



The firefighters recently refreshed their skills and physical and mental fitness in time for the summer fire season which starts in December.

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Firefighters equipped and ready for fire season

A TOTAL of 140 firefighters from the nine Working on Fire teams in the western part of the Eastern Cape passed their annual yellow card training, which was aimed at refreshing their skills and testing their physical and mental fitness.

The training assessment was officially launched on September 22 in Lottering, near Tsitsikamma, which was affected by a huge fire two years ago where an estimated 2 000 hectares were burnt.

The nine teams, namely, Tsitsikamma, Witelsbos, Longmore, Sarah Baartman, Addo, Baviaanskloof, Lottering, Kromsriver and Jansenville, had their yellow card training from September 22 until September 26.

Teams were divided into two groups. Both groups, the first consisting of four teams and the second of five teams, were assessed for three days.

Ground operations manager (GOM) of Work-

ing on Fire, Antoinette Jini, congratulated all the firefighters who passed the training assessment.

The training activities were a 10km route march, line construction, fire wall (passing through fire), PPC inspections, tool inspection, lectures and fitness test, that included a 2.4km run under 12 minutes for men and under 14 minutes for women, 40 push-ups in one minute, eight pull-ups and 40 sit-ups in one minute.

The firefighters were then assessed on their knowledge of fire behaviours and watch outs, fire-line safety principles, fire-line equipment and its use.

Jini said that this yellow card training was also meant to get the firefighters ready for the upcoming summer fire season, which will start in December.

Koumama Municipality Mayor, Samuel Vuso, thanked the firefighters for the hard work they do in saving and protecting the properties

and communities from unwanted fires.

He also encouraged them to work hard and continue protecting the Tsitsikamma plantation, as these play a major role in the lives of many people.

Jini said the Eastern Cape firefighters were now ready to reduce the risk of fires and ensure that communities remained safe from unwanted fires.

The Eastern Cape has two fire seasons, winter fire season and summer fire season.

It has about 540 firefighters across the province with about 160 in the western part of the province and about 380 in the eastern part of the province.

These young men and women have been working hard in the past assisting partners, such as Eastern Cape Parks Tourism and Agency, Eastern Cape Umbrella FPA, Amathole Forestry Company and local fire authorities in suppressing fires. WoF is an expanded public works programme funded by the Department of Environmental Affairs. - **REPORTER**