WHY THIS MATTERS

- Veldfires are not only an operational issue — they are a governance coverage issue

- Law and policy assume capability that often does not exist on the ground

- The result: recurring large fires originating in predictable blind spots

WHAT THE NVFFA ESTABLISHES

- A statutory fire governance framework (not just suppression)

- Duties, roles, and coordination expectations across land users

- Prevention + readiness + response as a single system

- Intended integration with Fire Services and Disaster Management

WHAT AN FPA IS SUPPOSED TO BE

- A legally recognised local coordination mechanism for veldfire risk

- Shared standards: planning, readiness, mutual aid, incident reporting

- A structure to translate law into practical local action

- Effective only if representation matches the risk landscape

PRACTICAL DIFFERENCE: IFM vs CBFiM

IFM: integrated planning, multi-agency coordination, prevention + response

CBFiM: local legitimacy, community action, livelihood reality, early containment

Problem: IFM is often on paper, while CBFiM occurs informally

Aim: CBFiM delivery inside an IFM coordination spine

THE FIRE GOVERNANCE GAP

- What the system expects: coordinated capability and compliance

- What exists: uneven municipal/fire services capacity and fragmented local structures

- What happens: informal/clandestine burning, weak reporting, late escalation

- Large fires start where governance and capability are thinnest

FREE STATE "BLIND SPOTS" WHERE RISK ACCUMULATES

• Municipal/commonage land

• Township edges / WUI margins

• Emerging and smallholder farmers

• Communal grazing areas

• Key servitudes and access corridors

• These spaces are high-ignition, high-impact — and often outside governance

WHAT IS ACTUALLY ESTABLISHED ON THE GROUND

- Formal structures often reflect a narrow-organized core

- Fire Services and Disaster Management weakness forces FPAs to fill the vacuum

- FPAs default to protecting what they resource (self protection)

- Participation and coverage shrinks to the people inside the structure — blind spots remain

RESULT: FRAGMENTATION AND DRIFT

- Many small FPAs create coordination overload

- Standards drift between areas (permits, training, readiness, response)

- Mutual aid becomes unreliable and ad-hoc

- Sustainability depends on a few individuals, not a durable system

EFFECT: EXCLUSION, CRIMINALISATION and NONCOMPLIANCE

- Limited participation - weak legitimacy - weak compliance

- Livelihood and anthropogenic fire use becomes high-risk and criminalized

- Weak reporting reduces learning and prevention

- Major fires originate in governance blind spots

RESOURCE CAPTURE = UNEQUAL OUTCOMES

- Planning and resources follow insiders, not the highest risk spaces

- Exclusion creates a feedback loop:
  exclusion → unmanaged risk → losses → tighter exclusion

- The system ends up protecting the already-protected

THE FIX: DISTRICT ALIGNMENT & INCLUSIVE DELIVERY

- Aligning fire governance to the district-level, linked to Fire Services and Disaster Management

- Formalise inclusive sub-areas so high-risk spaces are inside the system

- Make FPAs delivery partners with structured inclusion by design

- Reduce duplication, improve standardisation, strengthen mutual aid and escalation

- Measure success by reduced impact and improved safe use not only "total area burned"

IMPLEMENTING THE FIX: PROVINCIAL IFM FRAMEWORK

The Free State Provincial Veldfire Management Framework provides a practical route to:
- integrate FPAs into a single coordination spine
- extend governance into blind spots through structured inclusion
- anchor escalation and coordination in Fire Services / Disaster Management

Mangaung FPA (MAFPA) demonstrates implementation momentum:
- visible improvements in coordination and routine cooperation
- expanding inclusion and governance coverage year-on-year
- practical integration that becomes more effective with each passing season
- Improved sustainability

ALIGN FPA TRANSFORMATION WITH FIRE SERVICES RESTRUCTURING

- Include FPA transformation as part of the current Fire Services revision/restructuring
- Anchor authority and escalation in Fire Services + Disaster Management
- Reconfigure FPAs to be structurally inclusive (coverage matches risk)
- Use sub-areas to reach township edges, commonage, servitudes, smallholders

Closing the Fire Governance Gap in the Free State: Aligning Law, Practice and Livelihoods

If we include FPA transformation with Fire Services development, FPAs become inclusive delivery partners — and the system finally reaches the places where fires actually start.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING