



WOFIRE NEWS

Saving Lives • Protecting the Environment • Restoring Dignity

VOLUME 7 | EDITION 10 | JANUARY 2019



Working on Fire



Working on Fire - WOF TV News Channel



@wo_fire

New Minimum Wage Dispensation

THE NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE
A TOOL TO CLOSE THE WAGE GAP AND TO OVERCOME POVERTY



The National Minimum Wage sets the floor below which no worker must be paid. The National Minimum Wage will be applicable and enforced as from 1 JANUARY 2019.

ALL WORKERS MUST EARN A MINIMUM RATE OF R20.00 PER HOUR.

EXEMPTED SECTORS

- Farm Workers: R18 per hour
- Domestic Workers: R15 per hour
- EPWP: R11 per hour.

DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
R20 x 8 hours = R160	R20 x 40 hours = R800	R800 x 4,333 = R3 444.40
R20 x 9 hours = R180	R20 x 45 hours = R900	R900 x 4,333 = R3 899.70

- Wage calculations exclude additional benefit, allowance and tips
- An employee or worker who works less than four hours on any day is entitled to be paid for four hours work
- If not paid NMW lodge a complaint at nearest Department of Labour or CCMA

labour
Department: Labour
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



On 27 November 2018, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the National Minimum Wage Act, which came into effect on 1 January 2019.

The national minimum wage is set at R20 for each ordinary hour worked, except for the following categories of employees: farm workers are entitled to a minimum wage of R18 per hour, domestic workers are entitled to a minimum wage of R15 per hour and workers employed in an Expanded Public Works Programme are entitled to a minimum wage of R11 per hour.

Working on Fire is part of the Expanded Public Works Programmes which are meant to provide public or community services through a labour-intensive programme, in terms of section 50 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, and are funded from public resources.

Participants employed in the Working on Fire Programme are thus excluded from the new minimum wage dispensation and are catered for in Schedule 1, part 2.c of the National Minimum Wage Act, with a minimum wage of R11 per hour.

See the New Minimum Wage Poster on Page 8 that must be cut out and placed on all noticeboards.

Western Cape firefighters remain on high alert



As the wildfire season continues in the Western Cape, firefighters from the Department of Environmental Affairs' Working on Fire (WOF) programme are ready to assist with firefighting efforts across the province.

Since the start of the 2018/19 wildfire season, close to 900 firefighters, 11 spotter planes, eight Huey

helicopters and four fixed-wing Air Tractor waterbombers from Working on Fire have assisted partners such as the Provincial Disaster Management Centre, CapeNature, Greater Overberg FPA and SANParks at 41 fires.

Some of these fires occurred at Lion's Head, Van der Stell Pass/Overberg region (which burnt for two weeks), Ganzekraal, Wupperthal, Hartenbos,



Botrivier, Hansmoeskraal, Vyeboom, Louvaine and the Quarry Hill Road area along Table Mountain.

The Western Cape Province has been bolstered with 100 firefighters from the Free State and a further 500 on national standby.



Lauren Howard, Western Cape Provincial Communication Officer

Free State teams excel during the wildfire season

It has been over two months since the deployment of Working on Fire Free State teams to the Western Cape to assist with the wildfire season. The Free State firefighters show no signs of fatigue despite having finished off integrated fire management activities and fire suppression efforts during the Free State winter fire season and moving immediately to the Western Cape to do the same.

The Working on Fire Ficksburg Team, along with various partners, assisted with the fire control and suppression of the devastating fires that broke out in Wupperthal and destroyed many homes.

Michael May, a Type 2 Crew Leader with the Ficksburg Team says, "I have fought fires in the Western Cape before, in Grabouw and George, so I have experience with this type of vegetation near Wupperthal and this assisted us greatly with fire suppression."



Free State team assisted in multiple fires in the Western Cape

The Ficksburg Team was also on the fire line at the Malmesbury fire that lasted four days. In addition to firefighting efforts, they have been proactively removing overgrown vegetation and alien

invasive plant species that fuel fires on public and private properties.



Wayne Mokhethi, Free State Provincial Communication Officer

We welcome back all our management and participants after a well-deserved December holiday break. We trust that you had a good time away from work with family and friends.

We extend heartfelt thanks to our management and participants in the Western Cape and those who travelled from the other provinces to assist in providing ongoing firefighting support to our partners and stakeholders.

A huge thank-you also to all our firefighters who worked non-stop for two weeks on the Betty's Bay fires in the Overberg in the Western Cape, which broke out on 1 January 2019.

As we return to work in 2019, we want to reflect on some of our successes in 2018 and how we are strengthening the Working on Fire programme, especially our relationships with our partners and stakeholders.



The Community and Stakeholders in the Overberg District town of Kleinmond came out in their numbers to thank WOF

CHANGES IN WORKING ON FIRE MANAGEMENT

In November 2018, the Working on Fire board approved changes to the management structure of the programme which aim to strengthen the leadership structures and allow the Managing Director to focus more on the future of Working on Fire.

To this end, Shane Christian was appointed as the WOF Chief Operating Officer (COO) with the responsibility, among others, of coordinating the operations of the WOF EXCO and its clusters and monitoring the overall health of the organisation.

In addition, Martin Bolton was appointed as National Operations Manager (NOM) to, inter alia, support Provincial General Managers on operational matters, manage the functioning of the Stock Controllers and overall PPE and PPC management, and the development of WOF's Commercial Operations.

We have also had to implement some management changes at a provincial level, which were aimed at strengthening our operations in some provinces.

HCM APPOINTMENTS

We have made senior appointments within our HCM Department during the past two months, including the filling of the Skills Development and Industrial Relationship Manager posts.

We have also seen the welcome return to Working on Fire of Mbula Nematshivanani as our National HOD HRM.

These senior appointments have been made to bolster the support to the HCM Executive and to ensure that we strengthen our HCM support to provinces and departments.

Communique from the Executive Committee (EXCO)



From left to right: Shane Christian, Chief Operating Officer, Luthfia Cader, Communications Executive, Tony Mancos, Risk Management, Jacob Singo, OHS Executive, Piet Van Der Merwe, Operations Executive, Trevor Abrahams, Managing Director, Sandiso Ntsomi, Senior Financial Manager, Natalie Sauls, HCM Executive and Ancil Lee, IT Executive. Photo inset: Fatima Gilbert

UNIONISATION

During 2018, we experienced several challenges related to union activities within Working on Fire and there were sporadic incidents in which some firefighters conducted themselves unlawfully and disrupted the workplace, causing damage to property and vehicles.

The overwhelming majority of the Working on Fire workforce did not support these unlawful activities. This situation became untenable and necessitated that we approach the Labour Court for urgent intervention in these acts of the union and its members. Subsequently, GIWUSA was interdicted from allowing its members to engage in any unlawful activities and from causing disruption to our operations.

Since we now have a court order prohibiting such actions, we appeal to all our staff to act in a disciplined and legal manner to avoid contravening this court order.

In 2019, we will continue with our engagement with all unions to ensure that everyone understands the functioning of Working on Fire as an Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) of government.

CLEAN FINANCIAL AUDIT

We are happy to report that Working on Fire received a clean audit report for the 2017-18 financial year. The Finance Department appointed Lucky Maimela as Supply Chain Manager towards the end of 2018 to ensure ongoing compliance with our supply chain processes.

OHS AUDIT



During 2018, Working on Fire underwent a thorough NOSA 5-Star audit and we were excited to receive four stars. The OHS Department will work towards ISO 45001 certification in

2019. ISO 45001 is a new international standard that specifies requirements for the occupational health and safety (OH&S) management system, to enable organisations to proactively improve their OH&S performance in preventing injury and ill-health.

WOF KIDS CARE PROJECT

Inspired by the legacy of Nelson Mandela, Working on Fire provided Kids Care Packages to children of our firefighters during December as a gift of hope which provided essential personal care items, educational toys and clothing to children.

Many of our partners and new sponsors contributed to this project. This project is one way of honouring our firefighters, who make enormous sacrifices every year in saving lives and property. We look forward to taking this initiative to new heights in 2019 and want to thank everybody who contributed to the success of the project.



GARDEN ROUTE AND TSITSIKAMMA FIRES

Working on Fire's participation in combatting the multiple fires in the Southern Cape (Western Cape) and the Tsitsikamma region of the Eastern Cape during October and December has been greatly appreciated and acknowledged across the board.



DEA DROUGHT RELIEF PROJECT

We have successfully implemented the DEA Drought Relief Project in the Western and Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, aimed at removing alien invasive plants from river and dam catchment areas to help replenish the scarce water resources in these provinces.



DEA ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORS PROJECT

We also implemented the Environmental Monitors Project on behalf of DEA, wherein participants have been trained to provide additional safety and security services at SANParks facilities at Table Mountain National Park.

2021 AND BEYOND

During the next few months, all departments will be undergoing a series of engagements and workshops to help shape and develop a future vision for Working on Fire, with a special focus on how we can strengthen relationships with our partners and stakeholders.



In particular, we want to see more of our firefighters being able to secure full-time employment in the public and private sector, as well as more being able to set up their own businesses.

This will be an important focus for us in 2019 and beyond.

Working on Fire Executive Committee

South African National Parks (SANParks) and CapeNature have had among the longest-standing partnership agreements with Working on Fire in the Western Cape. Since 2003, teams have been developed under these agreements that have seen many successful participants being absorbed into SANParks and CapeNature management and ranger programmes.

Over the past 15 years, 12 bases have been established in the vicinity of reserves with close to 1 000 firefighters stationed there. These partners have prioritised the well-being of our firefighters to ensure that they are not just a firefighting resource. Not only personal investments have been made but leadership and skills developments have been offered by both partners through in-house training.

"We would like to thank SANParks and CapeNature for investing in our participants and Working on Fire over the past 15 years and recognise the value their management has instilled

Long partnerships in the Western Cape acknowledged



within our participants," says Moses Oupa Manganye, WOF General Manager for the Western Cape.



Lauren Howard, Western Cape Provincial Communication Officer

WOF's ASV/ HSV drivers keep firefighting aircraft ready to fly

Aircraft Support Vehicle (ASV) and Helicopter Support Vehicle (HSV) drivers are responsible for refuelling WOF's firefighting aircraft before, during and after wildfire suppression operations. They operate fuel bowsters used to refuel bombers and Hueys with jet fuel or the spotter planes with aviation fuel/ avgas.

When there is a big fire, WOF Aviation flies for many hours, even days. These drivers have to be ready to refuel the aircraft so that time isn't wasted.

Neo Moahlodi is a proud HSV driver who helped to ensure that the helicopters at the Betty's Bay fire were fuelled and ready to fly. Moahlodi has been an HSV

driver for the last two years and is based at the Stellenbosch Airfield.

"My job is to keep the Huey helicopter fuelled. If a fire is far from an airfield, I drive to a suitable location close to the fire, where the pilot can quickly refuel his Huey when he needs to."

Moahlodi joined WOF in 2006 as a firefighter at the Jonkershoek Base. He became a Type 2 Crew Leader in 2008 and a WOF driver in 2010. He initially managed fire trucks and transport buses and ensured that WOF teams were transported safely to wherever needed.

"I enjoyed transporting the teams, even though it was a very responsible job. The safety of the crew is the driver's



Neo is a proud WOF HSV driver who ensures that the Huey helicopters are fuelled and ready to fly

main priority. If you make a mistake, you could cause injuries or even fatalities," Moahlodi says.

He says being an ASV driver is a very responsible and important job as it helps WOF Aviation's operations to run smoothly. "It can be tough sometimes, but I enjoy it."



Lauren Howard, Western Cape Provincial Communication Officer

Working on Fire KwaZulu-Natal was approached by Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) to assist with the training of Stanger Hospital's fire marshals. Community Fire Awareness Officer Simphiwe Dlamini says, "My objective was to educate marshals on the theory sections which include understanding of fire, identifying emergency signage and the evacuation plan."

Fire marshals are usually staff members of the hospitals. This group consisted of medical doctors, the hospital Occupational Health & Safety Officer, security officers, nurses and general workers.

"It is very imperative for fire marshals to be established in any workplace as

Stanger Hospital fire marshals receive FireSafe workshop

they will be the first responders before firefighters reach the venue. They will also assess risks within the hospital and advise other staff and patients, and also induct any new staff in the hospital," adds Dlamini.

Dlamini will be revisiting Stanger Hospital to workshop with more fire marshals. "ACSA conducted the practical with the group. We worked very well, the marshals were engaging and asked questions. I will continue to partner with various stakeholders to ensure communi-

ties and employees are aware of fire risks in their areas," says Dlamini.



Nompilo Zondi, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Communication Officer



Simphiwe Dlamini workshoping with fire marshals

Municipality helps to upskill firefighters



Carletonville crew during the Fire search & Rescue course offered by WRDM in conjunction with University of Joburg

Carletonville Team's Siphokazi Mboyiya says that the structural firefighting courses offered by West Rand District Municipality are helping her prepare for future opportunities and employment. The municipality offers courses from the University of Johannesburg that are accredited at NQF level 5.

Mboyiya has completed a basic ambulance assistant certificate course and obtained a code 10 driver's licence. She says the courses will add weight to her CV.

Mboyiya believes that upskilling will enable her to take the opportunity that will arise at some point.

"We are able to utilise the stipend to do courses," Mboyiya says. "It is our responsibility as firefighters to fight our way up and out.

"I am applying for positions because I have formal training in ambulance services and structural firefighting," she says.

Andre Marx, the principal of West Rand District Municipality's training academy, says it is a pleasure to help sharpen & develop firefighters' skills.

"I will be happy to employ some of the WOF firefighters in structural firefighting teams here in the region. It has been nice working with the teams," says Marx.



Parapara Makgahlala, Gauteng Provincial Communication Officer

Base manager recognised

Working on Fire Limpopo recently acknowledged the dedicated leadership of Ashley Theron, the Base Manager at Rooiberg.

The Vingerkraal Team was moved to Mabalingwe in May 2018 and has since been singing the praises of their base manager.

"I enjoy working with these young males and females," says Theron. "Their dedication, discipline and commitment are out of this world. You can give them any task at any given time and they will perform it with passion. I'm so blessed to be working with them."



WOF GOM presents a token of appreciation to the Vingerkraal Base Manager



Matema Gwangwa, Limpopo Provincial Communication Officer

Let's make 2019 'Super Safe' at WOF

WOF intends to build on its past safety success by encouraging more bases to stay disabling injury (DI) free in 2019.



Safety is a huge priority across the WOF operations, especially since the firefighting industry has so many inherent risks of injury on the fire line, on the road, in store rooms, offices and bases and during IFM activities. Rather than just the responsibility of management, safety is everyone's responsibility.

The WO Health and Safety Department is calling on all employees to work together to help create a 'Super Safe 2019'. As an incentive, EXCO has decided to reward all bases that have not sustained any disabling injuries (DI) over the last 12 months with an award of R500

and R300 for WOF and HAT respectively. A disabling injury is an injury that can result in death, permanent disability or any degree of temporary total disability beyond the day of the injury. A person is disabled if the injury prevents him/her from performing tasks they were able to do before in the normal course of work.

A list of bases that have gone 12, 11 and 10 months without a disabling injury will be published soon. Only those teams with 12 DI-free months will be rewarded at this time. Ten and 11 months DI-free bases will be rewarded when they reach their 12 months, and the cycle then restarts. WOF

Health and Safety Manager Jacob Singo says, "I would like to congratulate each of these exemplary bases for this achievement; for showing that a safe production is indeed possible. I would like to encourage them to keep up the good work and also to apologise for the delay in implementing these rewards. The safety incentive will be an ongoing programme in WOF, awarded on a monthly basis, and therefore some hard work needed to be put in to ensure that the rewards went to the deserving bases." Singo says he hopes this will encourage other bases – especially those currently 10 and 11 months DI-free – to continue prioritising safety so that their bases could be rewarded.

Written by Zania Viljoen

KwaZulu-Natal Operations ready to tackle 2019

The Zululand Grounds Operations Manager, Mortas Khambule, recently shared his plans for 2019. Grounds Operations Managers are responsible for ensuring productions targets are met, all training needs are satisfied and teams have enough PPC and PPE.

"As the Operations Department we have operations we plan to achieve this year. The first is to ensure teams are fully operational in terms of numbers before the burning time starts in preparation for the fire season," says Khambule.

This means teams' top-ups should be done before March and the new recruits trained before the winter fire season.

Khambule says it is imperative that all firefighters attend the annual Yellow Card Training Camp to be deemed fit enough to be called out to a fire.



Normandien firefighters doing fitness exercises

"It will be a bit more fun this year as we plan to award top performers in certain activities. We plan to select activities that would encourage participants to give more than average and be rewarded if they achieve better results," Khambule says.

An annual operations plan showing monthly trends will be distributed to teams to encourage them to do their best, whether in fire awareness or production. "We also plan to encourage team spirit and the involvement of management with our base structures," says Khambule.



Nompilo Zondi, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Communication Officer

Limpopo all geared up for the year

Limpopo WOF firefighters have had a pleasant start to the year and are already well into delivering the plans for the new year.

WOF started the year with a string of recruitment drives in all the regions through which 38 new participants were recruited from the communities.

"Our plan is to ensure that our bases meet the required standards for the firefighters before we start with the Yellow Card training to enable us to prepare accordingly for the upcoming 2019 winter fire season," says Felicia Ngwasheng, Limpopo Ground Operations Manager.

WOF will be hosting the Crew Leader partnership workshop to prepare for the winter fire season. The workshop will assist in strengthening the relationship between WOF and



Limpopo's new recruits on their way to Nelspruit for training

its stakeholders and to ensure that all parties walk at the same pace.

"We are also planning to encourage our stakeholders to absorb our firefighters into their environment as they are equipped with experience, knowledge and discipline," says Ngwasheng.



Matema Gwangwa, Limpopo Provincial Communication Officer

GOM outlines plans for the year

"As we start the year, our focus as Eastern Cape is to make sure that our teams get back from their leave and conduct fitness tests to ensure that they are still physically and mentally fit," says the Ground Operations Manager of the Eastern Cape, Antoinette Busisiwe Jini. "Our teams will also conduct as much school and door-to-door awareness as they can. Finally, we want to focus on improving production by evaluating planned versus actual production, together with our base managers."

Jini says that during the festive season, firefighters hardly get time for fitness training, hence the need to get their fitness up to standard. Maintaining the discipline of the teams and continuing to strengthen relationships with stakeholders were the main priorities.

"2018 was very hectic when it came to fires. This year we want to make sure that we put more effort into our prevention measures, which include awareness," says Jini.

She said that teams will be educating learners in different schools and want to target a large number of schools this year. They will also ensure that community members get the FireSafe message.

"Teams will also do firebreaks and fuel load reduction all over the province



The Eastern Cape GOM sees 2019 as a year of changes that will make a difference in the province

to prevent fires from spreading from one area to another," adds Jini.

She says that the province will equip Crew Leaders and Regional Managers with developmental skills to assist them to perform at their best.

"We also thank our partners who absorbed some of our participants, including Crew Leaders, in this financial year," says Jini. "We want to make the province become one of the best in the programme by living the values of Working on Fire. We are here to make a difference!"



Nthabiseng Mokone, Eastern Cape Provincial Communication Officer

Mpumalanga teams beef up their fitness

After a busy 2018 and a much-needed rest in December, the WOF Mpumalanga firefighters and staff are all back and ready to tackle this year's winter fire season.

Thabiso Mohale, MPU Ground Operations Manager, says the province is planning a large awareness campaign to ensure a more proactive approach to wildfire management.

"We will put a lot of focus on raising awareness in the communities and at schools. We will also conduct fire awareness workshops with caregivers and Working for Water participants and have also planned presentations to military personnel on the risks and prevention of fires and a series of FireSafe workshops," says Mohale.

"RMs and Crew Leaders are working together to improve the standard of fitness at the MPU bases. Teams will also be assisting landowners with fuel reduction projects and the removal of alien invasive plants, as well as prescribed burning later in the season," Mohale says.



The WOF Wilgeboom Team do physical training to regain their fitness after December

Conveying his new year wishes to all our participants, partners and stakeholders, WOF Mpumalanga General Manager, Ovie Sehlabela, says, "I hope 2019 will be a good year for all. We are eager to start preparing for the 2019 fire season. Our teams will be doing slashing, prescribed burns and selective alien plant eradication operations. We are looking forward to building on our excellent working relationships with landowners and fire protection associations in order to better protect lives and our environment."

Written by Zania Viljoen

KZN delivers WOF Kid's Care Packages

The Shongweni Team was filled with excitement to receive their early Christmas presents for their children as part of the WOF Kids Care Package initiative.

Ground Operations Manager Dave Kleyn says WOF wanted to show firefighters that they were appreciated for being away from their children and families while saving the lives of other families across South Africa.



WOF parent-participants with the children

Mrs Hlela, one of the participants' parents, was present to see her grandchild receive a gift from Working on Fire.

Working on Fire continues to make a difference

Crew Leader Bukeka Mketo, of the Dwesa Base in the Eastern Cape, thanks Working on Fire for bringing Christmas cheer to the children of the firefighters.

This follows the awesome job that was done by the programme nationally in December last year wherein children of firefighters received gift packages for Christmas.

Eastern Cape Social Development Practitioner, Yvonne Nte, says that the programme implemented an initiative to make gift packages for firefighters' children to show WOF's appreciation for their hard work and dedication in saving lives and protecting the environment.

"Each child of a firefighter in the province was allocated a gift package which had items that included toys, snacks and school items. Those that did not receive their packages will be receiving them this month," says Nte.

Mketo says that her child, 12-year-old Luvo Mketo, received the package in



EC Crew Leader thanks the WOF programme for putting a smile on participants' children's faces

December and he was very excited to receive a gift from Working on Fire.

"My son was very proud to have a mother working for the programme, saying that he really appreciated the gift from WOF," says Mketo.

She says there aren't many places that would do such an awesome thing for the children of employees so she is grateful to the WOF programme for doing a wonderful job.



Nthabiseng Mokone, Eastern Cape Provincial Communication Officer

Affirming fire safety tips



Mdala team Crew Leader presenting inside the house safety first to nurses and community members of Makometsana village

The Mdala Team presented the 'inside the house' safety first topic to community members and nurses at Rhenosterkop clinic in Makometsana village, Gauteng, under the supervision of Fire Awareness Training Officer, Jabulile Shabalala.

The objective of the presentation was to alert and educate the audience about the dangers of fire to ensure the fire safety of communities.

"We went to this community because our team is servicing them with fire awareness education. The community is in a rural area and is fire prone. Fire safety tips are necessary for this community," says Shabalala.

Shabalala commenced with the workshop in the morning with the team and later headed to the clinic.

Before the start of the presentation the team did manual fuel load reduction on the premises of the clinic and its surroundings.

Crew member Cindy Masimula says the team wanted to demonstrate its commitment to the fire safety of communities with the load reduction.

Giving her assessment of the performance of the team and its understanding of the topic, Shabalala commended the team for presenting the content professionally and says the audience's response was positive.

The clinic manager, Tryphina Nkabinde, expressed appreciation for the presentation and work done by the team.



Parapara Makgahlela, Gauteng Provincial Communication Officer

"I remember one of my son's colleagues, who is also my neighbour, told him about the programme needing firefighters back in 2007 and today I am grateful for the positive impact the Working on Fire programme has been to my family," said Mrs Hlela.

Type 1 Crew Leader Maxwell Shange, expressing his happiness as his child received the early Christmas present, said,

"I'm appreciative of this initiative. This will assist us with just topping up here and there with our Christmas shopping. Thank you Working on Fire."

A huge thank-you to all our WOF management, stakeholders, partners, fire protection associations, corporate sponsors and members of the public for all generous contributions in cash and in kind that made this a great success.



Nompilo Zondi, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Communication Officer

Limpopo participants already hard at work

WOF firefighters have returned from their well-deserved rest during the festive season and have started implementing Integrated Fire Management Services at their bases.

Limpopo experienced lots of rain in all the regions during the month of December and early January which has caused the grass to grow taller and dense.

Once the teams have completed the manual fuel load reduction required they will embark on projects to assist landowners to prepare for the winter fire season.

"We are engaging our participants in frequent fitness tests to ensure that they are up to standard with the requirements. Our plan is to have everyone ready and fit by the end of the month," says Mpho van Rensburg,



Makhado firefighters doing manual fuel load reduction at their base

WOF Regional Manager in the East Region.



Matema Gwangwa, Limpopo Provincial Communication Officer

Longest-serving employees and WOF partner honoured

As part of Working on Fire's ongoing 15-year anniversary celebrations, North West recently hosted an awards ceremony to honour two of the longest-serving WOF employees. Ground Operations Manager Manase Mpholoane, and Linda Pretorius, who is the Provincial Payroll Administrator, have each served WOF for 15 years. Dr Kobus Roux, who is the Potchefstroom FPA chairman was also honoured for the services and support he has rendered to WOF for 15 years.

During the ceremony, WOF North West General Manager, Nolu-vuyo Mashologu, thanked all three awardees, saying that WOF is what it is today because of their tireless support and contribution.

"I remember meeting Manase for the first time before I joined WOF at the opening of Christiana Base. He was doing a presentation about WOF services and the difference it makes in the participants' lives. Hearing the way he spoke with pride about the programme and what it does, I thought to myself 'one day, I will wear that yellow shirt and work for this wonderful programme'," said Mashologu. Directly addressing the



Chairman of the Potchefstroom FPA, Dr Kobus Roux, Ground Operations Manager, Manase Mpholoane and Provincial Payroll Administrator, Linda Pretorius, have each served Working on Fire for 15 years

recipients, he said, "I think these are the qualities all three of you possess, the passion for your work and wanting to make a difference. And for that we want to thank you and show our appreciation."

Dr Roux, who has been a staunch supporter of the programme for many years, reminisced about the old days. He spoke about how he and Linda used to work in Linda's flat before there was an office. Despite those challenging times, they have seen the programme grow and make a difference in communities and in the lives of the participants.

Working on Fire is immensely grateful that they are part of the WOF family.

Newly appointed Fire Awareness Training Officer

Hard work, dedication and willingness will take you far as a young person, says Teko Mooki, a former firefighter from North West.

Mooki was appointed as the Fire Awareness Training Officer (FATO) of the Eastern Cape from November last year.

Mooki matriculated in 2010 and could not further his studies due to financial problems. He was jobless for a year when he heard that WOF was recruiting at Boskop Base in North West. Mooki was recruited in October 2012 as a firefighter in the Boskop Team.

Mooki says, "I was a hard worker and I became the SHE rep from 2013. Due to my hard work and dedication I was appointed to be the Fire Awareness Facilitator in North West in 2016."

He says he worked with both the Fire Awareness Training Officer and the Community Fire Awareness Officer to learn more about school awareness and community awareness.



Teko Mooki thanks the programme for changing his life for the better

"Then in 2018 I was promoted to be the FATO for the eastern part of the Eastern Cape province," says Mooki.

He will be conducting workshops for the Eastern Cape teams on how to conduct quality fire awareness in schools.

Mooki advises everyone to always aim high and have a goal in life so that it will take them somewhere someday.



Nthabiseng Mokone, Eastern Cape Provincial Communication Officer

Participant's uplifting experience at WOF

Mosehle Mosehle, of the Wedela Team, feels his dignity was restored after he managed to build himself a home the size of an RDP house with the stipend he earns in the programme.

Although it cost him around R10 000 to complete it, he says the financial management skills training the programme offered definitely helped and his achievement has helped to boost his morale and social standing.

"I now have my house, unlike before, when I slept in a shack," he says. Mosehle says being able to build himself a nice furnished home is the greatest thing that has ever happened to him.

Among many positive results of taking the work opportunity in the programme, which was his first formal job, he recently acquired a code 10 driver's licence and has also completed a fire search and rescue course with the West Rand District Municipality.

Mosehle says, "Had it not been for the programme perhaps I would still be without a job or a nice home."



Mosehle Mosehle of Wedela team standing next to his new house

He plans to study in 2019 and is preparing himself for a positive exit.



Parapara Makgahlela, Gauteng Provincial Communication Officer

Education is his path to success

Born and bred in the dusty village of Cofimvaba in the Eastern Cape, Abelo Duna knew that he was destined for greater heights.

After completing matric in 2010, Duna had some financial challenges which prevented him from pursuing his media, communications and culture course.

"I heard about the WOF recruitment from my uncle who I was visiting in Limpopo. I then decided to go and try my luck," says Duna.

Duna joined WOF on 7 July 2011 as a firefighter at Mogalakwena, by then located at Entabeni. He was promoted to SHE representative in November 2011. Due to his hardworking and disciplined

personality, he was appointed as the Type 2 Crew Leader in June 2013 and in May 2014 he was appointed as Type 1 Crew Leader.

"My journey was not easy. I had to work hard and prove that I deserved to be in the leadership position. With my dedication, hard work, passion, discipline, dedication and determination, I excelled in every task that was assigned to me," says Duna.

Duna used the stipend that he earned at WOF to further his education. Working as a SHE rep and Crew Leader fueled his love of safety. In 2015, he enrolled for an online OHS management course with Oxbridge Academy and passed with flying colours. During the same year he



Abelo Duna is ready to shine in his new role as OHS Administrator

also enrolled for SAMTRAC with NOSA and completed it in record time.

"It was very challenging juggling work and studies at the same time, especially during the fire season. I had to study every chance that I had," says Duna.

In 2018, Duna enrolled for the National Diploma in Safety Management at UNISA and is currently still busy with the course.

Duna was appointed as the OHS Administrator for Limpopo on 6 January 2019. Dedicated to education, his future goal is to complete the diploma in 2020 and to enrol for a Btech degree.

"I want to be the first SHEQ Manager at WOF who moved up the ranks. It's just a matter of time before I achieve that," he says confidently.



Matema Gwangwa, Limpopo Provincial Communication Officer

Workshop to beef up fire awareness education

The Working on Fire firefighters' battle with fires does not end at the fire line. These young men and women play a vital role in educating our communities about fire safety. They conduct fire awareness education in communities, at schools and through their door-to-door campaigns which encourage community members to take responsibility for their fire risks and find ways to mitigate them.

North West Fire Awareness Training Officer, Martha Tepo, and Community Fire Awareness Officer, Sophy Dinko, conducted an 'inside the house' FireSafe workshop for the Vaalhart Team. This

was to ensure that the team can conduct effective fire awareness in communities with the aim of creating fire-resilient communities.

Because the kitchen is where most household fires start, the workshop focused on a kitchen safety checklist. This list provides a step-by-step guide on what to look out for when doing a fire safety check in the kitchen.

More workshops will be conducted with teams across the province. This is one of the many ways Working on Fire plays its part in protecting and preserving our environment.



Fire Awareness Training Officer, Martha Tepo addressing the team during the workshop

Former WOF participants now SAPS constables



Agnes Modisana, a former Working on Fire Type 3 Dispatcher who started at WOF in 2013 and Jayson Lefisa, a Type 1 Crew Leader at Bloemfontein Base who started in 2011, have both exited the programme in 2018 to join the South African Police Services.

They started their training on 1 March 2018 at the SAPS academy in Bhisho in the Eastern Cape and recently attended their passing out parade where they were officially declared SAPS constables.

Lefisa says, "I joined SAPS because I want to create a safe and secure environment for all South African citizens and, by becoming a constable, I want to prevent criminal acts that threaten the safety, security and well-being of the community that I serve in."

They both say that what they enjoy most about their new careers is that they make safety their priority by investigating criminal conduct and bringing perpetrators to justice.

"The training we went through was very tough, especially in terms of studying the Constitution and going through firearms training. However, the physical fitness training was easier for me because I came from WOF," says Modisana. "I would like to encourage all WOF participants to commit themselves in everything they do with the resources they have and to remain positive because the future is bright."



Wayne Mokhehi, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State

Former firefighter gets her dream job

Hilda Ditshwele, a former firefighter at the Mamusa Base, is living her dream of being a police officer and laying the foundations for a great career in the South African Police Services. Ditshwele joined Working on Fire in May 2012. During her five-year journey at WOF she learned to take opportunities, empower herself and most importantly, persevere.

"Being a firefighter was not always easy, but I did the job because I had been excellently trained to do it and came to realise how important being a firefighter was. When I wore my yellow uniform I carried myself with pride because I was saving lives, property and protecting the environment," says Ditshwele.

In her time at WOF she became a Health and Safety representative and also a Fire Awareness Champs Head, which helped build her self-esteem.

"Because of the opportunities presented to me in the programme, I became confident that I can achieve anything I want in life, including being a police officer. When SAPS was recruiting in February last year, they were impressed by my fitness and I was immediately recruited to go to the training college. Many struggled there with the training but I did well because I had been doing fitness training for the previous five years as a firefighter," she says.



Former firefighter from Mamusa Base, Hilda Ditshwele, in her police officer uniform

"I thank WOF because if it was not for the fitness we did, I wouldn't have survived the training. I'm now a proud police constable and plan to study Criminology at UNISA and venture into Forensic Science," says Constable Ditshwele.

She advises firefighters to grab opportunities within the programme and better themselves so that they are ready for other opportunities outside WOF.

Another WOF participant progresses to employment

Zolani Pullen, a former firefighter from the Addo base in the Eastern Cape, thanks the Working on Fire programme for all the skills and experience he acquired while he was in the programme.

After Pullen was recruited as a firefighter, he completed an HIV awareness training course, advanced veld and forest firefighting, First Aid Level 1 and 2 as well as a building construction course through the programme.

In 2016 he was selected to be the Base Communications Representative for the Addo 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 as well as being a better photographer," Pullen says.

As the BCR, he organised awareness for his base and also played a major role liaising between management and the team. He was one of the BCRs who always provided stories to WOFire News as well as stories for social media.

"I got many skills in the programme that made me a better person and some of them are helping me a lot in my current job," he says. Pullen and



Former BCR thanks the WOF programme for being empowered

two other firefighters from his team have been hired by Addo Elephant National Park as environmental monitors.

"Getting this job made me so happy and I want to thank WOF as I am where I am today because of the programme," Pullen says, encouraging other firefighters to work hard towards their goals but to be patient.



Nthabiseng Mokone, Eastern Cape Provincial Communication Officer

Aspirant legal mind in our midst

Mdala Team's Type 1 Crew Leader Arthur Mampuru has registered as a Bachelor of Laws student at UNISA for this academic year.

He says he always wanted to become a lawyer and is looking forward to his studies. An advantage of the course is that he will undertake it through correspondence. Although he has applied for funding through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme he has also saved money towards his dream career.

A determined Mampuru says no one except himself will unshackle him from the harsh realities of poverty and starvation.

"We didn't know of NSFAS before. It's not too late to follow one's career dreams. As young people we must encourage ourselves to fight for our rightful space in life," says Mampuru.



Parapara Makgahlela, Gauteng Provincial Communication Officer



THE NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE

A TOOL TO CLOSE THE WAGE GAP AND TO OVERCOME POVERTY



**ALL WORKERS
MUST EARN A
MINIMUM RATE OF
R20.00 PER HOUR**

The National Minimum Wage sets the floor below which no worker must be paid. The National Minimum Wage will be applicable and enforced as from **1 JANUARY 2019.**

EXEMPTED SECTORS

- Farm Workers: R18 per hour
- Domestic Workers: R15 per hour
- EPWP: R11 per hour.

DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
R20 x 8 hours = R160	R20 x 40 hours = R800	R800 x 4.333 = R3 466.40
R20 x 9 hours = R180	R20 x 45 hours = R900	R900 x 4.333 = R3 899.70

- Wage calculations exclude additional benefit, allowance and tips
- An employee or worker who works less than four hours on any day is entitled to be paid for four hours work
- If not paid NMW lodge a complaint at nearest Department of Labour or CCMA.



labour

Department:
Labour
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

