

TRAILS GUIDE (VPDA) QUALIFICATIONS PROCEDURE

(SKILLS PROGRAMME

TG/DANGAMSITEGD/2/0043 /

TG/DANGAMSITEGD/4/0044)



1. You need to have **already obtained either**

***Nature Site Guide NQF2 or**

***Nature Site Guide NQF4**

Your FGASA membership needs to be up-to-date.

2. You need to purchase the **correct learning materials:**

Trails Guide and Rifle Handling Learner Manual,

Trails Guide Learner Study Guide and Workbook,

brown FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook.

3. You need to **complete the Workbook** to help you **prepare for the theory exam (compulsory)**

4. You need to **pass the Trails Guide exam with 75%**

5. You need to be declared competent at a **FGASA ARH assessment**

6. **Compulsory for the Advanced Rifle Handling assessment:**

US117705; US119651; US123519

7. Start logging the required walking hours and dangerous game encounters in your brown FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook


8. Participant Hours:

Log a minimum **50 hours on trail as participant/observer** led by an **authorised FGASA Trails Guide NQF4 with a Trails Guide certificate, Professional Trails Guide, or SKS (DG) Guide**. This can be in the workplace during guiding-based activities, during a FGASA endorsed Trails Guide course, **or** during Wilderness **or** Backpacking Trails in areas where **free-roaming dangerous game occur**.

Encounters:

Minimum of **10 encounters from at least 3 of the animal categories** on a trail as **participant/observer** led by an **authorised FGASA Trails Guide NQF4 with a Trails Guide certificate, FGASA Professional Trails Guide, or SKS (DG) Guide**. This can be in the workplace during guiding-based activities, during a FGASA endorsed Trails Guide course, **or** during Wilderness **or** Backpacking Trails in areas **where free-roaming dangerous game occur**.

9. Once the participant hours are complete and recorded in your FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook, you will need to undergo a 10-hour one-on-one mentored assessment with an authorised FGASA Trails Guide Mentor in order to enter into the Trails Guide programme.



10. Once you have been signed off by your Mentor you will be entered into the Trails Guide programme, as an apprentice trails guide.

You are now required to log the following in your Dangerous Game Logbook, see below:




11. 100 mentored guiding Hours (interchangeable):

Apprentice Trails Guide logs a minimum of:

- **50 hours on trail as 2nd Rifle led by a Mentor (log min 20 encounters)**
- **50 hours as 1st Rifle with a mentor as 2nd Rifle (log min 20 encounters)**

The mentor (authorised FGASA Professional Trails Guide or SKS (DG) Guide) functions as back-up and is the responsible guide in charge of the trail.

The 100 hours can be in the workplace during guiding-based activities, during a FGASA endorsed course, **or** during Wilderness **or** Backpacking Trails in areas **where free-roaming dangerous game occur.**





The apprentice **Trails Guide** can **accumulate** some or all of these hours while **acting as 2nd rifle or 1st rifle on trails** where other candidates (who are not yet in the trails programme) are accumulating their observer hours.

Logging of **1st and 2nd rifle hours is interchangeable** (in other words you do not have to log all 50 2nd rifle hours first and then all 50 1st rifle hours next).

Encounters:

Minimum of 40 encounters with at least one encounter from each of the **animal categories** during the minimum of 100 hours as 2nd Rifle or 1st Rifle on trails.

All of these hours and encounters **need to be logged in your brown FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook** and **signed off by the approved Mentor.**





12. Workplace Hours:

As a Trails Guide, log a **minimum of 50 hours on trail as 1st Rifle** with an **authorised FGASA Trails Guide NQF4, FGASA Professional Trails Guide or SKS (DG) Guide as 2nd Rifle**. *The 2nd/Back-up Rifle functions as back-up and is the responsible guide in charge of the trail. This must be in the workplace during guiding based activities with regular walking guests to the lodge/reserve on the walk/trail and may not be in a training context.*

The workplace can be:

- **The lodge or reserve where the guide is working**
- **At any other operation offering walks where the guide is freelance or a volunteer**, as long as it is not a training context or situation with students/other learners as guests

Encounters:

Log a **minimum of 10 encounters** from at least **three of the animal categories as 1st Rifle on trails with an authorised FGASA Professional Trails Guide or SKS (DG) Guide as 2nd/Back-up Rifle**.

All of these hours and encounters **MUST be logged** in your **brown FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook** and **signed off by the authorised Mentor**.





13. You may now complete a FGASA VPDA (View Potentially Dangerous Animals) Practical Assessment.

This is **conducted by an authorised assessor** and is a **multi-day walk spanning over a minimum of two full days** (two morning and two afternoon walks) and a **minimum of 10 hours on foot** and **must include at least two encounters with at least two different dangerous game categories.**

At least **four categories of free-roaming dangerous game must be present in the area** where the assessment takes place and the candidate **must be assessed in the roles of both 1st and 2nd rifle with walking guests.**

You need to **pass (be declared competent) the assessment.**




14. Once you have passed the assessment you will be awarded with the CATHSSETA VPDA (View Potentially Dangerous Animals).

You will also be awarded your **FGASA Trails Guide certificate** (*see additional information below*).



15. You may now continue to log active guiding experience in the brown FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook working towards obtaining the FGASA Professional Trails Guide.



The Animal Categories are as follows:

- Elephant bull
- Elephant breeding herd
- Buffalo bull
- Buffalo breeding herd
- Lion and/or leopard
- White and/or black rhino
- Hippopotamus out of water

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The CATHSSETA VPDA Qualifications are linked to the Nature Site Guide Qualifications.

If the Trails Guide is at Nature Site Guide NQF2 level, then the certificate will state VPDA NQF2.

If the Trails Guide is at Nature Site Guide NQF4 level, then the certificate will state VPDA NQF4.**

****IMPORTANT**

FGASA advises new Trails Guides to complete the Tracker 1 Certificate (combined Animal Track & Sign Level 1 and Animal Trailing Level 1) as this is a requirement for FGASA Trails Guide NQF4. There are no further requirements for Trails Guide NQF4.

The "Trails Guide" Certificate rests solely with FGASA, there are additional requirements to obtain the FGASA Trails Guide NQF4 Certificate.

You will need to submit all required further documentation to the FGASA Head Office for correct registration of your new qualification with CATHSSETA.

A valid First Aid certificate is a requirement for all FGASA qualifications.