



THE GREAT FERAL BURN – OFF 2026

Knowledge Exchange and Skills Transfer Event



Dates: 16–31 May 2026

Two Operational Cycles: 16-23 and 24-31 May 2026

Location: Thaba Nchu & Mangaung District, Free State Province, South Africa

Hosted By: Free State Umbrella FPA (FSUFPA) and the Mangaung Fire Protection Association (MAFPA)

In Collaboration With: The Forest Risk Facility (FoRISK), Green Flame and the Rural Africa Fire Alliance (RAFA).

Participant Fee: USD \$995 per person

Overview

The Great Feral Burn-Off is a high-tempo, live-fire practical workshop designed to maximise meaningful field time in a short period. Participants rotate through repeated operational cycles—brief, plan, execute, and debrief—building competence through real ignition and holding opportunities, combined with structured fire behaviour learning, and suppression fundamentals. Practical CBFiM knowledge exchange between local community teams and international practitioners.

Governance & Safety: All operational activities are conducted under the leadership and supervision of the relevant local agencies and designated incident leadership, in line with applicable SOPs and permissions.

Real-world impact: The community protection measures developed and implemented during the Great Feral Burn-Off will be relied on during the subsequent fire season. This is operational work with real consequences—designed to reduce risk, protect lives, livestock and wildlife, and strengthen readiness for the 2026 fire season.

Why This Programme Is Different

- High burn tempo in a compressed window—more repetitions, faster practical learning.
- Live-fire exposure focused on community protection operations: defensive burning/blacklining where appropriate, holding, line construction, and mop-up discipline.
- Real-world consequences: the protection work completed is used and tested in the subsequent fire season to safeguard people, livestock, wildlife, and priority conservation assets.
- Fire behaviour learning in real conditions: fuels, weather, terrain, spread, intensity, and spotting potential.
- CBFiM learning exchange: work alongside local community fire teams to strengthen community readiness, safety planning, and resilience.
- Conservation and community benefit: burning supports fuel reduction, firebreak objectives, and CBFiM protection outcomes.
- International cultural exchange that strengthens shared operating language and field lessons.

What Participants Will Do

- Participate in live-fire community protection operations: planning and executing defensive burning/blacklining (where appropriate), ignition methods, holding strategy, and burn discipline to protect communities and reserves.
- Conduct line construction and preparation to standard, including basic blacklining where appropriate.
- Operate on the holding side: positioning, communications, contingency awareness, and containment reinforcement.
- Apply suppression fundamentals through practical exercises starting at briefing through to demobilisation.
- Observe and interpret fire behaviour in real time and connect observations to tactical choices.
- Complete After-Action Reviews (AARs) to capture lessons and improve performance daily.





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Outcomes

- Improved practical competence in, suppression fundamentals, safety systems, and operational structure.
- A repeatable fire behaviour observation-to-action decision-making matrix that improves tactical judgement.
- Repeat exposure to operational brief–execute–AAR rhythm used in professional wildland settings.
- Community and reserve protection measures that have direct operational value and are intended to be used during the fire season.
- Certificate recognising skills transfer and international field training participation

Agency-Specific Objectives

The core programme is standardised to maximise live-fire exposure and field competence. By prior arrangement, agencies may request elective objectives aligned to their internal standards (e.g., community interface planning, safety strategy development, decision-making drills, and structured brief–execute–AAR cycles). Electives are integrated into the operational schedule and remain subject to local permissions and agreed safety controls.

Programme Structure and Cycle Dates

Cycle 1: Arrive Saturday 16 May • Programme Sunday 17 May–Saturday 23 May • Depart Sunday 24 May

Cycle 2: Arrive Saturday 23 May • Programme Sunday 24 May–Saturday 30 May • Depart Sunday 31 May

Fee Inclusions (USD \$995 p/p)

- 7-day experiential wildfire management training (practical workshop / knowledge exchange).
- Accommodation for the entire stay.
- 3 meals per day (field rations on operational days).
- Local transfers to and from Bloemfontein Airport.
- Full field kit: official Great Feral Burn-Off 2026 T-shirt; khaki operational field shirt (personalised with patch and callsign); peak cap; embroidered mission patch.
- Certificate recognising skills transfer and international field training participation.

Travel and Visa

Participants are responsible for international/domestic travel to Bloemfontein. (Free State)

Visa and entry requirements depend on nationality; invitation and confirmation letters are available on request.

Participants must provide proof of medical insurance prior to travel.

Enquiries : Please direct all enquiries to the organisers via e-mail to: greatferalburnoff@fsufpa.co.za

Expression of Interest: Complete the online registration form to receive a participation information pack.



Link: [Great Feral Burn-Off Online Registration Form](#)

