



MEDIA RELEASE

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Knysna Municipality welcomes new Fire Chief

Knysna Municipality welcomed Mr Clinton Manuel to its fold as the new Fire Chief Officer on 2 January this year. Manuel hails from Cape Town, where he had been appointed as Divisional Commander in training at Cape Town Fire Rescue Services.

"I joined the Cape Town Fire Rescue Services as a fire fighter in 1988 and started working my way through the ranks," said Manuel. "I have also completed a senior certificate with the South African Emergency Services Authority, a National Diploma: Fire Service Technology from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and a Bachelor's degree in Management at the University of Cape Town."

"I am extremely passionate about training and staff development," he continued. "In my previous position I was involved with the Local Government Sector Education Training Authority (LGSETA) as a Fire Service Instructor, Assessor, Moderator and Verifier. And, if at all possible, I would like to continue with my association with LGSETA in developing formal qualifications and training programs that would, at the end of the day, improve service delivery."

"In addition to staff training, I aim to start off by setting a standardised shift system for employees," he continued. "By negotiating with the relevant unions, we hope to institute a proper system that would deliver a 24-hour service to the greater Knysna area."

"There are a few challenges that will need to be addressed, including attaining more modern equipment. But all in all I am looking forward to working with the team to improve on our level of service delivery."

Community Services Portfolio Chairperson Irene Grootboom said that she was pleased with Manuel's appointment, and that his previous experience and education more than qualified him for the position. "We are very lucky that Mr Manuel decided to relocate to Knysna from Cape Town. I am certain that our Fire Department will flourish under his leadership and I wish him well in this new position."

Manuel explained that he used to visit Knysna in days gone by. "When I visited Knysna 20 years ago, I told myself that someday I would work for this municipality. I believe that the quality of life is better here than in a big city. The traffic is a breeze and there is so much to do when you're not working."

"I like to think of myself as a strategic thinker and hope that my contribution will aid in making the town safer for its residents, visitors and businesses," he concluded.

(Photo: Knysna Municipality)

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