

# PUBLIC-INTEREST PARTNERSHIPS

NATIONAL FIRE INDABA 2026 - BLOEMFONTEIN

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HEAD: SUPPORTING FIRE SERVICES SA

# Introduction

- We know the issues facing fire services
- The diagnosis is not new or contested
- Disaster does not sit neatly in one department, it sits across the system
- South Africa does not have a fire expertise problem,
  - We have a system alignment problem

# What are Public-Private Partnerships

- They:
  - Exist in over 130 countries
  - Accounts for 15-20% of total global infrastructure (\$100 billion)\*
- *Structured collaboration between a public authority and non-state partners*
  - Designed to achieve clearly defined public outcomes
  - Roles and responsibilities explicitly allocated
  - Public authority remains central and constitutionally accountable

\* [MDPI.com/Public-Private Partnerships \(PPPs\) for Construction Project Deliveries;](https://www.mdpi.com/Public-Private-Partnerships-PPPs-for-Construction-Project-Deliveries)  
[ppi/worldbank.org/ppiworldbankgroup](https://ppi.worldbank.org/ppiworldbankgroup)

# Acknowledging the Sensitivity in South Africa

- PPP's have historically raised governance concerns
- Public trust must be protected
- The issue is not partnership but design and oversight
- Better design creates better outcomes



# What We Mean — and What We Do Not Mean

- Not privatisation
- Not outsourcing command authority
- Not interfering with Municipal assets
- No dilution of responsibility
- Authority remains with the state
- Additional capacity creation
- Structured collaboration
- Leveraging expertise

Actually describing a **Public-Interest Partnership**

# Why Do PPP's or PIP's Matter?

- Chronic underfunding and ageing infrastructure
- Technology and skills gaps
- Fragmented coordination across mandates
  
- PIPs can unlock expertise, innovation and accountability
- Faster innovation cycles
- Anchored in public interest
- Disaster management is a public safety function - design is critical

# Risks in Establishing PPP's / PIP's

- Universal access - equity of response is not optional
- Clear and immediate accountability
- Avoid long-term lock-in
- Seamless integration within systems
- Protect public trust
- Institutional hollowing and skills dependency
- Information and data governance



# Where Partnerships Can Strengthen Fire Services

- Capacity building and specialist training
- Technology and risk intelligence systems
- Prevention and resilience programmes
- Coordinated support capability
- Capability-driven, not capital-heavy interventions
- Advocacy and strengthen coordination



# How to Build Responsible Public-Interest Partnerships

- Legislated authority remains central
- Clear scope and measurable outcomes
- Transparent governance
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- Transparent governance
- Operational realities drive design
- Community safety is the ultimate metric

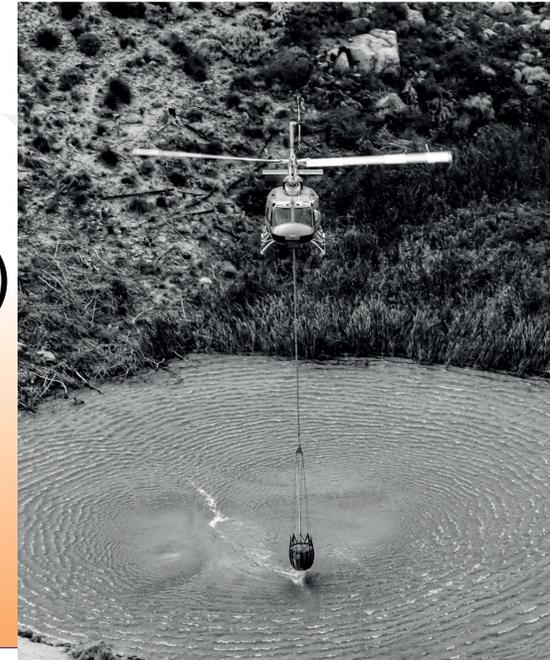


# The Role of Supporting Fire Services SA

- Independent non-profit founded by Hollard, Old Mutual Insure and Santam
- Focused on strengthening fire service resilience across communities
- **Catalytic** - a connector, convener and ally
- Supports structured, accountable partnership models

# Structure Collaboration in Action

- Structured collaboration within defined governance frameworks
- Pilot models to test and refine interventions
- Identify practical partnership opportunities
- Example: Insurance Sector Quick Reaction Force (QRF)
  - Targeted, governed, responsive resilience support



# Conclusion: Strengthening the System

- Fire protection remains a constitutional responsibility of the state
- Partnerships should be a mechanism - not a replacement
  - Designed correctly, collaboration reinforces resilience

Fire do not distinguish – neither should our resilience.

# THANK YOU

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