were also assessed to ensure that they understood what they were taught and were able to implement what they were trained on in their work.

The Fire Awareness Training Officer, Zola Hans, said that the BCRs also conducted door-to-door awareness in the area near the training venue to strengthen their presentation skills.

The GOM from the West region, Mxoli Cabela, wished all the BCRs the best and assured them of the full support of the Eastern Cape management.



**Nthabiseng Mokone**, Provincial Communication Officer, Eastern Cape

## North West

The North West Communications Cluster hosted a Base Communications Representatives (BCR) training event at Boskop Dam Nature Reserve from 27 to 30 June.

The 18 participants who attended and completed the three days of training will be the direct communication and awareness links between the Communications Cluster and bases. Information regarding events, awareness and resources will feed down from the Communication Cluster to the bases and vice versa.

After the presentation session, the BCRs did a door-to-door practical and assessments to ensure they understood what they learned.

The objective of the training was to develop effective communication at base level by equipping BCRs with writing, presentation and photography skills. They were also trained in coordinating schools and community-based fire awareness activities, capturing statistics at base level and updating and maintaining the base profile.

One of the BCRs, Lesego Lekote, says, “I would like to thank Working on Fire and the Communications Cluster for the opportunity they gave us, the inspiration, motivation and



North West BCRs with members of the Communications Cluster and the NW GM, Noluvuyo Mashologu

everything they taught us. I am now inspired and can't wait to go back to the base and start writing as I have always longed for it.”

The Fire Awareness Training Officer, Sophy Dinko, says, “The training went well and we are glad we have managed to equip the participants with the necessary skills in how to conduct themselves when they go out to communities.”



**Patricia Maanelo**, Provincial Communication Officer, North West

## Western Cape

The Western Cape Communications Cluster hosted a three-day training programme at the Mizpah Youth Centre in Grabouw, to enable 26 participants to become Base Communication Representatives (BCRs).

The Base Communication Representative is the direct communication/awareness link between management and bases.

During the training, BCRs received training in writing skills, presentation skills and etiquette, photography, resource

management, coordination of school and community-based fire awareness activities, base profile management and community and fire awareness workshop training.

Following the pilot programme which took place in November 2015, the Western Cape now has 32 active BCRs across the province.



**Lauren Howard**, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape



Twenty-six BCRs at the Mizpah Youth Centre

## Free State

A total of 22 firefighters will become Base Communications Representatives (BCRs) after completing a three-day training course held in Bethlehem.

The BCRs will represent all the teams in the province and serve as direct communication/awareness links between the Communication Cluster, management and bases.

One of the objectives of the training is to equip the participants to feed information regarding events, resources and awareness down from the Communications Cluster to the BCR and vice versa.

The BCRs were trained in acceptable writing and presentation skills, photography skills, as well as the do's and don'ts when conducting fire awareness. The activities during the training included practical work on the information shared, and a door-to-door fire awareness exercise.



**Limakatso Khalianyane**, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State





# From firefighter to Social Development Officer



Selalelo Rakgabale is a former firefighter now serving as a provincial Social Development Officer in the Free State. She was recruited as a firefighter at Gauteng Bekkersdal Base in 2012.

“I completed my matric in 2002. In 2003 I went to the University of Venda to study. Because I love working with people and helping them, I chose a career in psychology,” she says.

Rakgabale says she joined the programme because she struggled to get a job as a psychologist. “From 2007 till 2012 I struggled to get a job and ended up getting piece jobs,”she says.

She says she took her chances when she heard that Working on Fire was opening a base and was successful. She decided to do whatever was required of her regardless of the fact that she had a degree. “I knew once I got in, I would produce my qualifications and see how the programme could help me move up the corporate ladder.”

Now Rakgabale is working as a social development officer and is living her dream of helping people.

 **Limakatso Khalianyane**, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State

# Respect, discipline and fitness will take you far

Thabang Maphosa is a 24-year-old Type 2 Crew Leader at Kgaswane Base in North West who completed his matric in 2011. He joined the Working on Fire programme in 2013 and, in the same year, became a Health & Safety Representative at the base.


He then registered at Oxbridge Academy to study towards an OHS Diploma which he recently completed. In 2015, while still busy with his studies, he got an opportunity to attend a Type 2 Crew Leader course at Breakthrough Academy.

Though it wasn’t easy multi-tasking, Maphosa says knowing what he wanted in life kept him strong and he managed to pass both his theory and practical probation assessments to qualify as a Type 2 Crew Leader and health & safety graduate. When asked what kept him going he said he was inspired by the support

he got from his crew leaders and the views of critics. He said it showed him he was not where he wanted to be in life which forced him to take a step forward.

“Being the first crew leader from Kgaswane Base was a great honour for me. I came this far and I am not stopping now as there is still room for improvement. As Mr Mandela once said, “there is no passion to be found playing small – in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.’

“My goal is to groom and inspire more leaders, not followers. My motto, which is respect, discipline and fitness, will take you far,” Maphosa concludes.

 **Patricia Maanelo**, Provincial Communication Officer, North West



Kgaswane Type 2 Crew Leader Thabang Maphosa

# Fitness helps WOF participant to win at the Mayor’s Marathon

Phuti Sethowa participated in the annual Mayor’s Marathon programme that was held on 25 June at Sekeding Village in Blouberg. The marathon aims to encourage youngsters to participate in sport activities to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Sethowa, who has a passion for running, started taking part in races when he was a young boy. He earned his first medal while he was still in primary school. He joined WOF as a firefighter in Blouberg and used the fitness challenges to help him get ready for the races that take place in his community annually.


Sethowa completed his 10 km race in 30 minutes 50 seconds. He said the race was easy because the terrain was not tough. He is used to training on tough terrains and the fitness

training he does with his team contributed to him taking first place.

“I am grateful for the support I get from WOF and from my family,” said Sethowa, who is a crew leader at HAT in Tzaneen.

Sethowa became famous at WOF when he created a new record by running the 2,4 km in 7 minutes 48 seconds during the 2014 yellow card training camp.

He has won more than 50 medals at various races and still hopes to win more. However his ultimate dream is running the Comrades Marathon.

 **Matema Gwangwa**, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo



Phuthi Sethowa with the trophy he won at the Mayoral Race at Blouberg

# Firefighting skills used effectively



Agalelang Matubako is a Type 2 Crew Leader for Molopo team

A 28-year-old crew leader, Agalelang Matubako of Molopo Base in the North West, is using her firefighting skills to help with fire management at her grandfather’s farm.

“Fires used to burn huge hectares of grassing land and my grandfather’s livestock were at risk of being burned. It was after acquiring firefighting skills from Working on Fire that I was able to help my grandfather reduce fire risks in the farm,” Matubako says.

“As the Working on Fire team we do fuel load reduction in different areas by slashing grass. We then keep the slashed grass as livestock feed for farmers in the area. Before becoming a firefighter I never thought of managing the ecosystem on the farm,” she explains.

She says that slashed grass helped her grandfather and other farmers to mitigate drought crisis in the area. “That is why we advised farmers to keep the slashed grass as feed,” she says.

Matubako says that the skills she got from Working on Fire made her pay attention to environmental issues and to contribute to making sure the environment is protected.

“We do fire breaks which help limit the spread of fire and fire awareness for the farmers in the area,” she says.

 **Parapara Makgahlela**, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng

# Beating the odds

“I took a risk when I went to the recruitment process, despite being an epileptic sufferer, and I passed all the fitness tests and got the job. I initially didn’t disclose that I was epileptic because I was scared I might be excluded from the recruitment,” says Isaac Mahlangu, who works as a Store Person for the Roodeplaat Team.

“I travelled close to 200 km from Siyabuswa in Mpumalanga to be recruited at Roodeplaat. I needed this job,” he says, remarking that job opportunities in the rural areas were so scarce he was forced

to depend on his grandmother’s old age pension grant. He says that he only disclosed his sickness before going for medical assessments. He was then offered a position of a Store Person.

“Now I am proud that I can make a living for myself. I can now buy things I need without asking for my granny’s assistance and I am also able to help my grandmother financially,” Mahlangu says.

 **Parapara Makgahlela**, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng



Isaac Mahlangu is storeperson for the Roodeplaat team





# Golden Gate Highlands National Park employs WOF participants

The Golden Gate Highlands National Park in the Free State has employed a number of Working on Fire participants in the past years. Seven former firefighters work at the Park as field rangers, electricians, plumbers, traffic controllers or general workers. The Park is also home to the Working on Fire Golden Gate Base which was opened in 2004 and was one of the first bases opened in the Free State. One of the core objectives of the Working on Fire programme is to empower participants. The training provided goes beyond firefighting, making them more employable in the formal sector.

One of the former firefighters whose value was recognised by SANParks, Abiel Mofokeng, says he learned crucial skills while at Working on Fire. While he was still with Working on Fire he learnt discipline as a firefighter and leadership skills which he applies to his daily work in the park of patrolling, fighting fires and ensuring safety around the Park. As a field ranger, he patrols within the Park to ensure the safety of the animals and prevent poaching and trespassing.



**Limakatso Khaliyane**, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State

## Firefighter lands new job as driver



Cedaville fire fighter gets a job at Kokstad Advertiser

Hard work and dedication pays, says Vuyolwethu Sikete, a former firefighter from the Cedarville Base in the Eastern Cape. This dedicated man has just been appointed by the Kokstad Advertiser in Kokstad where he will work as a driver and distribute newspapers to various areas. “I joined the WOF family in 2014 after matriculating in 2013,” Sikete explains. He says that he was first recruited to Fort Donald Base in the Eastern Cape but, when the base was closed, he joined the newly opened Cedarville Base. The enterprising 23-year-old saved some of his stipend money to earn his driver’s licence. “Working on Fire gave me skills, experience and taught me to be disciplined, which has made me a better person,” he says with a smile. Sikete dreams of being a film editor and plans to use some of his income from the new job to fund video editing studies. “Love what you do and always dream big,” Sikete advises other firefighters.



**Nthabiseng Mokone**, Provincial Communication Officer, Eastern Cape

# Best wishes to departing fire fighter

A former firefighter at Leeuwfontein Base is on her way to become a crime fighter. Mavis Mabena is currently training at the South African Police Services Academy in Hammanskraal north of Pretoria. The team’s crew leader, Rachel Khomola, says 26-year-old Mabena deserves this opportunity because she is disciplined and committed to her job. “She used to be our health & safety representative and did her work with passion and dedication. I believe she will pass her police training because she commands great



Mavis Mabena during her days as a fire fighter in Leeuwfontein team

discipline, intelligence and physical fitness,” says Khomola. Khomola says the programme has shaped Mavis’s personality and life through its training and operations. “She added value to the wellbeing of her community by participating in fire awareness workshops and community work. She made a huge contribution to conserve the environment and as a team we wish her well,” says Khomola.



**Parapara Makgahlela**, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng

# Participant joins police services

Former Working on Fire ( WOF) participant, Hanolizia Geduld, is currently completing a basic police training course at the South African Police Services Academy in Bishop Lavis, Cape Town. She will relocate to SAPS in Riversdale in December 2016. A single parent to a six-year-old daughter and one-year-old son, Geduld worked hard to support her children and family after joining the WOF programme in August 2011. During her time at WOF, Hanolizia strived to learn as much as she could and, with the support of her family and motivation from the Riversdale crew leaders and team, she completed courses in advanced structural firefighting, first aid, Hazmat and accident scene management.

When asked about her journey within WOF, she says, “I really enjoyed working at WOF as I had a lot of opportunities to learn. Because of the training I received at WOF it made it easier to apply at SAPS as I had many qualifications and the discipline they required. Thank you WOF for moulding me into the person I am today.” Hanolizia says she is now fulfilling her lifelong dream of becoming a police officer and says she will protect her community as best she can after completing her basic training.



**Lauren Howard**, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape




Hanoziliza at the SAPS Academy in Bishop Lavis

# Former firefighter gets job as field ranger

Mzimkhulu Mdladlamba, a Working on Fire ( WOF) firefighter at the Ongeluksnek Base since 2007, was recently employed by the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency. “After matriculating I could not go to university due to financial problems but I was fortunate enough to get a job at WOF,” explains 29-year-old Mdladlamba. During his time in the programme, he says he learned discipline, leadership skills and how to survive tough situations. “While in the programme I went through tough situations, being on the fire line on the high mountains in Ongeluksnek, being on route march and working with different people. But that has made me stronger,” he says. Being a crew leader gave him experience in leadership. WOF also enabled him to do a structural course which he passed. “In May this year I got a new job as a field ranger at Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency,” a happy Mdladlamba says. Mdladlamba says that he is using the experience and skills he obtained at WOF in his new job and advises firefighters to also work hard and be patient.



Ongeluksnek fire fighter gets hired by ECPTA



**Nthabiseng Mokone**, Provincial Communication Officer, Eastern Cape



# Aganang Team scoops an award of excellence

The good work of the Aganang Team in Limpopo was recognised when it received Batho Pele awards from Department of Health. The awards ceremony was held on 7 July 2016 at the WF Knobel Hospital just outside Polokwane. Since then, the community has sung the praises of the team which has made a good impact in the community.

“Our team is one of the most disciplined team in the province, and they are the true ambassadors of WOF,” said Barbra Seokoma, the Base Manager for Aganang.

The Aganang Team received their first award from the Department of Health in 2015, for ensuring that the hospital was fire safe and going the extra mile in lending a



The Aganang Team in Limpopo received a gold medal and trophy for the hard work they are doing at their base

helping hand when requested by the hospital.

“We have received our second award, which means that our hard work is being noticed by the society. We are young and fit. We always perform our duties with passion, love and energy which is why people love and respect us,” said Elliot Mokobodi, a Base Communications Representative at Aganang.

Aganang was awarded a gold medal and a trophy for being the best outsourced team in the hospital.

“This medal and the trophy show that the department appreciates the tasks that we perform at the hospital,” concluded Mokobodi.



**Matema Gwangwa**, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo

# High Altitude Team help to reduce unemployment in Tzaneen

The High Altitude Team (HAT) in Limpopo hosted a recruitment drive at Tzaneen Dam to recruit nine rope technicians and a store controller. Approximately 500 young people gathered at Tzaneen Dam at the WOF regional office to try their luck in the recruitment drive.

The recruitment drive started with the registration of candidates who came from villages around Tzaneen. Among them were firefighters who were employed at nearby WOF bases. The selection criteria included running 2,4 kilometres in 12 minutes (males) and 14 minutes (females), 40 push ups in under one minute, and 40 sit ups in under one minute.

WOF invited the Department of Correctional Services to bring their parolees in order to give them a chance to change their lives and create a better future for themselves.

“I’m grateful that I was given a chance. It was a tough selection but I was eager to succeed in all the challenges. It’s not easy to find a job once you have a criminal record. I would like to thank HAT for giving me a second chance in turning my life around,” said Michael Rasekgothoma from Bolobedu, who was recruited through the Parolee Programme.

Only 15 contestants managed to get through the interview selection where they were interviewed by a panel.

The successful recruits, five males and four females, will be taken through first aid training followed by the IRATA training, where they will learn to be rope technicians.



**Matema Gwangwa**, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo



Ladies doing the push ups during the HAT recruitment drive



Portrait of Ricardo Phillips

## Former participant thanks WOF for skills learned

Former firefighter Ricardo Phillips from the Mamre Team has left the programme to join Pres Les Warehouse in Atlantis. He has also registered with the University of South Africa (Unisa) to complete his studies to become a public administrator.

Ricardo joined the Working on Fire programme in July 2013 and was a passionate firefighter who always wanted to learn as much as he could.

“My time at WOF was great. I learned about leadership and administration which is my passion, because I am a very organised person. Within WOF I met truly outstanding

people who taught me discipline and to focus on achieving my goals in life,” says 31-year-old Ricardo.

Ricardo is grateful to the Mamre Team, especially Base Manager Randall Arendse, Ground Operations Manager Ray-yaan Majiet and Assistant Regional Manager Quehenn Grootboom, for the opportunity to grow and be moulded by them, and for never giving up on him.



**Lauren Howard**, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape

## Ensuring the safety of the Bosdorp Community



The crew working in field

Following the recent cold front in the Western Cape, the Tulbagh Team assisted the Bosdorp community to ensure that their roads were in safe working condition for everyday public use.

Tulbagh BCR, Leon Swems, says, “We saw that the road was badly damaged and fence poles had been broken due to the strong wind and rainfall. As a team we decided to fill potholes along the road and reconstructed some of the fencing to avoid accidents occurring in the area.”



**Lauren Howard**, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape

## Crew Leaders to become field rangers

Two Type 1 Crew Leaders from Joubertina Team in the Eastern Cape are set to broaden their horizons as they take on new jobs. The two crew leaders have described being employed by the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA) as a lifetime opportunity.

Theuns Booysen and Anele Zonke, who have been in the programme for over three years, will both be leaving the programme soon.

Booyesen grew up on a farm called Misgund in the Eastern Cape but attended Haarlem Secondary School in the Western Cape where he matriculated in 2007.

“After matriculating I came back home. Then I went to Port Elizabeth where I worked part-time at two different places,” Booyesen explains.

He says life was difficult until he joined WOF as a firefighter in 2012, where he was developed to take on different positions and was able to afford his two daughters’ education.

“Since I joined WOF my life became better and better. I was taken to the type 2 crew leader level in 2015 and a year after I went to crew leader type 1. I got a salary and was able to support my family, and acquired skills and experience,” says Booyesen.

“Early this year I applied at ECPTA and this month Anele and I were told that we got the jobs as field rangers and will start at the end of July,” he says.

The West District Ground Operations Manager Mxoli Cabela says that he is proud of the two men and is sure they will keep working hard at their new jobs.



Anele Zonke



Theuns Booysen



**Nthabiseng Mokone**, Provincial Communication Officer, Eastern Cape



# International Nelson Mandela Day - 18 July 2016



“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead” – Nelson Mandela

International Nelson Mandela Day was launched in recognition of Nelson Mandela's birthday on 18 July, 2009 via unanimous decision of the United Nations General Assembly.

It was inspired by a call Nelson Mandela made a year earlier, for the next generation to take on the burden of leadership in addressing the world's social injustices when he said that

“it is in your hands now”. It is more than a celebration of Madiba's life and legacy. It is a global movement to honour his life's work and act to change the world for the better.

Nelson Mandela gave 67 years of his life to the struggle for human rights and social justice. Working on Fire participants across South Africa came together for the call to devote at least

67 minutes of their time on 18 July 2016, to a community service activity.

WOF participants dedicated their time to building homes, renovating homes, feeding the poor, lending a helping hand to many organisations and so much more, adhering to our objective of restoring dignity and saving lives.

## Working on Fire celebrates Mandela Day



Eastern Cape - Addo HAT team doing a firebreak at a pre-school



Eastern Cape - Ugie Team helped to cook food and served the elderly



Free State - Ficksburg Team joined hands with young people to commemorate Madiba Day



Gauteng - Wedela Team went to a local hospital to help take care of sick babies



KZN - provincial personnel serving cake and tea to young people



KZN - Teams helped with cleaning and doing firebreaks in local communities



Gauteng - Carletonville Team did a community clean-up campaign in their local communities



North West - Naledi Team helped with clean-up and painting of a creche in their community



North West - Provincial Staff giving socks to learners at a local primary school



Limpopo - Northam Team did a clean-up and gardening services at a local clinic



Limpopo - Modimolle Team did a clean-up campaign their local community



Western Cape - Sedgfield Team helped serve cake and tea at a local old age home



Western Cape - Swellendam Team showing the special painting they did for Madiba Day



Western Cape - Riversdale Team serving sandwiches to children on Madiba Day



Gauteng - Phineas Mphela is pictured at centre carrying flowers at Mediclinic where Mandela was hospitalized in 2013