



November 2017

HOT TOPICS

Celebrating our network

BUSHFIRES VOLLIES CLEAN-UP AT AWARDS

Bushfires NT would like to congratulate our volunteers for receiving four awards at this year's Volunteering NT Volunteer of the Year Awards.

Ben Balmer (Alice Springs) and Tom McIntyre (Darwin River) were both awarded the Emergency Services Volunteer of the Year Awards (Central Australian and Top End awards).

Acacia Hills Volunteer Bushfire Brigade was awarded the Community Volunteer Organisation of the Year. Dundee Volunteer Bushfire Brigade also received a special commendation for their efforts.

The Bushfires NT Volunteer Consultative Committee was awarded the Corporate Volunteer Team of the Year.

Amanda Houston received a special commendation for Excellence in Volunteer Management, while Mick Farrelly also received a special commendation for his Lifetime Contribution to Volunteering.

Congratulations to all volunteers who were nominated for the 2017 NT Volunteer of the Year Awards, and thank you to all of our volunteers for their invaluable commitment to Bushfires NT.



BEMS UPDATE



Steele Davies has returned to Darwin and commenced as the Senior Systems Administrator role working with Miriam in the Project Team to assist in getting the Bushfire Emergency Management System completed and operational for Staff and Volunteers to use to assist them in their day to day tasks.

Steele will be assisting to complete the overall design of the Bushfires Emergency Management System. This will also allow Steele to become familiar with the entire Project and progress made to date. From there, I will shift my focus to the successful implementation of the BEMS across all of Bushfires NT. My role will encompass three important functions: implementation, training and ongoing systems administration and a major part of this will be working with Brigades to provide more information on BEMS and making it common practice to use.

Some of the key tasks Steele will be working on include:

- Develop a clear strategy to roll out BEMS to all Brigades and users.
- Creating a suitable training package.
- Delivering training to all volunteers and users.
- Providing advice and assistance to users.
- Administer the System into the 2018 fire season.

Hopefully In the coming weeks and months you will see Steele and Miriam who will be able to provide updates on its progress.

BY FAILING TO PLAN, YOU ARE PLANNING TO FAIL

To ensure the implementation of best practices in bushfire management it is important to continually plan, evaluate and review operations. Bushfires NT is involved in a variety of planning processes to improve bushfire management in the Territory. Examples include:



The development of Regional Bushfire Plans that identify risks and treatments to reduce overall threat of bushfire in each region. The Savanna Regional Bushfire Management Plan has now been endorsement by its Regional Committee. The Arnhem, Alice Springs, Vernon Arafura and Barkly Regional Plans are all well under way.

DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES



The development of the Tennant Creek Area Fire Strategy. This plan focuses on developing stronger collaborations between fire managers by increasing awareness of stakeholder roles and responsibilities, in addition to the development of a shared fire planning calendar.

Increasing operational planning capacity of our Volunteer Bushfire Brigades (VBB) through the development of fire mitigation plans. Over the last five years, Bushfires NT and VBBs have worked together to identify operational scale risks during pre-bushfire season meetings. These plans are then evaluated at the end of the season, and lessons learnt are discussed.



The development of the 2017 Cox Peninsula (Kenbi) Mitigation Plan. The Kenbi Aboriginal Rangers and Cox Peninsula VBB developed the 2017 plan which identified areas for fine scale mitigation burns to be conducted between May and August. These burns successfully prevented several late season wildfires.



SAVE THE DATES

In an effort to show our appreciation for the incredible effort you (our volunteers) continue to put-in, there are several upcoming events to show our appreciation. Keep an eye-out over the coming few weeks for more information regarding these events:

- Bushfires NT Top End Volunteer Appreciation (Minister Moss will be attending)
25 November, Berry Springs Recreation Reserve
- Bushfires NT Savanna Volunteer Appreciation
1 December, Katherine Volunteer Bushfire Brigade headquarters
- International Volunteers Day Celebrations
5 December

Appreciation events will be held in Central Australia at the close of your fire season.

For more information regarding each event, please contact lucas.fiddaman@nt.gov.au



CAN WE PREDICT BUSHFIRES FROM SPACE?

Excerpt of a Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC article. Complete article can be found at <https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2017/can-we-predict-bushfires-space>



Photo by Carolina Luiz: Dr Marta Yebra conducting a grassland fire experiment.

Australia's forests are among the most fire-prone in the world and satellite monitoring could greatly help to predict and mitigate bushfires before they occur. This space-based monitoring will be one step closer thanks to Dr Marta Yebra's research in the Mapping Bushfire Hazard and Impacts project.

Dr Yebra will conduct experiments at the National Arboretum Canberra to determine the moisture content of Australia's native forests. Moisture content is particularly important to predicting bushfires on a large scale as it affects the likelihood of ignition occurring, as well as the severity and spread of the fire. This real-world data will be incorporated into new models that can be used to predict bushfires.



WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE IN HOT TOPICS?

Hot Topics is a newsletter designed to inform the Bushfires NT volunteer network. It's meant

to provide you with the right information to make life as a volunteer a little easier. So, how

can we do this? What is important to you? What do you want to read about in Hot Topics?

Do you want to see more training updates, more research articles, or just more information

about what other brigades are up to? If that's the case, let me know. Furthermore, if you

have any other ideas, photos or stories you would like to include in Hot Topics, don't hesitate to let me know.

Please get in touch on 8922 0839 or bushfires.engagement@nt.gov.au.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT ACACIA HILLS VBB

AHVBB hosts a monthly (first Friday of the month) community dinner as a way to engage volunteers, their families and the community. Their next dinner theme is Pig on a Spit, and will be on December 1st to celebrate Christmas and the formal opening of their Caretaker's Shelter. We anticipate a visit from Santa at the dinner as well and some games for the kids.

Please contact the brigade if you are interested in attending.



TRAINING IN SOUTHERN NT



Photo: Bound for Barkly



Photo: Across the Barkly

Over the past 5 weeks I have travelled over 6,700 km by road and 3,000 km by air to deliver Bushfires NT training across the Territory to some terrific stakeholders.

During that time Justin Hankinson from our Tennant Creek office assisted me to deliver Basic Wildfire Awareness training to 62 participants across the Barkly Fire Management Zone over 9 days in 4 locations. We visited Avon Downs, Lake Nash crossed into Qld to deliver training to staff from Rocklands Station which crosses the NT /Qld border then after returning to Tennant Creek we went to Anthony Lagoon Station and back to Tennant Creek.



Photo: The crew at Anthony Lagoon



Photo: Uluru Bound

Following the Barkly run I drove to the Alice and flew back to Darwin for a week before returning to Alice for more training.

Locky Fife from our Alice Springs office assisted me to deliver the training in the Alice Springs Fire Management Zone where we delivered training to 71 participants over 12 days. This included Fire Fighting 1 training for Bushfires NT and NTES Volunteers, Parks & Wildlife staff, Tjuwanpa Women's rangers over 4 courses and Basic Wildfire Awareness to Station and outstation staff, Police and community members over 3 courses. We travelled from Alice Springs to Uluru to Curtin Springs to Alice then out to Papunya and back to Alice Springs for the final course before my return drive to Darwin.



Photo: Group of Trainees in Alice

My sincere thanks goes out to Locky and Justin without whom there would be 133 people who would not have been able to undertake training in the southern parts of the NT.

ENDORSEMENT OF THE SAVANNA REGIONAL BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN



Photo: NT Bushfire Council

The 114th meeting of the NT Bushfire Council took place recently in Alice Springs. The meeting proved to be a good opportunity for the Chair of the Savanna Regional Committee, Alice Beilby, to endorse the first Regional Bushfire Management Plan under the 2016 Bushfires Management Act.

The Savanna Regional Bushfire Management Plan identifies risks associated with bushfire in the region. Significant time was spent in redefining the risks and making them more relatable. Appropriate treatments have also identified to ensure that each risk is managed at the appropriate scale.

The Plan was developed by Bushfires NT in particular Senior Planning Officer, Mark Gardener, and Senior Regional Fire Control Officer, Steele Davies, in consultation with the Savanna Regional Committee and key stakeholders in the region.

Publication is available at:

denr.nt.gov.au/land-resource-management/bushfire-information-and-management/



Photo: Chair of the Savanna Regional Committee, Alice Beilby, with Executive Director Bushfires NT, Collene Bremner, and Chair of the NT Bushfire Council, Liz Bird.



TENNANT CREEK THANK YOU



Jemena thanks Bushfires NT in Tennant Creek

Jemena recently took time out to meet with Bushfires NT in Tennant Creek. Northern Gas Pipeline Project Director Jonathan Spink thanked volunteer firefighters and staff for their efforts on the Project to date, which included preparing and burning off at both the pipe yard and the Phillip Creek Compressor Station site.

The work with Jemena also provided valuable training opportunities for volunteer firefighters, including for a number of new recruits. In recognition of the local unit's work, Jemena has provided a financial and in-kind donation.

Jemena's Phil Noble has been a volunteer for many years while Sean Chipman has recently joined the unit.



NGP Project Director Jonathan Spink with Bushfires NT volunteer firefighters in Tennant Creek last week.

NGP Project milestone: 2017 pipe requirements completed ahead of schedule

This year, 21,814 lengths of pipe (403km) have been safely loaded, transported, and unloaded to Jemena's Northern Gas Pipeline Project, achieving a construction milestone.

In Queensland, 7,625 lengths of pipe were safely moved from the pipe yard near Tennant Creek, in the NT, to Spiecapag's right of way (ROW) between Camooweal and Mount Isa.

The pipe transportation used 153 double road trains.

Meanwhile in the NT, 14,189 lengths of pipe (262km) have been safely delivered to McConnell Dowell's ROW using 309 double road trains. Transporting pipe is a major logistical effort for Jemena's contractors requiring a large team working together to load, transport

and unload the pipe, along the ROW ahead of welding.

Pipe is loaded and unloaded using the latest technology – a vacuum lift attached to an excavator. This allows pipes to be safely lifted from the stockpile to road trains and off again without cranes.

This year's pipe deliveries have been completed ahead of time.

Pipe transportation has ceased for the wet season break.

Load out and haulage for the remainder of McConnell Dowell's NT and QLD section of pipeline will resume early next year.

Jemena would like to thank each and every person involved for their efforts in the transportation and loading of our line pipe.



Questions?

If you have any questions about the project we are happy to meet with you to discuss them.

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