



GREATER OVERBERG FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION RULES

These rules and regulations are to be adhered to by members of the Greater Overberg Fire Protection Association (goFPA) and where applicable will apply to ALL landowners residing within the goFPA area of operations in terms of the National Veld & Forest Fire Act 101 of 1998 (NV&FFA).

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1 Terminology

- 1.1 **Bakkie unit:** A water tank (250 - 700 litres) and pump which can easily be slipped onto the back of a bakkie. Or **Spray cart** with minimum 500 litre capacity.
- 1.2 **Rake hoe:** Handheld tool with a dual-purpose head. Used to clear control lines during a fire.
- 1.3 **Fire beaters:** Handheld fire-fighting tool consisting of a wooden handle and a flexible flat rubber head.
- 1.4 **Knapsack pump:** A hand operated 15 - 20 litre capacity water pump that is worn on the back of a firefighter.
- 1.5 **Drip torch:** A handheld device for igniting fires. It consists of a fuel tank, a wick and nozzle through which the burning fuel is "dripped" onto vegetation.
- 1.6 **Landowner:** An "owner" means any landowner with a title deed as well as a lessee or other person legally controlling land, the executive body of a community, the manager of State land, and the chief executive officer of any local authority, or their duly appointed agents in the cases of State land (including SANDF land) and local authorities.
- 1.7 **Contractor:** a person/company who is hired to perform work or to provide goods at a certain price or within a certain time.
- 1.8 **Member:**
 - a. Any landowner in the Overberg District area may at any time become a member of goFPA. Every municipality or organ of State must be a member.
 - b. All landowners as defined by the Act and within the domain of the FPA can become members.
 - c. All landowners, lessees, state entities, municipalities, or communities, who have applied for membership, completed and submitted membership application forms and who have paid their membership fees are members.

2 Membership

Membership, member's duties and termination of membership are defined in Clause 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the goFPA Constitution. Membership is only recognised if the fee is fully paid-up.

3 Housekeeping

It is the responsibility of every member to ensure that the buildings on their



property are protected and made safe against the danger of fire.

4 Fire Management Plan/Hazard assessment

Members will be required to carry out an annual fire hazard assessment by 30 September each year. These hazards must be included in and addressed by the Integrated Management Plan of their Fire Management Unit (FMU). Read more on [what is an FMU. \(insert link\)](#)

5 Compliance with Fire Danger Rating System

Members must be conversant with the daily fire danger rating system and comply with the instructions and rules pertaining to the danger ratings.

Tip: During Fire Season the FDI (weekdays) will be posted on our website (www.overbergfpa.co.za/FDI) and the goFPA Facebook pg. or call our office at 028 425 1690.

6 Cooking/Warming Fires and designated fireplaces

- 6.1 Fires used for preparing meals, beverages or for warmth during cold conditions in the veld by farms or other workers must be in fire-safe areas only.
- 6.2 Fires may not be left unattended and must be properly extinguished with water after use.
- 6.3 Fires may not be made:
 - a. If the weather conditions are unsuitable (fire danger rating is high: orange or red).
 - b. In areas that have not been sufficiently cleared of combustible material.
 - c. In areas with a deep litter layer.
 - d. In no-fire zones as indicated by the landowner.
 - e. Near thickets of dense vegetation or any other combustible material.
 - f. In areas near wetlands with a thick peat layer.
 - g. If the fire is to be left unattended.
- 6.4 Domestic/social fires used outside of residences must be managed carefully in designated safe areas.
- 6.5 Where situations arise that people have to prepare domestic meals on an



outside fire, they must be informed in this regard by the property owner.

The landowner is responsible for informing contractors of this rule and remains responsible for the actions of said contractors.

Tips:

- a. Include a no-fire policy into Contractor contracts; that Contractors must have beaters & water on site
- b. Firebreaks around worker homes and open social areas

7 Firebreaks

7.1 Legislation

- a. According to the National Wild and Forest Fire Act (Section 12) every landowner on whose land a veldfire may start or burn or from whose land it may spread must prepare and maintain a firebreak on his or her side of the boundary between his or her land and any adjoining land.
- b. Section 12.7 states that owners of adjoining land may agree to position a common firebreak away from the boundary.

7.2 Definition of a firebreak

- a. A firebreak is a natural or constructed barrier utilised to stop or slow veldfires, or to provide a control line from which to work.
- b. goFPA promotes the use of strategic firebreaks, as envisioned by section 12(7) of the Act. Such firebreaks are not necessarily located on a property boundary, but rather optimally positioned to provide the best possible chance of stopping the spread of a fire.
- c. Where possible and practical, strategic firebreaks should be made in conjunction with existing roads and pathways to ensure vehicle access along the length of the firebreak.
- d. Members should also consider that natural firebreaks exist in the form on young veld (clean fynbos younger than four years), dams,



rivers, irrigated lands, barren lands, etc. In many cases, these make excellent existing strategic firebreaks.

7.3 Firebreak requirements

a. What is a **firebreak** – **Purposes and uses**

- Most firebreaks **cannot stop** a veldfire on its own.
- **Slowing Fires:** Reduces the intensity and speed of an advancing fire.
- **Control Lines:** Serves as a safe baseline for firefighters to launch back-burns or manage suppression tactics.

b. **Legal requirements**

According to Section 13, an owner who is obliged to prepare and maintain a firebreak must ensure that with due regard to the weather, climate, terrain and vegetation of the area:

- Is wide enough and long enough to have a reasonable chance of preventing a veldfire from spreading to or from neighbouring land.
- Will not cause soil erosion.
- Is reasonably free of inflammable material capable of carrying a veldfire across it.

c. **Rules regarding minimum firebreak width:**

- A firebreak's width should be at least 2.5 times the height of the adjacent flammable vegetation, with a minimum width of two metres.
- Neighbouring members may agree on a suitable fire break width, provided that it is not narrower than two metres.

d. **Types of firebreaks**

- **Natural:** Gaps formed by natural features like rivers, lakes, or rocky canyons that lack fuel for a fire.
- **Man-made:** Strips of land cleared of trees, grass and shrubs by ploughing, grading, or removing deadwood down to the mineral soil.



- **Roads:** Highways, tracks and dirt trails that double as wide gaps to block flames and give firefighters access.

8 Prescribed burning

- 8.1 Members intending to conduct a prescribed burn must obtain a **Burning Permit** from the Fire Department to conduct the burn.
- 8.2 Neighbours and the Fire Protection Officer (control rooms) should be notified at least 24 hours before any fire is lit, and weather conditions should be monitored.
- 8.3 Final permission must be obtained from their local Fire Department in the morning prior to the burn taking place.
- 8.4 A responsible person should be in attendance for the full duration of the burn and for a suitable mopping up period.
- 8.5 Members must observe all conditions of their Burning Permit.

Tip: Burn Permit applications can be downloaded from our website: www.overbergfpa.co.za

9 Minimum fire-fighting requirements

- 9.1 All members must comply with Chapter 5 of the NV&FF Act by having equipment, protective clothing and trained personnel as is reasonable for the extent of the member's property.
- 9.2 The Fire Services have the right to remove people from the fire, at their discretion, should they not have sufficient personal protective equipment.
- 9.3 Non-compliance with any or all of these minimum requirements (Table 2) have to be supported by the relevant FMU and approved by the Fire Protection Officer (FPO).
- 9.4 All members must ensure that in their absence there is a responsible person present on or near the property who will assist in extinguishing the fire and take reasonable steps to alert the FPO



and neighbouring landowners/their agents.

Table 2: Minimum fire-fighting equipment

Property Size (ha)	Bakkie Unit/spray cart Min 500 €	Water tanker or stored water capacity Min. 1 000 €	Water tanker Min. 2 000 €
1 – 20	Avail. in 15 min*	Limited to an identified water source	NIL
20 – 100	Avail. in 15 min*	1	NIL
100 – 500	1	1	NIL
500 – 1 000	1	1	NIL
1 000 – 4 000	1	NIL	1
4 000 – 10 000	1	NIL	1
Sawmill / Plantation	1	NIL	1

* Must have access to a unit on a pre-agreement with neighbours or FMU.

Please note on Red FDI days a responsible and contactable person must be on or near the property.

10 Training

- 10.1 Members/occupiers of land or their staff performing firefighting must partake in a basic fire-fighting course by an FPA-approved training institution.
- 10.2 In-house refresher training must be conducted by the owner or his representative before 1 December each year.

Tip: Contact the FPA office to access training.



11 Reporting Fires

Members must report all fires to the **Overberg Control Centre (028 425 1690)** or **Overstrand Fire and Rescue (028 312 2400)** and to the relevant Fire Management Unit (FMU) leader and neighbours.

Tip: FMU maps. Members and leader information requests can be emailed: info@overbergfpa.co.za

12 Members' duties in respect of firefighting

- 12.1 A member and / or landowner who becomes aware of a fire must:
- Report the fire to the Fire Brigade (ODM 24h control room 028 425 1690 or Overstrand 028 312 2400);
 - Notify the FMU leader or, failing him or her, the FPA office # - 063 690 7899 -;
 - The owners of adjoining land; and
 - Do everything in his or her power to stop the spread of the fire.
- 12.2 A member and / or landowner who has reason to believe that a fire on any land may endanger life, property or the environment, may, together with any other person under his or her control, enter that land or land to which the fire can spread in order to prevent that fire from spreading or to extinguish it.

Tips:

- It is recommended that members ensure that **access routes** are identified and available for firefighters and their vehicles to use.
- Mark waterpoints clearly.



13 Operational response and management/Incident command

- 13.1 Members must adhere to the fire-fighting command structure as per the goFPA Fire Management Plan and be conversant with the chain of command and communication procedures for your area.
- 13.2 Members must be aware that the Chief Fire Officer or his delegate will assume command (Incident Commander) upon arrival.
- 13.3 Members must verbally hand over the incident to the FPO or his delegate (Incident Commander) and inform all other active participants at the fire of any specific danger areas.

14 Actions after fires

- 14.1 The perimeter must be patrolled and any smoldering material within five metres of the perimeter of the fire extinguished (patrolling is especially necessary where underground fires may have occurred e.g. in dense litter or marshy ground.)
- 14.2 The FPO may conduct fire debrief when necessary to discuss the actions during the fire especially where the fire spread across multiple properties.
- 14.3 Members should make every effort to attend debriefs of fires that they were involved in or were threatened by.

15 Communications

- 15.1 Members must ensure that some form of communication is achieved with their staff on the fire scene.
- 15.2 Cell phone numbers/Contact details of all members must be updated with the FPA as soon as reasonably possible after it has changed.
- 15.3 Members should identify and establish lines of communication once they arrive at a fire.

16 Limitation of Liability

- 16.1 Neither the goFPA nor any other person related thereto is liable for



any damage or loss caused by—

- a. The purported exercise of any power or performance of any duty; or
- b. The failure to exercise any power or perform any duty,

16.2 In terms of these Rules and Regulations (to be read in conjunction with duties and responsibilities as contained in the Act), unless the goFPA or related person responsible did so—

- a. In bad faith, if it relates to a power or duty in terms of Chapter 3 of the Act; or
- b. Negligently or in bad faith, (as an FPA or as an appointed agent) in any other part of the Act.

17 Enforcement

The following will be the enforcement officers regarding provisions under the NV&FF Act, and the rules of the FPA as applied within the area of the FPA:

- a. The Fire Protection Officer
- b. The Fire Chief Officer of the ODM and Overstrand
- c. Any person delegated by a or b above.

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