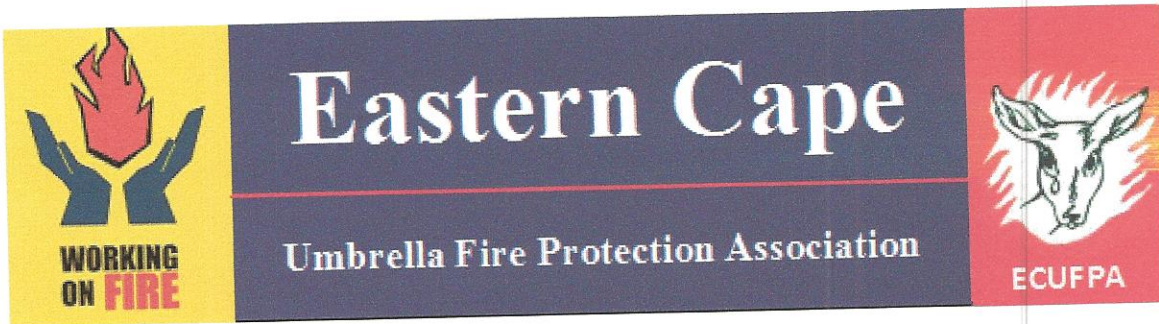




**Minutes of OPCO Meeting
Held on 24 July 2013 at 10h00
Stutterheim**

1. Opening, welcome and credentials:

D Malan opens the meeting and thanks everyone for attending.

2. Apologies:

D Swift
F Basset
W Erlank
L vd Merwe
C Botha
A Verster
I Henderson
G Judeel
G Sgwabe

3. Minutes of previous meeting - 25 April 2013:

The previous minutes were approved by Mr Dinga and seconded by A van Deventer.

4. Matters arising - Minutes of previous meeting - 25 April 2013:

4.1 Par 4.2 Meetings with DAFF D Malan Explains to Mr Dinga that in a meeting with DAFF in February 2013 G Sqwabe asked for regular meetings with ECUFPA. She undertook to supply ECUFPA with dates that she would be available for such meetings and up to now nothing has happened.

Mr Dinga suggests that ECUFPA contacts her or schedule dates for such meetings. It is stated the ECUFPA need DAFF involved. Mr Malan stresses that this very important. Mr Dinga says ECUFPA should indicate in correspondence what role DAFF should play at these meetings.

T Botha explains that money still outstanding from DAFF since September 2012, for aviation. Mr Dinga states that a specific person is responsible for the payment. ECUFPA must direct their issues to the director of the head to commercial forestry. T Botha states that this has been done, and yet nothing happened.

4.2 Par 9 FDR systems: The McArthur FDR system was not accepted on National Level and we will continue with Lowveld System.

4.3 Par 10 Weather forecasts: The weather forecasts by Giel Hugo, is used, as it is found to be very accurate. ECUFPA distributes this to all role players on a daily basis.

5. Feedback from the National Veld and Forest Fire Advisory Forum:

T Botha runs through the last minutes of the NVFFAF to inform the members about what is happening. DAFF and WoF MOU's are in process of happening.

Mr Dinga wants to know if T Botha doesn't think that it would be good for all DAFF provincial offices to have someone to attend these meetings. D Malan explains that this is something that DAFF has to take up with their head office. T Botha explains that DAFF head office wants to move away from small FPA's, seeing that they are very often not very functional. The question is raised: what is the size of a small FPA. This is discussed amongst the members. It seems that successful FPA's are larger and have a dedicated manager

6. DAFF Inputs and Feedback:

Mr Dinga states that DAFF realised that they are faced with serious problems. FPA's aren't even doing the basics requirements. They don't even submit their annual reports. All members agree that this is a problem. This was discussed at the National Advisory Forum and it was recommended that it was time to deregister non-functioning FPA's.

T Botha states that ECUFPA won't assist FPA's if they don't hand in the annual report. Hopefully this will encourage FPA's to start doing the basics.

The question is raised whether combined DAFF and ECUFPA annual reports can be done. This idea is rejected. The suggestion to DAFF is to send FPO's of non-functional FPA's a letter and state that they will be de registered if they do not comply. Mr Dinga says the DAFF must act in this regard not ECUFPA.

H Homann states that DAFF puts FPA's in a difficult position by not complying by the law themselves as they are not paying their annual fees. D Malan states that this discussion isn't about membership fees, but about complying with the law.

The question is raised about what the membership fee should be. The rate is R1.10 per hectare for all government departments. This is a rate, agreed to on national level.

7. WoF General Feedback:

No feedback

8. PDMC Feedback:

No feedback

9. PDMC – Fire preparedness plan:

T Botha circulates a file with the fire preparedness plan. T Botha feels this is very good document, that one can work with. It is stated that the PDMC meeting for 25 July 2013 has been postponed.

10. Amendments to the NVFFA:

The amendments bill to the NVFFA went through. There were some very good changes made. It will go to parliament in November 2013.

The main changes made: Municipality must be member of the FPA.
Definition of veld fire will change.

11. Legal opinion – Status of Municipal land situated within boundaries of FPA:

Municipalities are state land. National Government will now change this in the amendments.

This subject is being discussed amongst the members.

12. Aviation Update:

T Botha explains that all aviation is in place. There is a situation at this point in time, where some aircraft had to be withdrawn for repairs. This will be done as effectively as possible and with as little as possible disruption. The summer season placement will be based in St Francis Bay.

13. FDR Magnetism:

T Botha shows the magnetism to those present and states that is R450 each.

14. Internal audit of FPA's:

ECUFPA stopped doing the internal audits of FPA's, because G Sgwabe asked ECUFPA to stop and wait for the changes that needs to be made to the audit. T Botha shows the current document used to the members present. Mr Dinga states that the meeting with G Sgwabe is very important and needs to be addressed as soon as possible. UFPA can assist DAFF in getting the listed FPA function properly.

15. Membership of Government departments:

15.1 Sanral

Sanral did cut the road reserves. Membership was offered by Sanral, but it wasn't accepted by NAF. Discussions with Sanral to continue

15.2 Transnet

This is in process of being negotiated.

15.3 DAFF

No feedback.

15.4 DRDLR

No representation by DRDLR. We received a basic list of land portions but this is still not complete. T Botha explains that it is in progress. ECUFPA need help from DAFF to

get correct boundaries of all FPA's in this regard. These maps were supposed to be finalised by DAFF February 2013. Mr Dinga would like dates for when this might be completed.

15.5 ESKOM

T Botha reports on this matter and it is discussed by the members present. So far only land owned by Eskom had been negotiated. Still need to negotiate the issue supply power lines as they also create a fire risk.

15.6 District Municipalities

T Botha explains that a lot of District Municipalities state that they are members of an FPA. But they must make sure that they are listed on the FPA's members register, otherwise they aren't members. PDMC has offered to assist in getting the DM's to become members. Mr Dinga states that local chiefs and traditional leaders who use communal land, should also become members of a FPA

15.7 Local Municipalities - Division of Powers

This matter is discussed by those present. There was still an issue that local municipalities felt that rural veld fires were the responsibility of the DM.

16. Regional/District FPA
16.1 Cacadu

Mr Spangenberg state that fire wise, it is very quiet and that there is nothing to report. On the political side there is still the problem with the Tsitsikamma areas, belonging to SCFPA. The matter is discussed and everyone is informed of the history behind the situation. T Botha will discuss the matter with Johan Heine.

16.2 Amathole

A van Deventer states that the month of June was very dry. He states that there were fires very early this year. Fire awareness programmes were held, such as a radio programme. Meetings were also held with local communities. Most schools were visited. He states that the human element still plays a big role in fires locally. Agreements were made between bordering FPA's, there are lot of positives at this point in time. He feels we must realise our short comings and work on it. He mentions that the Fire Prohibition period starts on 1 August 2013.

16.3 Chris Hani

No feedback.

16.4 Joe Gqabi

D Malan states that some of the local municipalities still are a problem in their area. Indigwe Municipality joined the Maclear FPA. PG Bison get involved with Indigwe Municipality and is helping out there. They had no rain in June. It is very dry and Langeni had 2 big fires. Ugie also had a lot of fires, so far.

16.5 OR Tambo
No feedback

16.6 Alfred Nzo

Z Vuko that there isn't much to report. They have 5 registered FPA's. They haven't had many fires so far this season. Pre fire season awareness was done and they got some fire fighting equipment for the FPA's.

17. Feedback on Fires:

This has been reported on earlier. FPA's are asked to let ECUFPA office know about any fires. T Botha asks Mr Dinga about a monthly fire report required from DAFF, that he heard about. Mr Dinga doesn't know about it, but will follow up and re look at what is needed to be done, on the fire reports.

Mr Dinga knows about a fire report where all major fires are reported individually, and he will pass this on to T Botha.

T Botha shows how GSFPA keep their fire register to make it easy for them to report fires at the end of the year.

18. Fire season preparedness:

D Malan feels fire awareness is very important. He uses the WoF team at Ugie to do awareness. They reach out to surrounding areas. He states that all burning operations and preparations must be done by end of July. FPA's must make these plans in advance. M Marell explains the situation in his area as there is no specific fire season. D Malan agrees that every area is different and needs to be addressed according to its needs.

19. General

19.1 Radios:

T Botha informs the members that radios will be installed into the ECUFPA vehicle and asks for FPA radio frequencies and/or the name of their installer. ECUFPA also needs a consent letter to use these frequencies.

19.2 Website:

The website for ECUFPA is nearly done. T Botha goes through the website and shows all present. (www.ecufpa.co.za)

19.3 Exposure to FPA's:

Mr Dinga asks how ECUFPA is going to inform FPA's about the services of ECUFPA. He suggests something a road show. T Botha states that it might be a better idea to do a presentation on ECUFPA's at all meetings he attends. Mr Dinga feels ECUFPA

needs personal contact with all FPA's. T Botha feels this can also be done when the internal audit is conducted.

19.4 Availability of aerial support to FPA's:

The question is raised on how FPA's can get aerial support? The answer to this is very simple. Aviation is available to everyone, but it is very costly and the caller pays. Proposals are made to PDMC to have similar system as is in the Western Cape, where Provincial PDMC pays for first hour, DM pays for second hour and third hour is paid by Local Municipality and/or land owner

19.5 OR Thambo:

OR Thambo only has 1 FPA. Ground work was done, but nobody is willing to be an FPO. There is a request for guidelines in this regard from DAFF National Office. The plan for bigger FPA's to be formed is explained as well as the funding from Government that will be implemented by 2015, which will help address these types of problems.

20. The Way Forward

Date for the next meeting. 23 & 24 October 2013. Mr Spangenberg feels that it needs to be held in a different place every time. T Botha states if a FPA offer to host a meeting, then the meetings will rotate, from place to place.

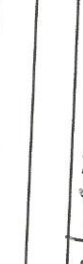
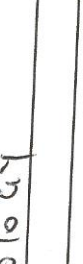
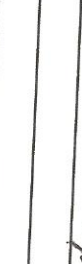
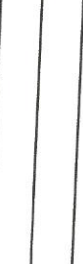
21. Closure

D Malan thanks everyone for attending and closes the meeting.

Eastern Cape Umbrella FPA

Operational Committee (Opco)

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