



MEDIA RELEASE

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EMBARGO: Immediate

Karatara boasts new fire station

The fire station at Karatara has been upgraded in order to house its newly refurbished and fully equipped fire engine. Construction on the fire station began at the end of May this year and was completed on 24 June this year, at a cost of R27 176,00. The fire station was officially opened yesterday, August 6th.

Ward 2 Councillor Louisa Hart explained that the project had been funded through her ward discretionary funds. "Karatara is a very important section of Ward 2, which also includes central Sedgfield. And it was high time that the previous firefighting system was upgraded."

The station housed a water trailer prior to the upgrade. This trailer would be towed to the scene of a fire by a tractor. "As the tractor was housed elsewhere, this caused a few delays in transporting the water trailer to where it was needed," said Hart. "This tractor was also not for our fire department's exclusive use, which would cause serious problems were it not to be available when necessary."

"Aside from the water trailer, Karatara also had strategically placed fire boxes with firefighting equipment," she continued. "But our Chief Fire Officer Clinton Manuel brought it to my attention that at least one of these had been vandalised and that these boxes presented potential liability issues should a member of the public be injured while using this equipment."

"Mr Manuel further explained his concerns regarding the delays in getting the water trailer to where it may be needed. We decided to replace the fire boxes and the trailer with a fully equipped fire engine," she said. "The fire engine would not have fit into the existing space, so we decided to upgrade the station to house this new addition."

At the opening of the refurbished station Knysna Executive Mayor Georlene Wolmarans said that it completed the firefighting triangle, as opposed to the fire triangle. "The fire triangle teaches us that fuel, oxygen and a heat source will create a fire when combined with an exothermic reaction," said Wolmarans. "My firefighting triangle consists of dedicated firefighters, appropriate equipment in good working order and an up to date fire station."

"I already know that our fire department is staffed with dedicated personnel, but now the other two parts of this triangle are also present in Karatara. The newly refurbished fire engine and the upgraded station complete the firefighting triangle," she concluded. "Keeping our residents and our municipal area safe from fires is only one way in which we are creating a town where people and nature prosper."

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