

# PRESS RELEASE

## Growth in fire engineering a hot topic for ASP Fire in 2019

*22 January 2019: With insurers placing greater demands on businesses to comply with all relevant fire-safety standards and regulations, ASP Fire has employed two new fire engineers to enhance its service offering in this regard.*

Citing fire engineering as a key growth area, ASP Fire CEO **Michael van Niekerk** comments that 2018 was an “exceptionally busy” year that resulted in significant growth. One of the new fire engineers employed also has a HVAC background, adding further to the expertise and experience of the company. “We are already active in Africa, and recently received an enquiry from Portugal.”

Looking at future growth, van Niekerk adds there are significant opportunities in the retail industry, with ASP Fire having carried out about 13 shopping centre fire-risk evaluations to date. The average shopping centre is very much an environment in flux. However, if anchor tenants occupy a space in excess of 2 500 m<sup>2</sup>, then sprinkler systems have to be installed.

“If you do not detect a fire in time, and cannot evacuate people fast enough, it can be a major issue resulting in fatalities,” van Niekerk warns. Shops larger than 250 m<sup>2</sup> in area are required to have manual fire-detection systems in place, while shops in excess of 500 m<sup>2</sup> require automatic fire detection and emergency evacuation systems. This also needs to be linked to the shopping centre’s building management system, so that patrons and other tenants can be forewarned timeously in the event of any emergency.

ASP Fire continues to educate both the public and industry in general about fire-risk management and fire engineering in particular. Here van Niekerk warns about complacency with regard to fire safety. “Most people do not believe they will become a victim of a car accident, a workplace incident, or a fire either at home or at their place of work.”

It is essential that any business or residential environment is, firstly, adequately prepared to deal with a fire, and that, secondly, people are mentally prepared to act swiftly, and with purpose, during a fire. The cheapest and most effective way to combat a fire is through the use of portable fire extinguishers and fire-hose reels. It is a legal requirement for every building in South Africa greater than 250 m<sup>2</sup> in area to be equipped with fire-hose reels at a ratio of one per 500 m<sup>2</sup> or part thereof.

Importantly, these must be located in such a manner that the end of the hose, not the water stream, can reach every part of the building. A minimum of one fire-hose reel is required on each floor of a multi-storey building. In addition, portable fire extinguishers must be installed at a ratio of one 4.5 kg dry chemical powder fire extinguisher per 200 m<sup>2</sup> or part thereof in offices.

ASP Fire conducts fire-risk assessments to determine whether the actual fire load within a building exceeds the installed fire-protection system design. “We are able to advise clients and to assist them with a suitable fire-protection strategy and system design to cater for any worse-case scenario. We specialise in turnkey fire protection projects, whereby we design, supply, install, and maintain fire protection equipment in buildings,” van Niekerk concludes.

**Ends**

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**Notes to the Editor**

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**About ASP Fire**

ASP Fire operates across the entire African continent from its Gauteng base, providing professional, accredited fire risk management and support to its clients. ASP Fire designs, installs and maintains a full range of fire detection and suppression equipment suited to clients' needs. ASP Fire provides a holistic, proactive and preventative fire solution based on integrated fire risk assessment, training and consulting, with the installation and maintenance of fire detection and suppression systems that meet SABS, NFPA, FPASA, FDIA and SAQCC standards.

**ASP Fire Contact**

Michael van Niekerk  
ASP Fire CEO  
Phone: +27 (0) 11 452 2169  
Cell: +27 (0) 83 779 1701  
Fax: +27 (0) 86 505 1030  
Email: [michael@aspfire.co.za](mailto:michael@aspfire.co.za)  
Web: [www.aspfire.co.za](http://www.aspfire.co.za)

**Media Contact**

Nomvelo Buthelezi  
NGAGE Public Relations  
Phone: (011) 867-7763  
Fax: 086 512 3352  
Cell: 083 4088 911  
Email: [nomvelo@ngage.co.za](mailto:nomvelo@ngage.co.za)  
Web: [www.ngage.co.za](http://www.ngage.co.za)

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