



Strengthening provincial coordination, compliance oversight, and legislative implementation across municipalities.

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Legislative Mandate

- Firefighting services in terms of Schedule 4, Part B of the South African Constitution is the responsibility of local government with national and provincial oversight. The Fire Brigade Services Act, 1987 (Act no. 99 of 1987) (FBSA) is the primary piece of legislation regulating fire services and provides for the establishment, maintenance, employment, co-ordination and standardisation of fire brigade services.
- Provincial government has a key role to play in the implementation of the FBSA as Proclamation R 153 of 1994 assigned all sections of this Act to the provincial sphere with the exception of Section 2 (Fire Brigade Board) and 15 (Regulations) which remained the administrative responsibility of national government.
- Section 154 of the Constitution, 1996 further calls upon national and provincial governments, by legislative and other measures, to support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs, to exercise their powers and to perform their functions.

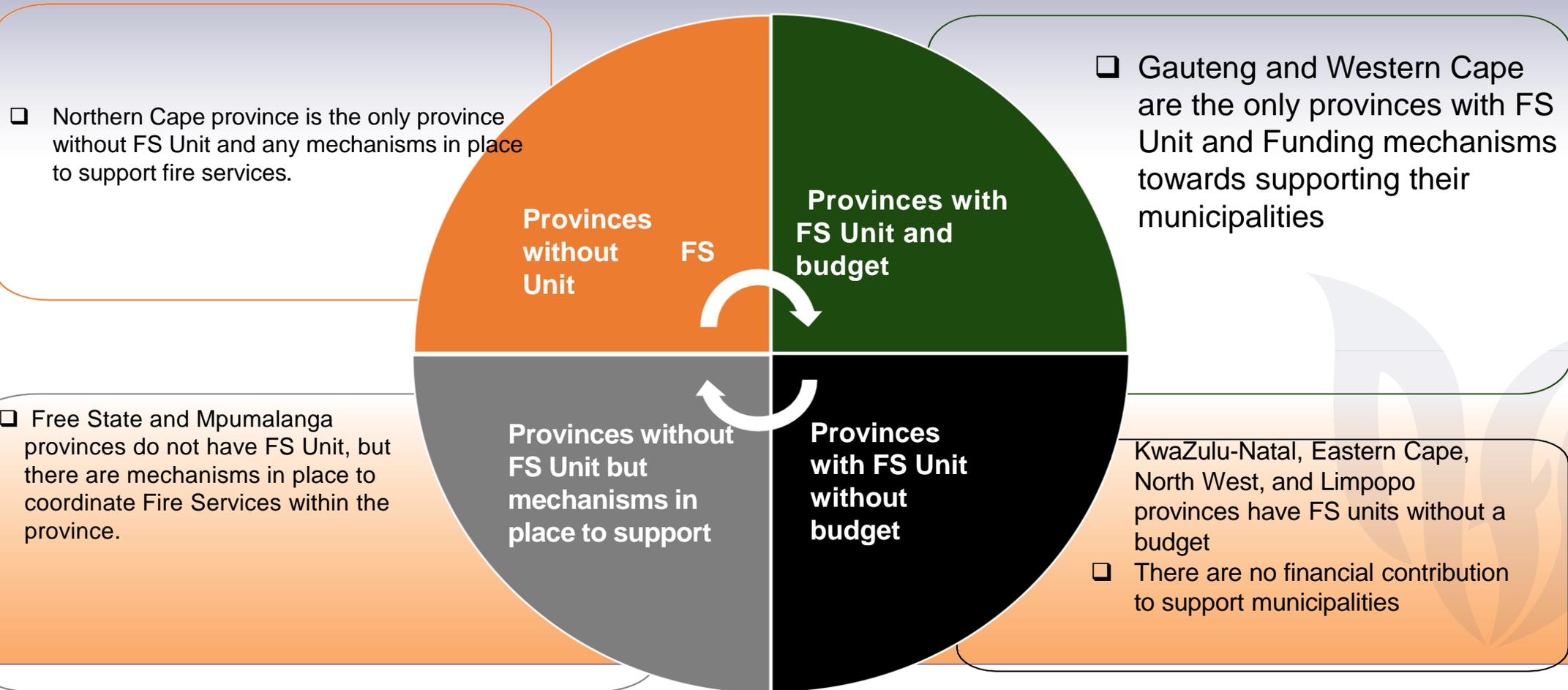
Objectives of the presentation

- Ensure that all fire services stakeholders receive consistent and adequate support from the provincial government, fostering collaboration and addressing local needs.
- Encourage the appointment of provincial government officials who are fully knowledgeable about the policy imperatives outlined in the White Paper, enabling them to implement these directives efficiently and effectively.
- Promote the development and strengthening of provincial capacity dedicated to the implementation of the FBSA, ensuring robust oversight, resource allocation, and sustained progress.
- By refining these objectives, provinces and municipalities can enhance stakeholder engagement, improve policy adherence, and build resilient fire service systems that contribute to sustainable development and good governance.

Roles and Responsibilities of Provinces in FS

- Provincial governments are responsible for monitoring and providing oversight in the implementation of the FBSA by municipalities and other role players involved in the provision of firefighting services in its area of jurisdiction.
- The establishment of dedicated capacity to oversee the implementation of this legislation is therefore a legal requirement for the provincial government to discharge its legal mandate optimally.
- The Cabinet has approved the White Paper on Fire Services on 27 May 2020. Chapter 6 of the White Paper on Fire Services outlines the roles and responsibilities of the provincial government in fire services. Provinces play a critical role of supporting municipalities in the optimal delivery of fire services to communities.
- While it is important (as outlined in the White Paper on Local Government, 1998) that provincial governments can tailor their approaches to supporting local government according to the specific conditions which prevail in each area, key roles and responsibilities of this sphere of government in the provision of fire services are outlined on section 6.2 of the White Paper on Fire Services.

Provinces with Fire Services Units



Conti...Provinces with Fire Services Units

Provinces	Level of structure
Gauteng	Directorate level
Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and North West	Sub-directorates level
Free State, Northern Cape, and Mpumalanga	No Units or support provided below the sub-directorate

National Development on Capacity

CHIEF DIRECTORATE: NATIONAL FIRE SERVICES (Posts:)

Purpose: To oversee and provide strategic leadership, policy direction, and coordinated oversight to strengthen and support fire services in South Africa.

Functions:

1. Coordinate and support fire services across the country.
2. Attain high standards of preparedness for extreme weather incidents and rescue operations.
3. Reduce fire likelihood and consequences through community engagement.
4. To oversee the administration and implementation of the fire services legislation for fire services nationally.
5. Professionalise fire services through education and training.

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Directorate: Fire Services Coordination & Support (Posts)

Purpose: To coordinate and support fire services across the country.

Functions:

1. Ensure overall coordination and support of fire services across the country.
2. Oversee the implementation of a funding model and strategy for fire services.
3. Take responsibility for stakeholder management and the effective functioning of institutional structures.
4. Render support, cooperation and administrative guidance to other spheres of government and Fire Services stakeholders.
5. Review National Fire Services Framework regulations.
6. Support the Fire Brigade Board (FBB) and ensure its support structures are fully functional.

Directorate: Special Operations (Posts)

Purpose: To attain high standards of preparedness for extreme weather incidents and rescue operations.

Functions:

1. Oversee the implementation of the National Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Framework to ensure Urban Search & Rescue preparedness across all provinces.
2. Oversee the implementation of a National Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) framework.
3. Oversee the implementation of a unified incident management system.
4. Ensure the implementation of a comprehensive and integrated fire management approach for wildland fires, emphasizing prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and ecological sustainability to mitigate risks and enhance resilience.

Directorate: Fire Safety and Prevention (Posts)

Purpose: To reduce fire likelihood and consequences through community engagement.

Functions:

1. Support the implementation of National Fire Safety & Prevention Strategy across all fire services.
2. Standardisation of norms and standards through model fire services bylaws and other means;
3. Ensure the development and adoption of a strategic fire research agenda.

Directorate: Fire Services Inspectorate (Posts)

Purpose: To oversee the administration and implementation of the fire services legislation for fire services nationally.

Functions:

1. Oversee the implementation of existing and future legislation, regulations, and policy for fire services nationally
2. Develop and implement national norms and standards for the delivery of fire services.
3. Develop and implement a national fire services strategic framework for standard setting for the delivery of fire services.
4. Monitor and evaluate compliance to fire services legislation by fire services.
5. Preparation and submission of annual reports on the state of fire services to oversight structures

Directorate: Fire Services Education and Training (Posts)

Purpose: To professionalise fire services through education and training.

Functions

1. Develop a career path for personnel in the fire services.
2. Develop and implement a national strategy to professionalise the fire services.
3. Develop a national fire services education, training and research strategy.
4. Establish a National Fire Services Academy.

Challenges with FS coordination

- The lack of dedicated capacity for fire services in these provinces hinders the effective provision of oversight and coordination of the function in the respective provinces;
- Lack of regular forums that foster dialogue between provincial government and municipalities, enabling the sharing of best practices, addressing common challenges, and aligning priorities;
- Supports the implementation of a national fire services strategic framework;
- Supports the development and implementation of a national fire safety program;
- Lack of centralised data platforms for real-time information sharing on budgets, projects, and performance indicators, enhancing transparency and informed decision-making.

Recommendations

- Provinces are encouraged to establish dedicated capacity for the function and also ensure that it is staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced personnel.
- Provinces are encouraged to establish FS units at least on a Directorate level, with a budget
- Political heads to note the challenges within Fire Services and intervene where possible.
- Provincial governments are encouraged to explore various funding mechanisms to support Fire Services