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 lll 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
- Black rhino
- White rhino
- Hippopotamus

13. Workplace Hours:

As a Trails Guide, log a **minimum of 50 hours on trail as 1st Rifle** with an **authorised NQF4 Trails Guide, 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**.