

TRAILS GUIDE (VPDA) NQF2/4 QUALIFICATIONS PROCEDURE

(SKILLS PROGRAMME

TG/DANGAMSITEGD/2/0043 /
TG/DANGAMSITEGD/4/0044)



1. You need to have already obtained:

- **FGASA Nature Site Guide NQF2 or**
- **FGASA Nature Site Guide NQF4**

Your FGASA membership needs to be up-to-date.

2. You need to purchase the correct learning materials: Trails Guide and Rifle Handling Learner Manual, Trails Guide Learner Study Guide and Workbook, brown FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook (Trails Guide Mentored Programme).

3. You need to complete the Workbook to help you prepare for the exam (compulsory).

4. You need to pass the Trails Guide exam with 75%

5. Compulsory for the Advanced Rifle Handling Certificate: US117705; US119651; US123519 (PFTC Unit Standards).

6. You need to be declared competent at a FGASA ARH Assessment

7. You will now be able to **start logging walking hours** in your brown **FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook** (Trails Guide Mentored Programme).

8. Participant Hours (compulsory):

Minimum **50 hours on trail as participant/observer** led by a **FGASA Trails Guide NQF4 with a Trails Guide certificate, Professional Trails Guide, or SKS (DG) Guide.** This can be in the workplace during guiding-based activities, during a FGASA endorsed Trails Guide course, **or** during Wilderness **or** Backpacking Trails in areas where **free-roaming dangerous game occur.**

***Note:** You do not need the PFTC unit standards or FGASA ARH to complete your participant hours.

Encounters:

Minimum of **10 encounters from at least 3 of the animal categories as observer** on a trail **led by a FGASA Professional Trails Guide, or SKS (DG) Guide.** This can be in the workplace during guiding-based activities, during a FGASA endorsed Trails Guide course, **or** during Wilderness **or** Backpacking Trails in areas **where free-roaming dangerous game occur.**

9. Once the **participant hours are complete and recorded in your brown FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook,** you will need to undergo a **10-hour one-on-one mentored assessment** with an authorised **FGASA Trails Guide Mentor** in order to be eligible for the **Trails Guide programme.**

10. Once you have been signed off by your Mentor you will enter the Trails Guide programme and are required to log the following in your brown Dangerous Game Logbook, see below:

11. 100 mentored guiding Hours (these are interchangeable):

Trails Guide logs a minimum of:

- **50 hours on trail as 2nd Rifle with an endorsed FGASA Resident Assistant Mentor or Professional Trails Guide Mentor. (log min 20 encounters)**
- **20 hours on trail as 2nd Rifle with a Resident Assistant Mentor (RAM) - NQF4 Trails Guide or as Single Rifle with a Resident Assistant Mentor (RAM) - Wildlife Tracker III with no guests**
- **30 hours on trail (minimum) as 1st Rifle with a Professional Trails Guide Mentor as 2nd Rifle (At least 10 of the 40 encounters must be during this phase)**

The mentor, an authorised FGASA Professional Trails Guide, SKS (DG) Guide or endorsed Resident Assistant Mentor [RAM] functions as back-up and is the responsible guide in charge of the trail.

This can be in the workplace during guiding-based activities, during a FGASA endorsed course, or during Wilderness or Backpacking Trails in areas **where free-roaming dangerous game occur.**

12. The Trails Guide can accumulate some or all of these hours while **acting as 2nd rifle and 1st rifle on trails** where other candidates (who are not yet in the trails programme) are accumulating their observer hours.

Logging of **1st and 2nd rifle hours is interchangeable** (in other words you do not have to log all 50 2nd rifle hours first and then all 50 1st rifle hours next).

Encounters:

Minimum of 40 encounters with at least one encounter from 7 out of the 8 Dangerous Game animal categories during the minimum of 100 hours as 2nd Rifle or 1st Rifle on trails.

All of these hours and encounters **need to be logged in your brown FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook and signed off by the approved Mentor.**

The Animal Categories are as follows:

- Elephant bull
- Elephant breeding herd
- Buffalo bull
- Buffalo breeding herd
- Lion and/or leopard
- White and/or black rhino
- Hippopotamus out of water

13. Workplace Hours:

As a Trails Guide, log a **minimum of 50 hours on trail as 1st Rifle** with an **authorised FGASA Resident Assistant Mentor, FGASA Professional Trails Guide or SKS (DG) Guide as 2nd Rifle/Back-up.**

*The 2nd/Back-up Rifle functions as back-up and is the responsible guide in charge of the trail. This **must be in the workplace during guiding based activities with regular walking guests to the lodge/reserve on the walk/trail and may not be in a training context.***

The workplace can be:

- **The lodge or reserve where the guide is working**
- **At any other operation offering walks where the guide is a freelance or volunteer, as long as it is not a training context or situation with students/other learners as guests**

Encounters:

Log a **minimum of 10 encounters** from at least **three of the animal categories as 1st Rifle on trails with an authorised FGASA Resident Assistant Mentor, FGASA Professional Trails Guide or SKS (DG) Guide as 2nd/Back-up Rifle.**

All of these hours and encounters **MUST be logged** in your **brown FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook** and **signed off by the authorised Mentor.**

The **assessment may only take place** if the Apprentice can show one static target for every six months that have lapsed after the successful completion of the current ARH certificate:

- **Fire five consecutive shots into the static target at 12 meters.** The exercise must be managed by the Mentor who needs to co-sign the target, and sign off the exercise shoot in the DG Logbook.
- The **Assessment will start with the Rifle and Ammunition Inspection**, and the **Quick Loading (Blindfold) exercise (Exercise 1 of the FGASA ARH)**. The Assessment may not continue if the Apprentice does not complete this successfully.

14. You may now complete a FGASA VPDA (View Potentially Dangerous Animals) Practical Assessment.

This is **conducted by an authorised assessor** and is a **multi-day walk spanning over a minimum of two full days** (two morning and two afternoon walks) and a **minimum of 10 hours on foot** and **must include at least two encounters with at least two different dangerous game categories.**

At least **four categories of free-roaming dangerous game must be present in the area** where the assessment takes place and the candidate must be assessed in the roles of **both 1st and 2nd rifle with walking guests.**

You need to pass (be declared competent) the assessment.

15. Once you have passed the assessment you will be awarded with the **VPDA (View Potentially Dangerous Animals) Qualification** that is recognised by **CATHSSETA**.

16. You may now continue to **log active guiding experience** in the **brown FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook** working towards obtaining the **FGASA Professional Trails Guide**.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The **CATHSSETA VPDA Qualifications** are linked to the **Nature Site Guide Qualifications**.

If the **Trails Guide** is at **Nature Site Guide NQF2 level**, then the certificate will state **VPDA NQF2**.

If the **Trails Guide** is at **Nature Site Guide NQF4 level**, then the certificate will state **VPDA NQF4****.

The "**Trails Guide**" Certificate rests solely with **FGASA**, there are **additional requirements** to obtain the **FGASA Trails Guide NQF4 Certificate**.

****IMPORTANT**

FGASA advises new **Trails Guides** to complete the **Tracker I Certificate (combined Animal Track & Sign Level 1 and Animal Trailing Level 1)** as this is a requirement for **FGASA Trails Guide NQF4**. There are no further requirements for **Trails Guide NQF4**.

You will need to **submit all required further documentation** to the FGASA Head Office for **correct registration of your new qualification with CATHSSETA.**

A valid First Aid certificate is a requirement for all FGASA qualifications.