



August 2018

HOT TOPICS

Celebrating our network

WE INVITE YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2018 BUSHFIRES NT CENSUS

Bushfires NT has received funding through the NT Disaster Resilience Fund to develop a three year Volunteer Strategy and Implementation Plan. The project will investigate options to address multiple areas of our volunteer programs, including volunteer recruitment, retention, training, leadership and succession planning.

Over the coming months, we will consult Bushfires NT volunteers at a number of stages to ensure we have a comprehensive understanding of the key issues affecting volunteer programs. The information you provide will allow us to set priorities for the Strategy. The first stage of this process is to conduct a census of all brigade members within the Bushfires NT volunteer network.

The census has been developed in consultation with experts from Charles Darwin University, Deakin University and Volunteering NT. We request that all brigade members complete the census to capture the appropriate baseline data used to measure progress post-implementation of the Strategy. This information will also allow us to develop a clear profile of the 'average volunteer' that currently exists within a Volunteer Bushfire Brigade.

A paper-based approach has been recommended as the best format to conduct the census as it provides everybody the same time to appropriately answer all questions and doesn't exclude volunteer members with limited/no internet access.

The census will be conducted over the coming weeks, so keep an eye-out for your opportunity to take part.

If you have any questions regarding how we plan to use this information, please contact 8922 0844.

AROUND LABASHEEDA



The Labasheeda Park Volunteer Bushfire Brigade (LPVBB) has spent many years and countless hours planning for the sustainable future of their brigade. The brigade has been in the process of securing land and development approvals for a new HQ facility. The facility will allow the brigade to house their vehicles and equipment in a purpose built shed. It will also provide a community space for the training and development of members and a central location for management meetings and fire management activities. Their determination has been tremendous and a true reminder of the generous community spirit that exists. BFNT wishes LPVBB all the best with their final journey and we can't wait to see the final result.

You are almost there!

AROUND LABASHEEDA CONT...

MR LICENCES FOR LABASHEEDA PARK VOLLIES



LPVBB were recently successful with their application for a Community Benefit Grant thanks to the Northern Territory Government.

The funds were used for volunteers to obtain Medium Rigid drivers' licenses for their new Medium Attack truck, LP2. More volunteer members will now be able to drive the vehicle and assist their local community.

MERITORIOUS SERVICE

A BFNT Volunteers Long & Meritorious Service medal was proudly presented to Peter Bhana, who has been with LPVBB since the beginning and Deputy for over 15 years. Peter has many stories to tell of his time with the brigade and adventures with Captain Dave Joyce.

Thank you Peter for your generosity and time!



L - R: Peter Bhana (Deputy Captain), Collene Bremner (ED Bushfires NT), Dave Joyce (Captain)

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to Jason Clulow and Allan Reardon. Both members bring different skills sets and experiences to the brigade and will no doubt have lots of fun learning all the tricks of the trade under Captain Dave Joyce and Deputy Peter Bhana.



L - R: Jason Clulow and Allan Reardon

WORLD FIRE FIGHTERS' DAY

The Centralian Advocate visited Bushfires NT in Alice Springs during April to do a photo shoot for World Fire Fighter Day on May 4, 2018. Joshua Fischer, Senior Fire Control Officer in Alice Springs, provided an interview on fire management, the activities and functions of Bushfires NT and the volunteer network.



Alice Springs Volunteers behind the scenes

REGIONAL BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Bushfires NT recently released two bushfire management plans for the Arnhem and Vernon Arafura regions. Each plan was developed by Bushfires NT in collaboration with the respective Regional Bushfires Committees.



The purpose of the plans is to support community wide fire management in line with the Bushfires Management Act 2016. The central part of the Plans is a transparent evaluation of regional scale risk events, an evaluation of existing controls and possible treatment actions to reduce the highest level risks. One risk identified in both plans is increased fuel loads due to the spread of gamba grass. Bushfires NT will take a lead role to help fire managers comply with the *Bushfires Management Act*.

Go to www.nt.gov.au/bushfires for more information about Bushfires NT and to download a copy of the management plans.

MERITORIOUS SERVICE



Bushfires NT would like to acknowledge both Reece Debney and Josh Clarke of the Alice Springs Volunteer Bushfire Brigade for their long and meritorious volunteer service. Reece and Josh are two very active volunteers of the Alice Springs region and two of 16 nominations for 2018. Bushfires NT are very fortunate and grateful for their continued dedication, passion and commitment to their local community and support to the Bushfires NT network. Thank you!



NEW FACEBOOK PAGE FOR ACACIA

Acacia Hills Volunteer Bushfire Brigade (AHVBB) has a new Facebook page. In a matter of weeks the brigade has managed to attract many followers so, if you haven't already, get onto Facebook and check it out!

If your brigade has a post you would like Bushfires NT to share, please contact Bushfires.NT@nt.gov.au

GAMBA RISK

A recent seminar titled Responsibility, criticism, and evidence: Making and defending your risk mitigation decisions was presented in Darwin recently by Dr Jessica Weir from Western Sydney University and Dr Timothy Neale from Deakin University.

Jessica and Tim each have extensive research experience in related areas. The seminar focused on the Gamba risk in the Greater Darwin area, but also reported on similarities and differences with practitioners from two interstate case studies. Jessica and Tim collected the anonymous, candid perspectives of natural hazard responders whose decision making is regularly on the receiving end of criticism from the media and public inquiries.

Over four years the researchers undertook three case studies with responders to examine how they do this, and to analyse the strategies they have developed to help make better and less stressful decisions. The seminar provided an interesting insight into how we understand 'evidence' in natural hazard risk mitigation, and what that means for decision makers who deal with Gamba risk in the Darwin rural area.

The presentation was attended by representatives from NTFRS, Bushfires NT, NT Parks and Wildlife Commission, Department of the Chief Minister, Weeds Management Branch and other agencies.



L – R Timothy Neale (Deakin University), Jessica K. Weir (Western Sydney University), Mark Charteris (Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service), and Mark Gardener (Bushfires NT).

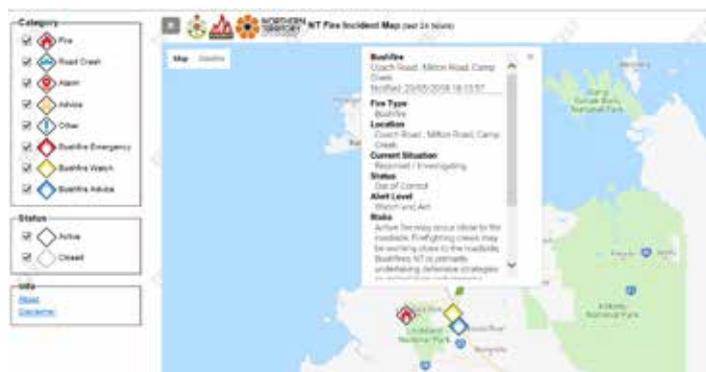
NT FIRE INCIDENT MAP

Bushfires NT and the NT Police Fire and Emergency Services have joined forces to improve the availability of public information about wildfire incidents across the Territory. We can now publish fire incident information online on the NT Fire Incident Map. The map can show the current situation and threat level, as well as providing further advice and information for the public to allow them to make informed decisions.

The image (above) is an example of a recent wildfire incident on Kentish Road in the Livingstone area on July 21. As the fire evolved throughout the afternoon, the information on the map was updated using the new Bushfires Emergency Management System.

Bushfires NT will continue to develop this capability and we are working to include information about planned burns in the near future.

This NT Fire Incident Map is accessible from computers, tablets and smart phones at <http://www.pfes.nt.gov.au/incidentmap/index.html>



MARRAKAI (BEATRICE HILL) VBB CONTINUE TO KICK GOALS

This year, the Marrakai VBB have made a great deal of progress in developing the brigade. Here is an update from brigade Captain, Ralph Dein.

1. We have updated our CCTV security around the compound.
2. Upgraded the security lighting outside the buildings.
3. Installed new lighting inside the shed.
4. The overhead tank quick fill has been completed.
5. All our vehicles are mechanically sound.
6. The insulating and lining of the fire shed was completed as of 06.06.18.
7. The floor of the fire shed has been coated with long lasting industrial floor coat.
8. A remote operated (from inside the vehicle) spray device has been fitted to the left-hand side one of our grass fire units (GFU's). This was so successful that they will be fitted to both sides of all GFU's.
9. Discussions have commenced as to the replacement of the administration donga with a new building and ablutions block. This project will no doubt be a couple of years in the making as a plan has to be decided upon and applications for grants to cover costs submitted.
10. The Committee has decided to implement an honour board to recognise and honour those members who have and/or still actively contributing to the brigade and pay tribute to local community members and families who have generously donated land, time and determination towards the progression of the brigade



Overhead tank with automatic from the bore that kicks in when the tank gets ½ empty.



Deputy Captain Jed Field was the first to fill a tank using the quick fill. While not yet timed to fill 3000 litres, it takes 1 minute and 45 seconds to fill a Grass Fire Unit. It is estimated that to fill the tanker and trailer will take less than 10 minutes which is a far call from the 40+ it used to take using the bore alone.



Insulating and lining the Brigades fire shed has now finished. After last year being painted with roof seal this will make a huge difference to the inside temperature.



Spray device fitted to the front, left-hand side of a grass fire units giving a 5m spray across the front. This device can be operated from inside the vehicle with a flick of a switch. It was tested and found to be so successful that all GFU will be fitted with these devices on both the passenger and driver's side of the vehicles.



Whilst it may use more water we believe it will be a very useful tool to combat grass fires.

TENNANT CREEK A HIT WITH THE STARS GIRLS



The Stars Foundation program's purpose is to improve the education and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women. The Stars program provides full-time mentors for young women at the Tennant Creek High School and addresses the different socialization, community expectations and life experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women, as well as their particular needs and challenges.

A recent activity gave girls an opportunity to learn about the wonderful job the TCVBB volunteers do to protect the community. There were 11 girls in total in attendance, ranging from Year 7 through to Year 12 students.



Photo of Fire Management Officer Justin Hankinson and Tennant Creek Volunteer Kev Stout at the 2018 Brunette Races. Thank you to Kev for volunteering his time for the duration of the event. Very much appreciated!



To receive Volunteering NT fortnightly E-Newsletter, V News and keep up to date with the latest news go to <https://www.volunteeringnt.org.au/about/subscribe-newsletters> and register your details.

It's a great read with plenty of free information and opportunities not to be missed.



WELCOME TO MATTHEW

BFNT would like to welcome Matthew Worthington who joined the BFNT team on Monday July 23, 2018 as a Temporary Operational Support Officer located in Batchelor.

Matthew will be with BFNT for a six week period and brings with him 5 years' of experience as a local volunteer with the Acacia Volunteer Bushfire Brigade. He is very much looking forward to the opportunity, in particular experiencing fire management from the other side.



DOUGLAS DALY TRAINING FACILITY

In 2017, the Douglas Daly Volunteer Bushfire Brigade (DDVBB) was successful in obtaining a Northern Territory Natural Disaster Resilience Program Grant for \$75,000 to build a Training / Meeting Facility at the Brigade Headquarters in the Douglas-Daly, NT.

This project was to extend the existing infrastructure, which had only catered for vehicle housing, by extending the undercover area to accommodate a training / meeting area. A small 12 volt solar system was insitu and this needed to be upgraded to enable power for lighting and power outlets for electronic equipment needed for training purposes. Power outlets were also required for accessory items needed during training and meetings such as small fridges, kettles and fans. As there was not a toilet facility at the headquarters a toilet was an essential part of this project.

The project was strongly supported by Bushfires NT, with Ken Baulch, Director of Policy and Planning, stating that “the brigade provides a crucial fire management service within the Douglas Daly area, resulting in improved community safety and supporting a stronger environment for investment in local industry.”

He went on to say that “the proposed upgrade will improve the effectiveness of training by providing a comfortable and dedicated training environment. There was a real likelihood that this will improve volunteer recruitment and retention by providing a much improved ‘first impression’ of volunteering for new recruits and trainees.”

The project has nearly come to completion after some hurdles through the planning and building stage that resulted from the late commencement of the project, which was then hampered by a typical wet season and problems associated with road weight limits on the local roads. Once the building works commenced the new area was built fairly quickly and the final part of the project (the solar works) is almost complete but was efficient enough to supply great lighting for the facility opening BBQ on June 16. Alas the Level 1 training, which was due to be held that weekend, did have to have the venue changed as the electrical was not completely finished in time for this but the next training will be held in the new facility.

The total cost of this project was around \$115,000 with the brigade, brigade volunteers and the builders contributing with the extra needed to cover what the grant did not. The Douglas Daly Volunteer Bushfire Brigade would like to thank the construction crews:

Monsoon Pastoral, Gold Medal Services and Eco-Energy; the brigade volunteers and local businesses: Top End Turf; Douglas Daly Research Farm; and RNT Business Solutions for their help and in-kind support for this project.



DDVBB Volunteers and BFNT staff at the official opening on June 16, 2018.



Dan Thomson (DDVBB Captain) & Mike Farrell (Eco-Energy) enjoying the night.

ALICE SPRINGS AT IT AGAIN

Once again this year the Alice Springs Volunteer Bushfire Brigade braved the dust and headed out to assist with the Finke Desert Race.

As always the three-day adventure was full of action and excitement as our volunteers patrolled the Fire Protection Zone to ensure spectators were being safe with their campfires.

On day one of the race (Alice to Finke), Race Control asked members to attend a buggy that had caught fire around the 70km mark of the race. Due to the distance away and the dust on the road, by the time we arrived the vehicle was mostly extinguished and the damage had already been done.... Then came the bikes.....

Around the 10km mark, the buggies had dug a hole perfectly suited for the front wheels of a motorcycle. This meant that in a short space of time no less than 10 riders had fallen off their bikes. The members of the ASVBB were on hand to assist St John Ambulance to pick up the broken and man the flags to ensure that no other riders were injured. At the culmination of the carnage around five riders were transported to hospital with broken bones or other injuries that prevented them from continuing in the race.

Thankfully on day two of the race, we were not as busy and many of us got to view the race. Towards the end of the afternoon some of our members assisted a bike rider to remove his flat tyre so that he could continue in the race on his rim - to our delight he finished the race.

A big thanks must go to the spectators of this year's race who were very well behaved with their campfires this year, with the brigade attending only one fire that had already been extinguished by a sweep vehicle. Most of the spectators were also well behaved with their fireworks, with the brigade only having to remind three groups of campers of their obligations with fireworks.

The biggest thanks needs to go to all of the volunteers who give up their weekends time and again to allow the brigade to be involved in such a great event for Central Australia - plans are underway for 2019 already - and they are BIG plans!

Ben Balmer, Captain ASVBB



RECENT FIRE ACTIVITY AROUND BATCHELOR AND ADELAIDE RIVER

Photos from a recent fire near Lake Bennett which required considerable effort from both staff and Batchelor, Adelaide River and Tortilla volunteers to contain. At one stage, the fire front was 12.1km long.



BERRY SPRINGS VBB TO BENEFIT FROM CBF

The committee of the Berry Springs Volunteer Bushfire brigade is proud to announce their success in applying for a major Community Benefit Fund grant to build a new headquarters on their existing site. The grant is worth \$200,000, and the brigade looks forward to the work ahead in progressing the project over the next few months.

Well done Berry Springs!

For more information on the CBF grant program visit <https://nt.gov.au/community/community-grants-and-volunteers/small-and-major-community-grants>

INCIDENT CONTROLLER LEVEL 2



Bushfires NT staff recently had the opportunity to participate in the Incident Controller Level 2 training program recognised as a part of Australian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS).

The training provided participants with the opportunity to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to fulfil the role and responsibilities of the Incident Controller during a Level 2 incident. Participants gained the skills and attributes to:

- establish control of an incident
- conduct an assessment of the incident
- establish and maintain a control structure
- develop an Incident Action Plan
- implement an Incident Action Plan
- maintain control of an incident
- oversee and manage a Level 2 incident
- conclude incident activities, and
- manage post incident operations.

Well done to all who participated.

GENERIC FIREBREAK & COMPLIANCE EMAIL

For all firebreak and compliance enquiries please use:
BushfiresNT.Compliance@nt.gov.au

opinion

Volunteering for your community is vital

JFK made famous: "It's not what your country can do for you, it's what you can do for your country."

This wisdom resonates through all highly functional organisations and communities essentially the mantra for a healthy and productive society.

At a local level such wisdom is translated into, what can I do for my community, not what can I get out of it?

The Northern Territory Emergency Services, Tennant Creek Volunteer Unit aspires to the organisational ethos of, "ordinary people doing extraordinary things," that encompasses important community values for supporting and looking after others.

Their recent awards ceremony recognised and celebrated two local NTES Tennant Creek Volunteer Unit officers, Ngaire Donald and Keven Stout as highly trained and committed members demonstrating long standing volunteering with five year's service.

NTES Regional Manager Southern Command, Nicholas Cowham travelled from Alice Springs to join with unit colleagues, family and friends in acknowledging and recognising the extraordinary community service provided by Ngaire and Keven.

Reflecting on the Tennant Creek Volunteer Unit serving Tennant Creek and the Barkly Region for over 40 years testifies to the courage, determination and tenacity of local volunteers training and serving in the field over generations.

Les A. Liddell headlines the local NTES Tennant Creek Volunteer Unit Roll of Honour as Civil Defence Coordinator in Tennant Creek during the evacuation of Darwin after Cyclone Tracy destroyed the city on Christmas Eve 1974.

The Tennant Creek community's legendary title, 'town with a heart of gold' depicts the incredible logistical support and



GERRY MCCARTHY
Member for Barkly

generosity provided to Cyclone Tracy refugees fleeing the devastation and it's great to witness such fine volunteering present today in the NTES – TCVU.

Ngaire and Keven also provide valuable community support as local NT Bushfire volunteers putting themselves on the frontline caring for and protecting our town, Aboriginal lands and surrounding pastoral estate.

The NTES medal presentation ceremony highlighted outstanding service by unit members however ironically also underlined a plethora of community organisations and service clubs desperately needing volunteers.

It's apparent across the country that community volunteering is waning with numbers at an all-time low risking critical front line community safety and services that people depend on in times of adversity requiring search, rescue and recovery.

The community looks to the NTES for care and protection and the NTES Tennant Creek Unit looks to the community for volunteers.

If you would like more information on professional training and skill development in survival, search and rescue on country operating the latest equipment contact a Tennant Creek Volunteer Unit member or attend their weekly Tuesday evening meetings.

Tennant Creek offers great opportunities including exciting community volunteering as a member of the Northern Territory Emergency Services.



SHOW TIME



As July came to an end, so too did another Show Circuit for Bushfires NT, and just like the rides on offer, each show brought a lot of highs and lows (along with the occasional hysterical scream). Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine shows all came and went so quickly, there seemed hardly the time to wash the smell of 'nutritious' dagwood dogs and fairy floss from our clothes.

This year's show circuit saw Bushfires NT 'showing-off' the 3D Fire Simulation developed by the Darwin Centre for Bushfires Research. It proved a huge hit with the punters, and allowed Bushfires NT to clearly demonstrate bushfire safety information.

First stop was the Alice where the Alice Springs Volunteer Bushfire Brigade stole the show. Their display (flashing lights and all) attracted huge crowds, and generated a lot of interest with potential volunteers. Well done Alice!

Tennant Creek saw two locations for community members to ask questions and learn about bushfire safety, allowing Bushfires NT and the Tennant Creek Volunteer Bushfire Brigade to take full advantage of their opportunity to speak with the community.

The Bushfires NT stall at Katherine was a little quieter than usual but this gave us the opportunity to spend more time with punters, providing information about firebreaks, weed management and fire safety. Jan Murphy (Murph) from the Katherine Volunteer Bushfire Brigade was the lucky winner of a weed spray pack as part of a competition run by the Weeds Branch of the Department. Well done Murph!

All up Bushfires NT had lots of fun and would like to thank all those who helped make the 2018 show circuit another success. THANK YOU.



Jan Murphy of KVBB a deserving winner.

COLOUR THE NIGHT

This photo showing off the colours of a fire at night was taken by Fire Management Officer Michael Carter from a fire along Dorat Road in the Top End on June 27, 2018. Spectacular!

If you have any photos you would like to share please email us. Bushfires NT would love to see them.



AIR TRAINING



In June, Bushfires NT arranged for the SA Country Fire Service to assist in the development of a plan to identify and assess Bushfires NT aerial training and compliance against national standards. A Bushfires Aerial Firefighting and Safety Course was conducted focussing on airmanship, crew resource management, airspace management, communications and aerial firefighting principals.

The course was attended by a number of Bushfires NT and NT Fire and Rescue members who were assessed to ascertain their current competencies against the national assessment tools for Air Observers and Air Attack Supervisors. Participants also received training and assessment to achieve the National Unit of Competency 'Work Safely Around Aircraft', a core unit of the national course in air observation.

This course was the beginning of Bushfires NT commitment to grow this capability for the Territory.

EXERCISE INCENDIUM

On Wednesday June 20, Bushfires NT hosted a joint discussion exercise, 'Exercise Incendium' with NTPFES and the Department of the Chief Minister. The exercise discussed emergency management arrangements at whole of government level in time for 2018 Top End bushfire season.

The scenario was based upon a wildfire that was reported in the Darwin rural area within the Bushfires NT Northern Fire Protection Zone (FPZ). As the incident developed the bushfire began to impact the NTFRS Darwin Emergency Response Area (ERA). The fictional day was a declared 24-hour fire ban period for the Northern FPZ which included the Darwin ERA. Fire weather conditions were predicted to bring a fire danger rating of severe moving into extreme later in the afternoon.

Exercise participants included representatives from DENR, Bushfires NT, Joint Emergency Services Communications Centre, NTFRS, NTES, DIPL, Territory Families, DCM and Power and Water.

Discussion was focused around the whole of government messaging relating to predicted fire weather events, public information and warnings and the development of the Bushfires NT Emergency Plan and its relevance against the Territory Emergency Management Plan and other agency specific plans about bushfire incident escalation.

The day was well received with fantastic discussion from exercise participants that will aid in future developments in emergency management arrangements for the Territory.



TERRITORY WILDLIFE PARK MITIGATION

Territory Wildlife Park project successfully reduces bushfire risk.

The iconic Territory Wildlife Park is annually threatened by wildfires in the late dry season. Phase 1 of a bushfire management planning project resulted in fuel reduction in the highest risk areas on the southern side of the Park. This project is a collaboration between the Territory Wildlife Park, the Berry Springs Nature Park, the Berry Springs Volunteer Bushfire Brigade and Bushfires NT and involved building capacity of eight staff who recently completed their Fire Fighter 1 course. Shael Martin, the Director of Territory Wildlife Park, said “it is a huge relief to get this work done before it becomes too dry.” The next phase of the project is to develop a long-term Fire Management Plan that addresses the complexity of all the Park and neighbour’s values.



The team from Territory Wildlife Park, Berry Springs Nature Park and Bushfire NT after their pre-burn briefing.

NORTHERN AUSTRALIA FIRE MANAGERS FORUM 2018

Fire managers from across the north of Australia were invited to discuss topics of current interest to the tropical savannas at the North Australia Fire Managers (NAFM) forum held in Townsville, Queensland on June 26.

The intended outcome of the meeting was to finalise the annual Bushfire Seasonal Outlook for northern Australia. The Outlook will be publicly distributed as a Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Hazard Note.

The NAFM Forum 2018 was hosted by the Queensland members – Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Department of Environment and Science - with the support of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC.

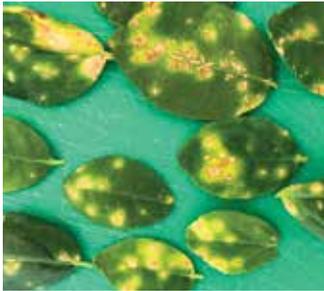
For more information: <https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/events/2018-nafm>





BIOSECURITY ALERT

Citrus canker is a serious disease of citrus



Movement restrictions are now in place to stop the spread of citrus canker in the Northern Territory.

To find out more about this disease and information about current restrictions on moving citrus plants, visit www.dpir.nt.gov.au/citrus-canker

Biosecurity is everyone's responsibility!

If you think you have a plant with citrus canker, call the citrus canker hotline 1800 931 722

www.dpir.nt.gov.au/citrus-canker



NORTHERN TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT



BIOSECURITY ALERT

Citrus canker is a serious disease of citrus

Have you bought or been given a citrus plant in the past 12 months? Let us know!



REPORT YOUR PLANT TODAY

- Call the citrus canker hotline 1800 931 722
- Submit the online form at www.dpir.nt.gov.au/reportcitruscanker

www.dpir.nt.gov.au/citrus-canker



NORTHERN TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT