



Greetings,

April brings some cooler weather and Easter, giving members a bit of a breather before they go full swing into preparations for the new Fire Season. On Saturday 18th March a group of LEFPA staff manned a water table at the Mankele cycle race, showing yet again that there is much more to LEFPA than drenching fires, they got stuck in to community support and quenched thirsty cyclists as well! Well done guys for giving up some of your precious time to wave the LEFPA flag.

Until next time.

2017 / 2018 Membership

With the new financial year, membership invoices were sent out between the 13th and 17th March. Membership runs from 1 April 2017 until 31 March 2018 and membership invoices are due for payment within 30 days from invoice date (1 April). At the Special General March, the 2017/2018 rates below were approved:



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Permit Requests

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Basic Members	Basic Rates	Aerial Members	Aerial Rates
0 – 100 hectares	R 346.00 + VAT per year	Aerial	R28.51 + VAT/TD ha per year
101 – 500 hectares	R 822.00 + VAT per Year	Basic Aviation	R6,193 + VAT per year
500+ hectares	R1.65+VAT/TD ha per year	Small Aviation	R 34.16 + VAT per ha per year

PLEASE NOTE: membership will not be confirmed nor membership certificates issued unless a member's account is paid in full and up to date.

LEFPA Staff Tour SAPPI Ngodwana Mill

On Tuesday 28th February Sappi Forests staff on the board of LEFPA took the LEFPA staff on a tour of Ngodwana Mill. The LEFPA staff assist in ensuring that the huge mill will always have tree fibre to utilise and thus support this key economic activity of the Lowveld.

Duncan Ballantyne (Chairman) and Mark Wagner (Secretary) led them on a fascinating journey through the inner workings and complexities of the factory and it's processes. The tour began with a presentation by Hunphrey Landman covering all the processes and the interesting products that result from them.

It's always an eye-opener for visitors to learn that the most beautiful cloth and even ice cream can be made from gum tree fibre. Producing the various pulp and paper products is an immensely complex procedure. The control centres were of great interest to many of the LEFPA staff, as was the sheer size of the machines.

After the tour everyone was treated to an enjoyable lunch. LEFPA's staff hugely enjoyed and appreciated the efforts made by the mill management and public relations for a well-executed and memorable tour of the mill.



Back, from left; Charles Hopkins (LEFPA GIS Specialist), Andre Scheepers (LEFPA Manager), Robert Rodgers (LEFPA Operations Manager), Duncan Ballantyne (LEFPA Chairman), Mark Wagner (LEFPA Secretary)

Front, from left; Hunphrey Landman (Technical Services Manager, Ngodwana Management), Susan Daniel (LEFPA Debtors Controller), Nomcebo Mlotywa (LEFPA Permit Officer), Zanele Chiloane (LEFPA Permit Officer), Corne Martyn (LEFPA Administrator)

LEFPA Crews



Change is sometimes necessary to effect positive growth and improvement and LEFPA is no exception. From 1st March 2017 the LEFPA Alpha, Bravo & Waterval Boven Teams are under new Base Management.

The new Acting Base Manager is Robert Rodgers and Assistant Base Manager is Queen Thabethe (who officially starts on the 1st April).

Already Robert reports a 180° turn around in the team's general spirit, fitness training and discipline, while their attitude is a bright and positive one.

Clients such as White River Saw Mills, Shandon Estate and Trac N4 have noted the difference and have sung the teams praises after several

projects were recently completed.

Under the guidance of André Scheepers this positive attitude will be the ONLY way forward and Robert expects to maintain this high standard of performance and client satisfaction.

Disaster Management Indaba

Ehlanzeni District Municipality Disaster Management held an Indaba, sponsored by SANTAM insurance, at Nuttinghouse on the 16th and 17th March 2017. The aim of the indaba was to bring all the newly elected municipal officials and councillors from all four local authorities up to speed with the Disaster Management Act.



LEFPA set up an awareness stand at the Indaba and was on hand to answer questions raised by the delegates.

It is essential that LEFPA continue to engage and interact with municipal officials regarding the legalities surrounding the Act, the abilities of the Association and responsibilities of the municipal officials.

The building of a strong relationship with the authorities underpins LEFPA's effectiveness.

Climbing the Ladder to Success

Queen Nomaqhawe Thabethe is only 25 years old, but she has already shown promising leadership and management skills and was appointed LEFPA Assistant Base Manager from 1st April.

She joined Working on Fire as a Fire Fighter in March 2011, becoming a Type 2 Crew Leader in March 2012 after completing Crew Leader training. In 2014 Queen was transferred to the Salique base as an Acting Type 1 and attended Type 1 training in July of that year. Transferring to Graskop as a Type 1 Crew Leader under the supervision of Mr Sakkie van der Merwe, she then proved herself there until returning to her home base at LEFPA in July 2016.

With André Scheepers keeping a watchful eye on her progress, Queen kept on displaying her abilities and in February André offered her the position of LEFPA Assistant Base Manager.

Queen says she was both shocked and excited and took some time to think about the offer. Realising this was a life-changer for her, she was delighted to accept the promotion. "I am proud to say that LEFPA is my home. I am eating the fruits of my hard work and commitment," she says, crediting André with encouraging her and recognising her potential.

Queen Nomaqhawe Thabethe on the rungs to success!



Duties of a Fire Protection Association

It's always good to refresh ourselves on the legalities so we asked Andre Scheepers to take us through Chapter 2 of the Act dealing with point 5(1) to (5) Duties of a Fire Protection Association. The duties are, as you'd imagine, extensive and varied. At the least, a Fire Protection Association must:

- develop and apply a veldfire management strategy for its area and provide in the strategy agreed mechanisms for the co-ordination of actions with adjoining fire protection associations should a fire cross boundaries;
- make rules binding its members;
- identify the ecological conditions that affect the fire danger and regularly communicate the fire danger rating to its members;
- organise and train its members in fire fighting, management and prevention and inform its members of equipment and technology available for preventing and suppressing veldfires;
- provide management services, training and support to communities in their efforts to manage and control veldfires;
- supply the Minister at least once every 12 months with statistics on veldfires in its area and furnish any information requested by the Minister in order to prepare or maintain the fire danger rating system;
- exercise the powers and perform the duties delegated to it by the Minister; and appoint a Fire Protection Officer, unless a municipality is a member. Where a municipality or a designated service is a member, the fire protection association must consult with it in the development and application of the strategy.



There is provision in the Act for the Minister to delegate additional power or duties to an FPA. However, this can only come about after consultation between the Minister and the Fire Protection Officer.

Fire Protection Association rules must provide for any matter which may or must be dealt with in terms of this Act and state the minimum standards to be maintained by members in relation to all aspects of veldfire prevention and readiness for fire fighting. The rules should also regulate controlled burning to conserve ecosystems and reduce the fire danger and clarify any other matter which is necessary for the fire protection association to achieve its objects.

In addition, a copy of these rules must be lodged with the Minister. All of this goes some way to explain why the LEFPA Board and Admin team are usually to be seen scurrying about, busy as bees with their tremendous 'behind the scenes' workload.

Understanding Fire Management

Not all fires are unwanted – fire is also an instrument for land management used, for instance, in slash burning, weed control and the controlling of indigenous vegetation. It's important to have an understanding of fire behaviour factors when considering the use of fire as a management tool.

Fire spreads in three main ways: direct flame contact, heat transfer through hot air currents (radiant heat) and from embers.

Drought conditions impact heavily upon fire management. Although grass paddocks tend to be heavily grazed in these circumstances, fire can still travel across short grass and fire management remains an important undertaking.



Fuel, weather and topography influence fire behaviour – both how hot it burns and how quickly it spreads. Fuel load and size is the quantity of fuel per unit area, commonly expressed as tons per hectare. Reducing fuel loads assists in protecting property and assets, making suppression easier as well. Fine fuels (leaves, twigs, grass and bark) dry out rapidly and burn quickly. Heavier fuels such as branches and logs are slower to ignite and give off heat more slowly. By minimising both near key assets, you reduce the risk of radiant heat and direct flame contact.

Weather plays a major role in the ignition and spread of fire, so preparing for common weather patterns and unusual weather events assists landowners to minimise fire risk. Temperature, humidity, wind speed and direction affect fire behaviour, and can make control and suppression something of a challenge.

Topography, or the shape of the land, should be considered when planning your fire management strategy. Fire travels faster upslope, the rate of fire spread upslope approximately doubles for every 10 degrees of slope. Topography also influences the wind behaviour, causing turbulence which may lead to unpredictable fire behaviour. Valleys and gullies can channel and strengthen winds. Be aware of local wind conditions and if you are a new landowner, speak to your neighbour and the previous owner about local winds when developing your management policy.

Integrated Fire Management Explained

Integrated Fire Management can be summed up in three words - Prevention, Protection and Suppression. **Fire Prevention** includes all of the activities and operations aimed at preventing unwanted and uncontrolled fires from occurring. Prevention also includes steps taken to eliminate or reduce the risks and hazards associated with fire. The main three pillars of fire prevention are: education and awareness, being prepared in terms of the law and compliance with the law.

LEFPA undertakes several important fire prevention activities on behalf of its members, including:

- Wildfire awareness campaigns - Miilo Project
- Fire detection and weather monitoring services
- Training
- Investigations into the causes of wildfires and their origins
- General fire education and awareness interventions.

Fire Protection, on the other hand, refers to all the actions aimed at the protection of life, property and assets from the impact of unwanted wildfires. LEFPA's measures here include:

- The development of policies and strategies
- Implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Gathering of data
- Fire burning agreements
- Development of communication networks
- Determining training needs, establishing training schedules
- Prescribed burning and fuel load reduction operations.

Fire Suppression and Response completes the triangle and entails being sufficiently prepared to ensure an appropriate response to veld and forest fires when they break out, key to efficient and effective fire management. Having plans and resources in place prior to fires starting is essential for responsible landownership. *All Fired Up* lists the activities for the month to assist members to be prepared. Landowners should have a range of options available, know which fires to suppress and which ones to leave, mechanisms to monitor fire danger and identifying fires requiring action as well as clear responsibility and coordination mechanisms.

The fundamental principle of "throwing" the maximum fire fighting resources at a fire during its initial stages greatly reduces the complexity and costs associated with a large fire that has outgrown the initial firefighting efforts.



Activities for the Month - April

- Check all radios.
- Prepare manual traces.
- Attend LEFPA meetings regularly.
- Obtain LEFPA rules and regulations.
- Train your employees in fire management.
- Obtain standby rosters from your neighbours.
- Check that water points have adequate supplies.
- Burn open areas on rotational burning programmes.
- Implement a daily vehicle checklist to ensure fire readiness.
- Match your fire-fighting resources based on the fire risks identified.
- Prepare roads bordering open areas and firebreaks that will be burned.
- Obtain LEFPA standard operating procedures related to high FDI periods.
- Slash burning allowed if weather permits - get a burning permit from LEFPA.
- Implement procedures to ensure the availability and supply of fuel, rations, etc. as and when required.
- Implement operational procedures to ensure quick response to provide medical and mechanical protection and other services.



Important Note:

- Basic Firefighting Training is available to LEFPA members. Interested parties can contact the LEFPA office.
- FDI weather emails and SMSs are available to LEFPA members, contact Corné for more information.
- A Corporate Creditors Meeting will be held in the LEFPA Boardroom in May. Details to follow.
- **SUCCESS** cannot be spelt without a **U**. Attend and participate - we need your contribution!