



## FGASA News: August 2023



### FGASA News and Updates:

Hey {{ contact.FIRSTNAME }} the August winds have arrived and as we begin to bid farewell to our winter months, spring is slowly blooming all around us. We are gearing up to celebrate our heritage this September and as we do so it's always important to reflect on what we have achieved in recent weeks.

August has been especially busy for us, between National Exam sittings, FGASA ARH shoots, regional meetings and distributing the most up-to-date information we currently have on the upcoming changes to the qualifications process for guides in the future, we have certainly had our hands full.

We have been receiving some incredible news about our members and endorsed Delivery Partners and have some extremely exciting announcements to make regarding movements within the organisation.

Officially, we would like to welcome Andrew Kearney to the FGASA Board of Directors and commend him for his unwavering dedication to FGASA, upholding incredible standards of professionalism and assisting our members in the Eastern Cape as the former Executive Committee Representative. Andrew had this to say about his new appointment to the FGASA Board;

*"I am honoured to be nominated and appointed as a person who is able to give value and insight into an industry that I am very passionate about. My FGASA journey began 23 years ago, and I think FGASA has grown from strength to strength because of the people driving and developing it. We are a new industry and self-improvement, reaching the next level of skill, ability and knowledge is what drives our members. I am excited to add value based on what I have learned and experienced as a FGASA member and hope this*

*will have a positive impact on all members going forward” - Andrew Kearney*

Next, we would like to congratulate and welcome Richard Pearse as the new FGASA Executive Committee (Exco) Representative in the Eastern Cape. Richard has been a loyal, upstanding, generous and exemplary FGASA member for 25 years and we could not be more grateful to him for stepping up to take on the role of Exco Representative. Richard is excited about his new role in the FGASA family and continues to run the Eastern Cape FGASA Office;

*“I am greatly honoured to represent an ever growing and committed community of guides in the Eastern Cape region. I look forward to being a part of great mentoring and guidance for our guides and developing more Mentors and Trails Guides in our region, and through our successes, being able to share this with other regions. I believe in the word “team,” no one can achieve remarkable things without a supportive community. I too, was once an NQF2 Nature Site Guide when I first began guiding in 1998 for &Beyond in Madikwe. It has been an adventure up to now, August 2023, 25 years later. I pride myself in representing FGASA and our region’s guides as a Standards Ambassador, Assessor, Mentor, and Moderator. It gives me great joy in seeing young men and women growing through the different standards, in most instances, being the Mentor guiding these individuals through this process. I also look forward to standing alongside a friend, Mentor and pillar of the guiding community in the Eastern Cape, Andrew Kearney. Thank you for considering me for this post and I hope to fulfill the requirements expected of me as we venture into a year of change in 2024.” - Richard Pearse*

Sadly, we say farewell to Schalk Pretorius as one of the FGASA Board of Directors. We are beyond grateful to Schalk for his commitment to FGASA and the incredible community of guides in the Eastern Cape. Schalk served on the FGASA Exco for many years and has been a FGASA Board Members for two years, he has also been integral to guide training in the region being the co-founder of one of our endorsed Service Delivery Partners. Throughout his involvement as a key member of FGASA, he brought invaluable opportunity, insight and development to the organisation. Thank you, Schalk, for everything you have done for FGASA. We are excited and pleased for you as you step down from the Exco to give your full attention and efforts to the exciting new chapter that Ulovane Environmental Training is beginning. We know that you will bring impeccable standards of training and development to all of Ulovane's new students and we could not be more pleased to see your legacy and professionalism being passed on to the future faces of tourism and guiding in the region.

Although Schalk is sad to step away from such an involved role within FGASA, he is champing at the bit to build Ulovane and take it to new heights. Please take a moment to read Schalk's departing words from the FGASA Board of Directors;

*"As I exit from my role on the FGASA Board of Directors, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for the remarkable journey that I have been a part of. As I move forward to new horizons, I would like to wish FGASA continued success and growth. Many your endeavors continue to inspire and uplift many. Best wishes to the FGASA Team and all the members of the future!"*



**Andrew Kearney** -  
FGASA Scout, Mentor,  
Assessor and FGASA  
Board Member



**Richard Pearse** -  
FGASA Assessor,  
Mentor, and Eastern  
Cape Exco  
Representative



**Schalk Pretorius** -  
FGASA Assessor and  
Mentor

# September

<b>Tuesday</b> <b>5</b> Qualifications Update Delivery Partners	<b>Wednesday</b> <b>6</b> Info Session 11:00am Qualifications Update	<b>Wednesday</b> <b>6</b> Info Evening 17:30pm Qualifications Update	<b>Thursday</b> <b>7</b> Qualifications Update Zoom Session
	<b>Wednesday</b> <b>25</b> Office Closed: Heritage Day (Public Holiday)	<b>Wednesday</b> <b>27</b> Eastern Cape Region: AGM and Awards night	

Click below to view the FGASA calendar on the website.

[FGASA Events](#)

## In the News



### FGASA: FUTURE GUIDE QUALIFICATIONS

To our esteemed Members, Friends and  
Industry Stakeholders

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You are invited to an information session  
regarding the future of guiding  
qualifications and training.

6 September | 11am (in-person)  
6 September | 5:30pm (in-person)  
FGASA Offices Hoedspruit

7 September | 11am  
Online Zoom Meeting



### The Future of the Qualified Guide

Recently we announced that there will be some changes coming to guiding qualifications across the board for all guides in the tourism sector of South Africa. This has caused some concern and has led to many questions about current qualifications, historical qualifications, and future qualifications. We are committed to maintaining open, honest, and accurate communication with our members to ensure there is no misinformation on this process.

We are having three open Information Sessions to update you all on the coming changes, the work that has been put into this process so far, as well as the road ahead for people looking to build their careers in guiding.

These changes are being driven by the [National Department of Tourism](#)

(NDT), the [Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority](#) (CATHSSETA), the [Quality Council for Trades and Occupations](#) (QCTO), and [South African Qualifications Authority](#) (SAQA).

FGASA has been engaged by all these bodies as a key role player in tourist guide training and we have been working closely with these as well as other organisations and industry stakeholders to map the road ahead for future guides. We are excited about the positive changes this will bring to the tourism sector in terms of guide training and recognition for guiding as a respected and legitimate career path.

We do also, however, understand the uncertainty this is creating in terms of the qualification process. We are hosting three open Information Sessions for all our members, interested parties, guide employers, and industry stakeholders to attend. The purpose of these sessions is to disseminate accurate information, mitigate the spread of false information and ensure that everyone knows what the future of guiding holds. While we are still waiting for the finalisation of the framework, we want to be proactive in our approach to communicating with you and put your questions, concerns, and minds at ease.

**We strongly recommend attending one of these sessions:**

- 6 September 2023 | 11:00am CAT | FGASA Office Hoedspruit (in-person session)
- 6 September 2023 | 17:30pm CAT | FGASA Office Hoedspruit (in-person session)
- 7 September 2023 | 11:00am CAT | Online Zoom session ([click here to join session](#))

You can view our calendar on the website [here](#). You can also read our official press release on the updated qualifications process [here](#).

Once the qualifications process and framework has been finalised it will be published for public review and input. We will update as soon as this becomes available for your feedback. From there a final review process will take place where public concerns will be addressed prior to the finalisation of the new qualifications. So, you will have the opportunity to give your input into this process directly. We do not have all the answers yet as this is still in the mapping and scoping process, but we will give you all the information we have so far.

We look forward to seeing and engaging with you at the information sessions. Please come prepared with your questions.

For anyone unable to attend one of these sessions we will be recording them and uploading them to our social media platforms and our website so you will be able to watch and obtain all the information you need. Our doors are always open, and we welcome you to reach out to us via email, social media, call us or pop into the office.

[Contact FGASA](#)



# FGASA: SCOUT AND ABOUT



## FGASA Scout and About

The FGASA Scout Qualification is the highest Tracker level obtainable with FGASA. You can only earn this prestigious accolade by being a qualified [FGASA SKS DG Trails Guide](#) (Special Knowledge and Skills: Dangerous Game) and the Senior Tracker level certificate.

Having either one of the qualifications is a huge achievement in and of itself as both require years of hard work, practice, study and experience to achieve. The FGASA SKS DG Trails Guide certificate requires a minimum of 1200 hours of walking in high-profile animal areas, a minimum of 600 encounters with the DG category animals, passing a specialised Advanced Rifle Handling shoot and completing a rigorous assessment on trail in a high-profile animal reserve.

The [CyberTracker](#) Senior Tracker certificate is equally challenging to achieve. To obtain any Tracker level a candidate needs to complete both an animal Track & Sign assessment as well as an animal Trailing assessment. Track & Sign tests the ability of the candidate to recognise and accurately identify various animal tracks as well as specific signs these animals leave behind such as feeding patterns, dung or scat, territorial markings...etc. The Trailing component tests a candidate's ability to follow the tracks and signs left behind by an animal to locate it. Candidates are scored on both their Track & Sign as well as their Trailing abilities, these two scores together result in a Tracker certificate.

To reach the Senior Tracker level candidates must score 100% in both the Track & Sign and Trailing assessments at the lower band. This results in the candidate receiving the Professional Tracker certificate. Candidates are then invited to the Senior assessments where their knowledge and skills are put to the ultimate test. Candidates who score 100% on the senior assessments are then awarded the Senior Tracker certificate.

Once a candidate has obtained SKS DG Trails Guide status and the Senior Tracker level, they are then awarded the FGASA Scout certificate.

This year we welcomed two new FGASA Scouts, Andrew Kearney and Wayne Te Brake. Both Andrew and Wayne have years of practical experience, and theoretical study. They have completed numerous Track & Sign and Trailing assessments at the senior level, spend thousands of hours on foot in the bush and have dedicated themselves to their careers. Their hard work has more than paid off by looking at their incredible achievements. Both exceptional guides stand as excellent examples of the time and work you put into your career.

We would like to congratulate and celebrate both of you and the immense work you have put into your careers!



Andrew Kearney - FGASA Scout



Wayne Te Brake - FGASA Scout



## A Story of the Chameleon: Adapting, Changing, Overcoming

[Ulovane Environmental Training](#) has stayed true to their word and their namesake. “Ulovane” means chameleon in isiXhosa, we all know chameleons are famed for their ability to change the colour of their skin to blend with and adapt to their environments.

We are excited to share some fantastic news, Ulovane Environmental Training and [Wilderness Foundation Africa](#) have entered into a strategic collaboration to train field guides, bring much needed transformation to the industry, create job opportunities for local communities, contribute to important wildlife research and conservation, and provide training and development opportunities for previously disadvantaged youth.

The pilot programme for this incredible initiative is set to start at the beginning of October and will take place against the backdrop of the beautiful Bushman’s River Corridor in the [Tanglewood Conservation Area](#). This area of the Eastern Cape is renowned for its scenery, wildlife and unique ecology.

Ulovane Environmental Training is widely regarded as a leading Delivery Partner in the Eastern Cape, providing professional, ethical, hands-on training to all their students, creating generations of environmentally conscious and passionate field guides. Wilderness Foundation Africa has a 50-year legacy of being at the forefront of conservation efforts across Africa.

The combined experience, efforts and professionalism of these two organisations aims to train and develop a generation of conservation-focused guides, able to provide professional and unique safari experiences to any guest visiting the area.

We are incredibly excited to watch this collaboration develop and celebrate the results of this initiative. We look forward to welcoming many new, conservation-oriented guides to the tourism sector.



You can read the official press release on the Wilderness Foundation Africa website by hitting the button below.

[Read more](#)



## #IamFGASA Good news story: Wildlife Wizards Bring the Magic of the Wilderness to All

[Wildlife Wizards Africa NPO](#) and FGASA have once again combined their efforts to bring training and development opportunities for local youth from previously disadvantaged communities in and around the Kruger National Park area.

Field guiding is more than just a job. It is a lifestyle devoted to the love and passion guides have for the natural world and all the life within it. Having that love and passion for nature combined with a desire to share that love through knowledge and skills is the foundation of becoming a great guide. FGASA supports everyone with this love and passion and in collaboration with our delivery partners will ensure that those with this passion will have equal opportunities to achieve their career goals.

At the beginning of August our Managing Director, Michelle du Plessis, was invited to Wildlife Wizards to distribute the Nature Site Guide NQF2 training materials to an incredible group of youths from local communities, set on achieving their dreams of becoming safari guides. All these individuals have the love, the passion, and the desire to share our incredible wildlife with the world, yet many of them would never have been able to afford to become guides without a little help.

We're proud to assist Wildlife Wizards by supporting this programme which is part of the FGASA Guide Development Initiative.

This initiative is about more than guide training, it is about assisting young people in breaking the cycle of poverty, uplifting not only themselves but their communities as well. By ensuring equal opportunities, we are creating a better and brighter future for people, wildlife and the environment.

We are grateful to give back and play an active role in uplifting, developing, and transforming the safari tourism and conservation industries. Creating a healthier, more equitable and better protected planet takes everyone, no one group, or organisation can do it alone, but with all our efforts combined, we can make a difference!

You can learn more about Wildlife Wizards Africa NPO by visiting their website [here](#). Click on the button below to learn more about the FGASA Guide Development Initiative.



## **Empowering Conservation through Innovation: Cadenz Electric**

Elevate your understanding of eco-conscious conservation efforts with Cadenz Electric - a driving force behind anti-poaching and sustainable wildlife protection.

### **Uniting Technology and Conservation**

Cadenz Electric stands as a beacon of innovation, fusing cutting-edge electric motorcycle technology with a steadfast commitment to wildlife preservation. Our vehicles play an essential role in anti-poaching patrols and conservation initiatives, ensuring the safety of Africa's iconic species.

### **Silent Guardians of the Wild**

Our electric motorcycles are more than just modes of transportation; they are a key tool for the guardians of the wilderness. Silent and discreet, they enable anti-poaching rangers to patrol without disturbing the delicate balance of nature, and without alerting potential poachers to the presence of the rangers thereby assisting in successful captures. By utilizing electric vehicles in patrolling efforts, we enhance surveillance capabilities, deter illegal activities, and safeguard endangered species from the external threat of poaching.

### **Championing Sustainable Practices**

With Cadenz Electric's dedication to sustainable practices and to reducing carbon footprints in nature, you become a participant in the conservation narrative. By supporting our mission, you contribute to the preservation of Africa's incredible biodiversity. These leading E-bikes take approximately 4 hours to fully charge and take your rangers up to 100km before needing to swap out the battery or needing to be recharged. The bike features quick-swap battery technology meaning changing batteries in the field is simple and easy, and with a weight of less than 13kgs they are convenient and easy to carry.

Learn more about how we can play a transformative role in anti-poaching and conservation by hitting the button below.

[Learn More](#)





## FGASA Job Space

FGASA is always looking out to help our members find their ideal career paths in tourist guiding, nature guiding, tourism and hospitality, have a look at some of the jobs currently available in the industry:



### **Mask Expeditions**

Mask Expeditions is looking for their next adventure-loving field guide with a passion for travel! Mask Expeditions is an adventure travel company specializing in small group safaris. They offer a variety of exciting adventure tours – including walking, hiking, cycling and specialist game viewing safaris. Hit the button below to apply.

[Apply here](#)



### **Sunway Safaris**

We are currently looking for young, dynamic individuals with strong personalities and the ability to work under the pressure of client demands. We will consider both experienced tour leaders and newly qualified guides...

[Apply here](#)

## FGASA Mentor Space



### **Trails Guide Mentored Hours**

Jack Hutchinson, Professional Field Guide and Trails Guide Mentor is offering his time and knowledge to help all the aspiring Trails Guides out there! Join Jack to gain needed hours, encounters, and receive one-on-one mentorship:

The mentored trails include:

- Accommodation
- Food
- Rifle and ammunition
- Two mentored walks

Price: R1500.00 per person per night

WhatsApp: (+27) 72 145 7538

Instagram: [@bearded\\_trailsranger](#)

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