



WOFIRE NEWS

SAVING LIVES • PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT • RESTORING DIGNITY

TEAM BRINGS EARLY CHRISTMAS TO HOSPICE

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EDUCATORS TAUGHT ON BEING FIRESAFE

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WOF RECRUITS UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

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Minister commends firefighters for saving lives and protecting the environment

The Minister of Environmental Affairs, Edna Molewa, has commended Working on Fire firefighters for saving lives and protecting the environment.

"These young men and women, who are all well trained to fight wildland fires, are a clear example of the success of the Department's programmes in training our youth to not only help save lives but also make an invaluable contribution in protecting our environment," said Minister Molewa recently.

The Western Cape has experienced an early start to its 2016 summer fire season. Over the weekend of 19 and 20 November, teams from across the province battled three fires that raged in the Table Mountain National Park and in the Southern Cape.

Working on Fire (WOF) provided just over 100 firefighters in four teams, one spotter plane, a water bomber and a helicopter to fire authorities.

WOF sent an additional 100 firefighters to help the Cape Winelands District Municipality and CapeNature contain the Banhoek fire which also started on 19 November in Jonkershoek, near Stellenbosch.

"We would like to wish our Working on Fire participants a safe Summer Fire Season in the Western Cape and we extend our gratitude and thanks for the great work they are doing," Minister Molewa said.

Written by Editorial Team



Minister of Environmental Affairs, Edna Molewa



16 DAYS of Activism

for no violence against Women and Children

countme in!
together moving a non-violent
South Africa Forward



25 November - 10 December

Together we move South Africa forward

The 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children is an international awareness-raising campaign. It takes place every year from

25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to 10 December (International Human Rights Day). The commemorative period follows

Universal Children's Day (20 November) and includes World AIDS Day (1 December).

Working on Fire will hold various activities throughout the country to support

the campaign. For more information about the campaign please contact the Social Development Practitioner in your province.

Editorial

Dear Readers

Welcome to the November edition of WOFire News.

In this edition, we report on several community fire awareness workshops and door-to-door fire awareness initiatives conducted by our teams across the country to ensure that communities and landowners are fire safe.

As the Western Cape approached the start of its summer fire season, teams worked with Fire Protection Associations and landowners to ensure that fire prevention measures such as firebreaks, stack burns, fuel load reduction and prescribed burning were implemented.

Many of our participants go from being firefighters to taking up junior management posts within the programme, while some opt to take better job opportunities outside the programme. Some of these participants – many of whom have served beyond the call of duty – relate how Working on Fire has changed their lives, and impacted positively on their communities.

Working on Fire is committed to saving lives, protecting the environment and restoring dignity. By recruiting and training unemployed youth from disadvantaged communities as firefighters, we will continue to make a difference in their lives and that of their families

Happy reading!

MD Message

Llewellyn Pillay



This year marks the 18th anniversary of the annual 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign. The campaign, themed ‘Count Me in: together moving a non-violent South Africa forward’, begins on 25 November each year.

This campaign aims to generate awareness of the need for the protection of women and children, with more focus on mobilising men to assist in the fight against this plague of violence. Our own employees took time to support this campaign through our Social Development Campaigns. Let us make this coming festive season a safe time for our loved ones.

The Western Cape had an early start to its fire season and over 100 firefighters with air support fought the Banhoek fire in Jonkershoek near Stellenbosch recently. Our teams received high praise from the Minister of Environmental Affairs, Edna Molewa, for saving lives and protecting the environment.

Indications are that our firefighters should prepare themselves for a busy fire season. With most of the country experiencing severe drought and hot and dry weather conditions expected throughout the country, we anticipate that this could exacerbate the prevalence of wildfires.

Let me again remind our firefighters to continue to be vigilant and safe on the fire line. Our participants will continue to remain on high alert should they be needed to provide any fire suppression support.

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

Environmental Affairs
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
Co-operative Governance
Water and Sanitation

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

EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME

Molemane Team brings early Christmas to Hospice

The North West’s Molemane Team organised a social development activity at the Itsoseng Hospice in Itsoseng Village. The elders were showered with special early Christmas gifts and groceries as a form of giving back to the community. The elderly and disabled residents enjoyed a fun-filled day with the performances of a drill and a song from the team choir.

One of the participants from Molemane Base, Gomolemo Koreng, says they were happy they got the opportunity to spend the day with the elders to show love and support.

“We are who we are because of them,” Koreng says. The team started visiting the hospice earlier this year, and helped by cooking, cleaning the yard and fixing the fence at the hospice. That’s when they saw the need to further the relationship with the hospice.

Mamiki Leshage, one of the founders of the hospice, can’t contain her excitement about the good work and contribution made by the team. “We are very honoured to be chosen by these hardworking young men and women because, as young as they are, they are able to support and care for our wellbeing,” says Leshage.

Molemane Team giving back to the community

Patricia Maanelo, Provincial Communication Officer, North West

Disability Rights Awareness Month 2016

South Africa commemorates National Disability Rights Awareness Month annually between 3 November and 3 December. 3 December is the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, and is also commemorated as National Disability Rights Awareness Day.

This year’s theme is ‘Persons with disabilities– Equal participants in shaping a sustainable future.’

Disability is the consequence of an impairment that may be physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional, developmental, or some combination of these. A disability may be present from birth or occur during a person’s lifetime.

The Department of Social Development is responsible for driving the government’s equity, equality and empowerment agenda in terms of people living with disabilities.

Disability Rights Awareness Month 2016

Persons with disabilities - Equal participants in shaping a sustainable future

We are proud that Working on Fire has created an enabling environment for persons with disabilities to grow and flourish in the programme.

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.

Three percent of the participants in Working on Fire are persons with disabilities who make an important contribution to the programme.

Understanding wildland fire behavior critical for sound fire management

Working on Fire (WOF) hosted Professor Domingos Xavier Viegas, a globally renowned specialist in wildland fire behaviour from the University of Coimbra in Portugal, at the Provincial Disaster Management Centre in Tygerberg.

Various fire authorities from municipalities throughout the Western Cape and the provincial fire brigade services were briefed by Prof Viegas on wildland firefighting and prevention.

Aside from presenting a series of lectures in several other provinces, Prof Viegas was also in the country to assess Working on Fire's procedures and state of knowledge concerning guidelines for firefighting teams, particularly those involved in dangerous field operations.

The presentation coincided with fire authorities in the Western Cape preparing for the upcoming summer fire season. In his

presentation, titled 'Application of Technology to Wildland Fire Management', he focused on the necessity of having a good understanding of fire behaviour to safely perform fire suppression activities.

He said that while fire suppression is performed by well trained and equipped personnel, they often have to extinguish fire under social pressure, while in the process disregarding their own safety.

In this regard, Professor Viegas praised the work done by WOF firefighters and said, "I have looked into WOF's fire suppression methods and I am quite impressed by the fact that your firefighters are very meticulous when suppressing fires."



Lauren Howard, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape



Participants takes fire awareness to communities




The KwaZulu-Natal Underberg Team conducted a door-to-door fire awareness campaign in the Mqatsheni community. The campaign aims to educate communities and make them aware of how to identify and reduce the risks around their homes.

Underberg's Base Communications Representative (BCR), Mlondi Molefe, says they taught community members about the dangers of fires and how to keep safe when there is a fire.

"It's more effective when interacting with community members face to face as we can go around the house together identifying dangerous fuel loads surrounding their home," says Molefe. As the winter fire season draws to an end, the province is experiencing fewer veld and forest wildfires but there is still a risk

of structural fires. In as much as WOF firefighters can only assist in veld and forest fires, they also want to empower community members to protect themselves from fire and loss of property and lives.

"We also showed community members that staying safe doesn't need to cost money, by teaching them candle safety measures such as putting sand in an enamel mug and placing the candle inside," says Molefe, who points out that candles must not be placed near flammable material such as curtains or furniture. Community members were impressed by the inexpensive ways they could protect themselves from fires this summer season.



Nompilo Zondi, Provincial Communication Officer, KwaZulu-Natal

Fire awareness saves lives

As the year draws to a close, various teams in Mpumalanga say that despite the challenges they faced in 2016, conducting fire safe awareness campaigns remained the highlight of the year for them.

According to Loskop Base Communication Representative (BCR) Bongani Mthimunye, conducting fire awareness at primary schools forced him to reflect on his decision of becoming a firefighter.

"My heart was overwhelmed with love and appreciation for the support our team received at the Tagane and Kau Magane Primary Schools in Dennelton. The learners were attentive and engaging," says Mthimunye.

He adds that his visit to the two schools "became a heart-warming reminder to us that our work indeed assists in saving lives."

Dipuo Ntswani of the Dullstroom Team said that conducting the awareness was a learning curve for her as she recognises that "we all have a role to play in protecting the environment."

The teams say they are proud to participate in the WOF programme that assists in saving lives, restoring dignity and protects the environment.



Lebogang Maseko, Provincial Communication Officer, Mpumalanga




Fuel load reduction the key to fire prevention


Working on Fire Limpopo's Tzaneen Team is working around the clock implementing an Integrated Fire Management system for landowners in the Tzaneen area.

When not responding to the fires, the Tzaneen Team conducts fire awareness at the local schools surrounding their base and helping landowners to be fire safe. Since the winter fire season was declared over, the WOF participants have been implementing integrated fire management systems for the landowners. They are also assisting landowners to comply with the National Veld and Forestry Act by creating firebreaks for them.

Though the 2016 fire season has ended, the team decided to start with the firebreaks as early as possible to be able to work at a normal pace, cover more ground and assist more landowners.



Tzaneen participants conducting manual fuel load reduction for landowners outside Tzaneen. (Pictures by Malekutu Maake – Tzaneen BCR)



Matema Gwangwa, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo

Getting ready for Western Cape Summer Fire Season

The Western Cape's Kleinmond and Walker Bay Teams assisted the Overstrand District Municipality by managing a controlled burn at the Wortelgat Nature Reserve to ensure that the surrounding community remains safe during the 2016/17 summer fire season.

Controlled burns are carried out at a local, provincial and national level and are essential for biodiversity and agricultural practices. They are in common use in fire risk reduction, reduction of dense vegetation, ecological rejuvenation of fynbos, land preparation for agriculture, rejuvenation of grazing fields and the reduction of alien vegetation.

Controlled burns form part of the Working on Fire Integrated Fire Management (IFM) system, a series of actions implemented through reduction, readiness, response and recovery planning and management.

Activities in IFM include fire awareness, fire prevention, prescribed burning, resource sharing and coordination, fire detection,



An image of the block burn conducted by the Kleinmond and Walker Bay Teams

fire suppression, fire damage rehabilitation and research at a local, provincial and national level to create a sustainable and well-balanced environment, reduce wildfire damage and promote the beneficial use of fire.



Lauren Howard, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape

Early Childhood Development educators taught on being FireSafe

Early childhood development (ECD) is the all-round development of very young children by engaging them in a variety of educational and social activities to help them to further develop into childhood and adulthood. The development of babies, toddlers and young children forms the foundation for all further development that a person undergoes.

Working on Fire has been rolling out Firesafe workshops with ECD centres across the country. The aim of these workshops is to educate and empower teachers with the knowledge to understand and identify fire risks in and around their schools. Teachers were also taught how they could conduct their own FireSafe workshops.

In the Free State, the Fire Awareness Officers held a workshop to teach crèche teachers in the Bethlehem area the fundamentals of fire, how fires are started, how to extinguish different types of fires, the different sources

that can fuel a fire, as well as how to successfully evacuate during a fire. These teachers were also empowered with knowledge to return to their schools and to teach the children what they were taught during the workshop.

Free State Fire Awareness Training Officer, Tommy Mokoena, says, “We invited various teachers that work in the Bohlokong area in Bethlehem and taught them about fire safety inside and outside the house. After this workshop we expect them to implement the very thing that we have taught them today.”

“We were invited to attend the workshop so that we could learn how to safely evacuate the children when there is a fire. What I have been taught today I will teach all of the teachers at my school,” says Khohliso Hlongwane, principal at Paballong Day Care.



Wayne Mokhethi, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State



Teachers from the Bohlokong area created their own individual evacuation plans for their schools

Educators urged to educate learners about fire safety



NW Communication Cluster members and the ECD educators

The North West Communications Cluster conducted a fire awareness workshop for early childhood development (ECD) educators at the Social Development Centre in Unit 2, Mogwase. Among the topics were fire background and dynamics, how to deal with fires, inside house fire safety, and safety in and around homes and schools.

The main aim of this workshop was to train the educators so they could in turn implement the lessons learnt in the workshop with their learners and make their centres fire safe.

About 26 educators from Mogwase were equipped with fire safe techniques as North West Fire Awareness Training Officer Martha Tepo discussed the causes and dangers of fires. She also explained to educators how to prevent learners from playing with dangerous objects around their centres and at home.

Educators formed discussion groups and were tasked to identify fire risks around them and come up with ways to eliminate fire risks. After group exercises, the educators provided feedback on which hazards cause fires and what to do to prevent them.

One of the educators, Lydia Seleteng, from Everjoy Day Care Centre in Mogwase, thanked WOF for the workshop. “I thank WOF for the information we received today. I will be able to pass it to my learners and share with my kids at home.”

Educator Themba Nzala, from Ebeneler Day Care in Monono, thanked WOF for an outstanding workshop that taught them about some of the fire risks at centres that they had not been aware of but about which they would now be more alert.



Patricia Maanelo, Provincial Communication Officer, North West

Community Development Workers equipped with fire safety tips

The KwaZulu-Natal Community Fire Awareness Officer, Simphiwe Dlamini, has conducted a FireSafe workshop with the uBuhlebezwe Local Municipality for community development workers (CDWs) at the Peace Initiative Hall in Ixopo. The workshop aimed to curb the escalating veld and structural fires in the municipality.

Mr W Dlamini, the Chief Fire Disaster Management Officer of uBuhlebezwe said, “Due to the increased veld fires in the winter season and the structural fires in the summer, as a municipality we thought this workshop would help decrease fires by educating CDWs.”

Ten wards were represented in the workshop. CDWs will assist to filter down information of how Working on Fire could assist communities and build stakeholder

relations. They could also assist in identifying high risk areas.

“I learnt a lot and I’ll be inviting Simphiwe to also train my ward as I have a lot of unemployed youth,” says uBuhlebezwe CDW, Siphelele Gumede.

Dlamini said the workshop was a success. The CDWs were participating and also thinking of other stakeholders they wanted to invite to their wards to empower community members.

“I’m looking forward to the invitations from all the different wards that were represented at the workshop. They showed so much enthusiasm for protecting their wards,” says Dlamini.



Nompilo Zondi, Provincial Communication Officer, KwaZulu-Natal



Community development workers of uBuhlebezwe Local Municipality participating in the workshop

Mpumalanga Early Childhood Development teachers are now FireSafe



ECD teachers join WOF Community Fire Safety Awareness Officer in Ermelo

Working on Fire (WOF) Mpumalanga’s Fire Awareness Unit conducted a fire awareness workshop for early childhood development (ECD) teachers at the Ithemba Education Development Centre in Ermelo in October.

The ECD workshops aimed to ensure that educators were aware of evacuation processes, how to deal with fires and the overall safety of their centres.

“The objective of the workshop was to bring environmental education to teachers to enhance their knowledge of fire safety in schools and homes so they can educate their learners and keep them safe,” says Community Fire Awareness Training Officer, Mbuso Siwela.

According to Siwela, topics covered in the workshop were mainly fire safety tips and

measures that could be taken to help prevent fires.

“When presenting the workshops, I emphasise the fact that fire safety is everyone’s responsibility and that young ones also need to be educated in case of fire,” he says.

Nompumelelo Nkosi, an ECD teacher at Inhlosenhle Day Care Centre in Ermelo says, “I am pleased that this workshop took place because it has shed some light on how as educators we can teach the little ones to be fire safe when it comes to fire hazards surrounding their homes and schools.”



Lebogang Maseko, Provincial Communication Officer, Mpumalanga



Community Fire Awareness Officer assists ECD teachers

Participant climbs the ladder of success

Born in the small village of Ditichereng (Mariazell) in the Eastern Cape, near the Drakensberg Mountains bordering Lesotho, Bongani Qoza has worked his way up to a senior position in human resources.

This zealous young man joined the WOF programme in 2007 at Ongeluksnek Base in the Eastern Cape. Qoza was lucky to be selected as one of the firefighters for the Ongeluksnek Team, and he has worked hard to further his ambitions.


“In 2008 I was nominated to attend the Type 2 Crew Leader course in Mpumalanga and I passed well,” says Qoza. “This engagement harnessed and aroused my passion for people dynamics which ultimately earned me the space in the senior crew leader course.”

His journey prepared him to respond proactively to the challenges he faced, which led to his appointment as an instructor at



the Training Academy in Nelspruit. Qoza said that the Training Academy created a conducive environment for professional growth as it trains individuals in various aspects, including leadership skills and people relations. “I saw myself moving from instructor to Deputy Academy Manager, HR officer and HR manager. What a journey full of learning and delivering,” says Qoza with a smile.

Using the skills he acquired in the programme, Qoza has risen up the ranks from firefighter to crew leader, training instructor and now HR practitioner. In November, Qoza started working at the Eastern Cape provincial office as the human resource practitioner.

 Nthabiseng Mokone, Provincial Communication Officer, Eastern Cape

Working on Fire made me believe in myself

Leoni Rooy, who is a Training Officer based in Bloemfontein, joined the Working on Fire programme in April 2004 in Clanwilliam, a small town about 200km north of Cape Town.

She started off as a firefighter at the Clanwilliam Base and within months was nominated by her base manager to attend the Type 2 crew leader course in Tokai, Cape Town. After passing the course she was put on three months probation.

She completed her probation period and, after observing her work ethic over the next few months, her impressed base manager nominated her to attend the Type 1 crew leader course in Nelspruit at the Long Tom Pass, which she duly passed.

Rooy only worked as a Type 1 crew leader for a few months before Fred Favard, the Training Manager, nominated her to become a training instructor. She then became the first female instructor in the WOF programme. She was sent to attend a course in Montana, USA, for three

weeks with three others. “After coming back from America I worked until November 2007 as an instructor before I was promoted to Regional Manager in the Western Cape, managing seven teams. I opened four more Western Cape bases that are still going strong,” says Rooy.

Rooy served as Regional Manager until December 2012, and then became a senior instructor with the role of training crew leaders, conducting induction and advanced classes for teams, and also Yellow Card and driver training. In January 2016 Rooy moved to Bloemfontein to start a job as a Training Officer in the Free State.

Rooy has completed various training courses which have set her apart as an valued employee. These courses include First Aid Level 1, 2 and 3, Advanced MS Excel, Advanced MS Word, Life Skills, Leadership, Personal Development, Health and Safety, Human Resource and Administration, Wildlife power saws, Basic and Advanced FireFighting, ICS logistics, Laces

workshops and Human Factors on Fire line, and facilitator and assessor training.

“Through the WOF programme I was able to help my mother extend our home. As a single mother WOF enabled me to provide for my children. My eldest daughter completed matric last year and this year she is able to further her studies. I was able to buy myself a car and next year my goal is to further my studies,” says Rooy.

“If it was not for this programme I don’t think that I would have been able to do all of these things because where I come from, the unemployment rate is very high and the abuse of drugs is destroying the youth. I will forever be thankful and grateful for the WOF programme for entering my life at a time I needed it the most. This programme picked me up when I was down and out and nobody wanted to give me a chance. It gave me wings to fly and made me believe in myself,” says Rooy.



Free State Training Officer Leoni Rooy

 Wayne Mokhethi, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State

Training to be first pilot from his township

A 22-year-old Type 2 Crew Leader from the Maropeng Team, who almost gave up on his dream of being a pilot due to financial constraints, has been given a chance to live his dream.

Donald Malekuto is training to attain a professional pilot’s licence with the Kishugu Aviation Training Organisation in Nelspruit.


“I wish to become the first qualified pilot from my township. I will not squander this golden opportunity,” says a determined Malekuto.

Malekuto is no newcomer to aviation. He trained as a glider pilot in Magaliesberg but this time around, the comprehensive pilot training was offered to him for free. “I am privileged,” he says. “I applied after the ATO advertised the training programme and I was one of the lucky participants from Working on Fire to be chosen.”

Malekuto says this opportunity rekindled his passion for aviation. “I struggled to complete the glider pilot licence due to money issues. I am grateful that the Kishugu Aviation Training Organisation is offering training to me. It is an opportunity of a lifetime and it will open many doors for me in future. Not everyone gets such a chance,” says Malekuto, who hails from Mohale township in Magaliesberg on the West Rand.



Donald Makutu from Maropeng base is one of the participants training as pilot at Kishugu Aviation

 Parapara Makgahlela, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng

First female Transport Officer in KwaZulu-Natal

“I strongly believe my action today makes my tomorrow better,” says recently appointed KwaZulu-Natal Transport Officer, Ester Hlaki. After completing her matric in 2007, Hlaki studied human resources at Esayidi FET College but unfortunately could not complete the course. She was recruited to WOF at Kokstad Base in the Eastern Cape in 2010.

“In 2013 I got the exciting opportunity to become a Type 3 dispatcher in KZN which was quite challenging,” she says.

After learning the ropes, Hlaki became one of the top dispatchers and got the opportunity to assist with the Cape Town fires of 2014.

“I feel my experience as a Type 3 dispatcher prepared me for my current position. I have been working with drivers, regional managers and base partners with regard to call takes and transport paperwork,” says Hlaki.

She feels grateful and honoured to play such a big role and is looking forward to new challenges as the first female Transport Officer in the province.


“Faith and perseverance is what has kept me going and it’s what I would advise my colleagues to always have. Also remember that you can’t get anywhere without discipline,” she says.

When asked what motivates her Hlaki says, “I am motivated by meeting set targets

within deadlines, as it gives me a sense of accomplishment. It’s something that I can look back on and say ‘I achieved that.’”



Ester Hlaki, the new Transport Officer

 Nompilo Zondi, Provincial Communication Officer, KwaZulu-Natal

Crew Leader speaks out against abuse



Evelyn Mthethwa has been abused by her partner

Dr JS Moroka’s Type 2 crew leader, Evelyn Mthethwa, broke her silence on the abuse she suffered at the hands of her ex-boyfriend several years ago.

Mthethwa explains that her boyfriend was verbally and physically very abusive. She said her child would ask why the father had left, but she had avoided telling her child the truth. Mthethwa believes that the time has come for her to break the silence on abuse against women and children and she wants to tell her child why she broke up with the father.

“I remember one day he pulled my round earring and ripped my ear. I was lucky only a tiny part was torn. But I can’t wear earrings because of that brutal experience. I am living with the scars of that brutal relationship,” she says.

She explained how beatings were so normal, she thought they were a sign of her boyfriend’s love. “He could have killed me had I stayed longer in that relationship,” says Mthethwa.

“I am urging people to denounce abuse in relationships and report it to the relevant authorities. Abuse of men, women and children can’t be tolerated and swept under the carpet,” says Mthethwa.

Commemorating this year’s 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children, Mthethwa says the team has prepared a play that it will perform at a children’s home to raise awareness.



Parapara Makgahlela, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng

Former firefighter now Fire Awareness Training Officer



Former Working on Fire (WOF) firefighter, Rudi Lucas, aged 33, has been appointed the Fire Awareness Training Officer in the Western Cape.

Lucas started his journey as a firefighter in January 2009. “I learnt to be part of a team. I felt like I belonged because we had to trust each other as our job was quite dangerous. Being a firefighter was easy because I have a passion for what I do. Working on Fire gave me many opportunities in life for which I am grateful.”

WOF enabled him to attend courses such as catering, brush cutting, chainsaw use and first aid. In 2012 he became a Type 2 Crew Leader.

Aiming ever higher, in August 2014, Lucas became a fire awareness assistant and in 2016 he became the Fire Awareness Training Officer (FATO) in the Western Cape.

Lucas says, “I can really say the support I received from management and fellow colleagues was great. I felt good about myself and knew that there was a better life for me. Word spread to higher management about my passion for firefighting and my willingness to always strive to do my best. Thank you Working on Fire for the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of many.”



Lauren Howard, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape

My colleagues’ safety is in my hands

Tebogo Tau, a Working on Fire driver from Molemane Base, is one of the more motivated drivers in the programme. Tebogo joined the WOF programme in February 2014 and was promoted to driver in October 2014.

Tau says he enjoys his work as a driver as it has taught him to be responsible. “I know when I drive, people’s lives and safety are in my hands. Therefore I have to drive responsibly and follow the rules of the road at all times as they are relying on me to get them to their destination safely,” he says.

“For those who would like to be drivers one day, I would advise them to get a driver’s licence as it’s the first requirement to be a driver. You must also be reliable, dedicated to your work and always remember people’s lives depend on you.”

Tau plans to use his salary to further his studies in public relations.

Tau was born in Biesiesvlei near Lichtenburg. He has a five-year-old son who means the world to him.



Tebogo Tau next to the WOF bus he drives at work



Patricia Maanelo, Provincial Communication Officer, North West

Firefighter goes beyond the call of duty

Decia Moruane of the Mdala Team proves once again that being a firefighter is not only about being courageous but having the burning passion to save lives. The 27-year-old goes beyond the call of duty by donating her scarce blood type.

She has group O negative blood type, a much-needed and scarce blood group. A doctor advised her of this after she gave birth to her first child.

“He told me that my group is such a scarce one and is the only blood type that can be given to every blood group in cases of emergency,” she says.

When asked why she donates blood, she points out that many people are injured in car accidents and need blood transfusions to save their lives. “I therefore made a commitment

and pledged to be a blood donor to save more lives on the fireline and beyond the fireline. As festive season draws closer more blood will be needed,” she says.

Moruane suggests that the Arrive Alive campaign looks at encouraging people to donate blood. “I am glad that somehow I am saving someone’s life on a daily, monthly and annual basis. That makes me feel grateful and human.”

Moruane encourages fellow crew members to donate. “During the festive season road fatalities are on an upward spiral. We need to help as much as we can,” she says.



Parapara Makgahlela, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng



Decia Moruane is donating blood to save lives of others who are involved in accident

Unemployed youth score job opportunities

The lives of a number of young men and women from Rooiberg Village in Waterberg will never be the same again as they bid farewell to being unemployed.

Working on Fire Limpopo conducted a recruitment drive at Rooiberg where they are opening a new base. More than 80 youth responded to the call and gathered at Rooiberg to try their luck at the physically demanding recruitment evaluation.

The recruitment assessment included running a 2,4km run, and completing 40 push ups and 40 sit ups, all within set time limits. The youth were all eager to secure a spot in the new team and gave it their all. Unfortunately there

were only positions for 23 people in the end, who will be taken for medical checkups as the final stage of recruitment.

The successful recruits will be trained in Nelspruit in advanced firefighting. Some will be trained as first-aiders and SHE representatives and others will undergo other courses.

With this recruitment drive WOF has once again contributed to the reduction of unemployment and poverty in marginalised communities.



Matema Gwangwa, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo



Youth from Rooiberg participating in the WOF recruitment drive. (Pictures by Lesiba Matlou – Vingerkraal BCR)

A brighter future awaits these youths



The Working on Fire programme has employed 19 firefighters in the West District , Eastern Cape, an area that suffers a high unemployment rate among youth.

According to the Regional Manager, Bheki Mhlabane, this recruitment was done in preparation for the upcoming summer fire season which starts on 1 December. All the young people that reported for the recruitment process had to undergo fitness tests.

Mhlabane says all the new recruits will be taken to the training academy in Nelspruit where they will undergo advanced

firefighting, fire safety, specialised skills and integrated fire management training.

“Above all, the purpose of the programme is skills development for the young men and women and we are achieving that with this recruitment,” he says.

Mhlabane adds that this opportunity will help alleviate poverty in the homes of these young men and women while also strengthening our teams as we approach the summer fire season.



Nthabiseng Mokone, Provincial Communication Officer, Eastern Cape

Participant makes a glamorous exit

A former firefighter at the Cradle of Humankind Team, Refilwe Moshoeshoe, is now a Beauty Therapist at Rhinos Estate resort, a stone’s throw from Lanseria Airport on the West Rand.

Moshoeshoe completed her beauty therapy course part-time at the Fourways Hotel in Randburg, using her monthly stipend to finance a change in her life.

“The Working on Fire job opportunity was the only opportunity available to me to earn a living, which then turned my platinum into gold in a way,” says Moshoeshoe, who joined the programme in 2013.

“At times I used to attend the course in the evenings and studying was hard. I don’t have matric but I knew that something needed to be done for the future of my kids. That is why I went for this course,” she says.

Moshoeshoe grew up in a squatter camp, but says that it did not demoralise her. Instead, the circumstances pushed her to succeed against all odds.

Her new job is to provide body massages to clients. “I am earning a decent salary at this stage,” she says, adding that she wants to run her own massage business in future.

Giving a word of advice to former colleagues, she says, “Fear is the biggest impediment for many to succeed. We need to challenge ourselves and unleash our true inner dreams.”



Refilwe Moshoeshoe is now a beauty therapist with Rhinos Estate Resort



Parapara Makgahlela, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng

Training for Communications Department

The Working on Fire Communications Department hosted its annual departmental training from 7 to 11 November 2016.

Among the attendees were Community Awareness Training Officers (CATOs) and Fire Awareness Training Officers (FATOs) – who received training in Project Management from Twasa Training Academy, and Communications Officers, Video Journalists, a Communications Coordinator as well as an Editor – who received training in online video journalism from the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism.

“My overall experience and overview of the training we received this week is very interesting. In particular, the project management course we did is going to help us improve the projects that we currently do. This training has definitely cleared up certain things. It was a great experience getting to know our new colleagues that recently joined the Communications

Department,” says Rudi Lucas, Western Cape FATO.

“The training was awesome and it helped us to determine the different dynamics of a project and the different expectations required in the commencement and closure of a project. This was beneficial to us as CATOs because it will enable us to produce great projects in our provinces in terms of our community fire awareness workshops. What we learned this week we will be giving back to the communities we work with,” says Wongama Copiso, Eastern Cape CATO.

With this training, the Communications Department will be better equipped to achieve its key organisational communications goals and objectives.



Wayne Mokhethi, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State



CATOs, FATOs and PCOs attending departmental training in Benoni

YOU ARE COVERED!

PERSONAL INJURY POLICY AND FUNERAL COVER POLICY



WHAT IS A PERSONAL INJURY POLICY AND FUNERAL COVER POLICY?

From a checklist that includes:
Personal Injury
Funeral Cover
Policy and Funeral
Cover Policy
Policy and Funeral
Cover Policy

DID YOU KNOW:
IF AN INCIDENT OCCURS AT THE WORKPLACE WHICH LEADS TO YOUR DEATH, THE COMPANY WILL PAY YOUR FAMILY R50,000 TO COVER FUNERAL COSTS.

IT MEANS THAT WHILE YOU ARE EMPLOYED BY KWSHUGU YOU ARE COVERED FOR CERTAIN ACCIDENTS WHICH MIGHT TAKE PLACE IN THE WORKPLACE.

THERE IS ALSO A LIST OF OTHER INJURIES WHICH WILL BE COVERED BY THE INSURANCE COMPANY THAT THE GROUP IS MAKING USE OF.

ACCIDENTAL DISFIGUREMENT: SPECIFIED % OF PERMANENT DISABILITY

IF YOUR BODY IS HARMED AND YOU ARE LEFT WITH SCARS OR BURNS, THE POLICY WILL COVER THE COSTS.

CHAUFFEUR EXPENSES:
ACTUAL EXPENSES INCURRED UP TO A MAXIMUM OF R 10,000 IF YOU ARE INJURED AND YOU NEED TO BE AIRLIFTED.

WHAT OTHER INJURIES WILL ALSO BE COVERED?

IT ALSO STATES THAT WE WILL BE COVERED FOR R10,000 EACH FOR TRANSPORT EXPENSES AND ADMINISTRATION COSTS. DOES THIS MEAN THAT IF I NEED TO BE TRANSPORTED BY A PRIVATE AMBULANCE DURING MY INJURY THE COMPANY WILL REFUND ME?

I'M NOT SURE, LET'S CALL SOMEONE FROM HR TO EXPLAIN.

THERE IS MBULA FROM HR, LET'S CALL HIM

HI GUYS, I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE PERSONAL INJURY AND FUNERAL COVER POLICIES? LET ME EXPLAIN. FIRST OF ALL: YOU WILL ONLY BE COVERED FOR THESE BENEFITS WHILE YOU ARE ON DUTY. THESE BENEFITS WILL NOT APPLY WHILE YOU ARE OFF DUTY.

CHAUFFEUR COSTS IS TRANSPORTATION COSTS THAT WILL BE COVERED UP TO R10,000.

REGARDING ADMINISTRATIVE CLAIMS PREPARATION COSTS, IT MEANS THAT THE MONEY YOU SPEND UP TO THE VALUE OF R10,000 WILL BE COVERED.

EMERGENCY TRANSPORT/RESCUE: ACTUAL EXPENSES INCURRED UP TO A MAXIMUM OF R30,000.

YES, WE UNDERSTAND. WHAT DOES EMERGENCY TRANSPORT AND RESCUE MEAN?



SHOULD YOU BE TRANSPORTED OR RESCUED FROM ANY DANGEROUS AREA, THE COSTS FOR THAT SPECIFIC EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION WILL BE COVERED UP TO R30,000.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, DOES IT MEAN THAT SHOULD A HELICOPTER OR PRIVATE AMBULANCE TRANSPORT ME TO THE CLOSEST HOSPITAL, THAT ALL THE COSTS WILL BE COVERED?

SAY IT COSTS R35,000, THE POLICY WILL PAY R30,000 MAXIMUM.

SO, IF I HAVE TO DRIVE SOMEWHERE WHILE ON DUTY AND I GET HIJACKED OR KIDNAPPED, WILL THE INSURANCE COMPANY PAY UP TO R100,000 TO RECOVER MY CAR AND PAY FOR COUNSELLING?

IF WE REFER TO HOSPITAL CONFINEMENT, IT MEANS THAT IF YOU STAY IN HOSPITAL FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME, THE COMPANY WILL PAY R2,000 PER DAY FOR 14 DAYS. LIFE SUPPORT MEANS THAT IF YOU NEED TO STAY IN ICU, YOU WILL BE COVERED FOR UP TO R20,000.

THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT IT MEANS.

PARAPLEGIA: 10% OF ITEM 2 OF THE TABLE OF BENEFITS UP TO A MAX OF R 50,000.

QUADRIPLEGIA: 20% OF ITEM 2 OF THE TABLE OF BENEFITS UP TO A MAX OF R 75,000

WHAT DOES MOBILITY EXPENSES MEAN? LET ME GUESS. IT'S WHEN I CAN'T WALK AND NEED A WHEELCHAIR OR CRUTCHES, THE POLICY WILL COVER UP TO R150,000.

YOU'RE RIGHT. SAY YOU ARE ALREADY IN A WHEELCHAIR AND THEN BECOME PARAPLEGIC OR A QUADRIPLEGIC, YOU WILL BE COVERED UP TO R75,000, APART FROM THE R150,000.

THEN, WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RELOCATION, CHAUFFEUR AND EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION THEN?

OK, I GET THE HANG OF THIS, SO REHABILITATION EXPENSES MEAN THAT IF I NEED TO LEARN HOW TO WALK AGAIN, OR IF I NEED PHYSIOTHERAPY, THE POLICY WILL PAY 85% UP TO A MAXIMUM OF R100,000.

WELL DONE, YOU GOT IT. AND RELOCATION EXPENSES MEANS IF YOU NEED TO BE RELOCATED FROM ONE REHABILITATION CENTRE OR HOSPITAL TO ANOTHER.

RELOCATION IS FROM ONE MEDICAL INSTITUTION TO ANOTHER OR BACK TO THE BASE. CHAUFFEUR IS NORMAL TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION IS WHEN YOU NEED TO BE AIRLIFTED OR IF A PRIVATE AMBULANCE PICKS YOU UP.

RELOCATION EXPENSES: Actual expenses incurred up to a max of R25,000

REHABILITATION EXPENSES: Actual expenses incurred up to a max of R50,000

REPATRIATION EXPENSES MEANS: WHEN YOU WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA OR OTHER COUNTRIES AND YOU PASS AWAY, YOUR REMAINS WILL BE SENT BACK TO YOUR COUNTRY.

IT ALSO MEANS IF YOU LOSE A FAMILY MEMBER OR A COLLEAGUE, YOU WILL RECEIVE TRAUMA COUNSELLING BY AN EXPERT. THERE IS ALSO AN ADDED BENEFIT OF URGENT EXPENSES FOLLOWING DEATH. WHO CAN TELL ME WHAT THAT MEANS?

IT MEANS ANY ADDITIONAL COST INCURRED BEFORE YOU PASS AWAY, YOUR FAMILY WILL RECEIVE R10,000 TO COVER THE COSTS.

THAT IS CORRECT. LOOKING AT THE NEXT LINE, THE MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT BENEFIT COMES IN WHEN YOU HAVE AN ACCIDENT WITH YOUR PERSONAL VEHICLE, A COMPANY CAR OR POOL CAR WHILE ON DUTY. YOU WILL BE COVERED FOR UP TO R100,000.

THE INSURANCE COMPANY WILL PAY THIRD PARTY CLAIMS IF YOU ARE IN AN ACCIDENT. A THIRD PARTY CLAIM IS WHEN A PERSON FROM OUTSIDE THE COMPANY CAN CLAIM.

THEN THERE IS THE FUNERAL COVER POLICY.

YES. A FUNERAL BENEFIT LUMP SUM WILL BE PAYABLE ON YOUR DEATH OR THAT OF A FAMILY MEMBER.

WOW, THIS IS AMAZING. THE COMPANY REALLY IS LOOKING OUT FOR US.

IF YOU REQUIRE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE SPEAK TO YOUR PROVINCIAL HR OR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS.

THIS MAKES MUCH MORE SENSE. THANKS FOR TAKING THE TIME TO EXPLAIN THIS TO US.

FUNERAL COVER POLICY

FUNERAL BENEFIT PAYABLE ON DEATH	COVER AMOUNT
MAIN MEMBER (EMPLOYEE)	R10,000
SPOUSE	R10,000
CHILDREN AGED 14 YEARS AND OVER	R10,000
CHILDREN AGED 6 – 13 YEARS	R5,000
CHILDREN AGED 1 – 5 YEARS	R2,500
STILLBORN TO 11 MONTHS	R1,250