

# Northern Territory jurisdictional report

## NAFM

Andrew Turner, Mark Ashley, Paul Rubie

Departments of Environment and Natural Resources; Tourism and Culture; and Police, Fire and Emergency Services

3 April 2019

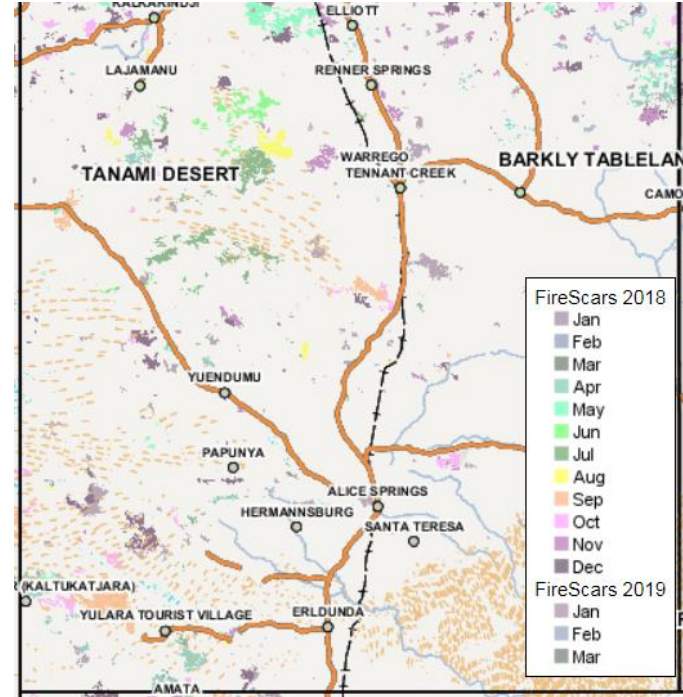
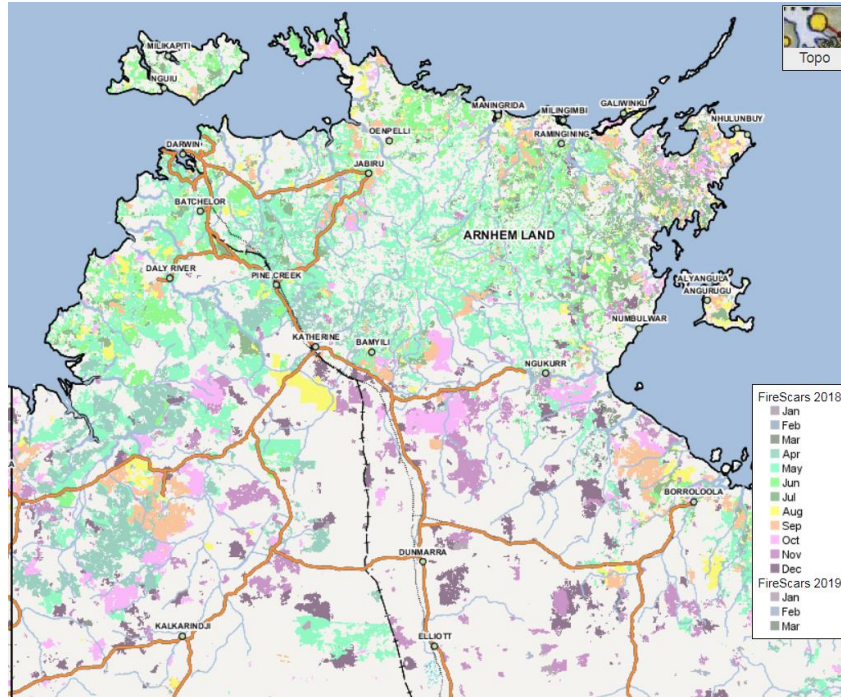


# Overview of this presentation

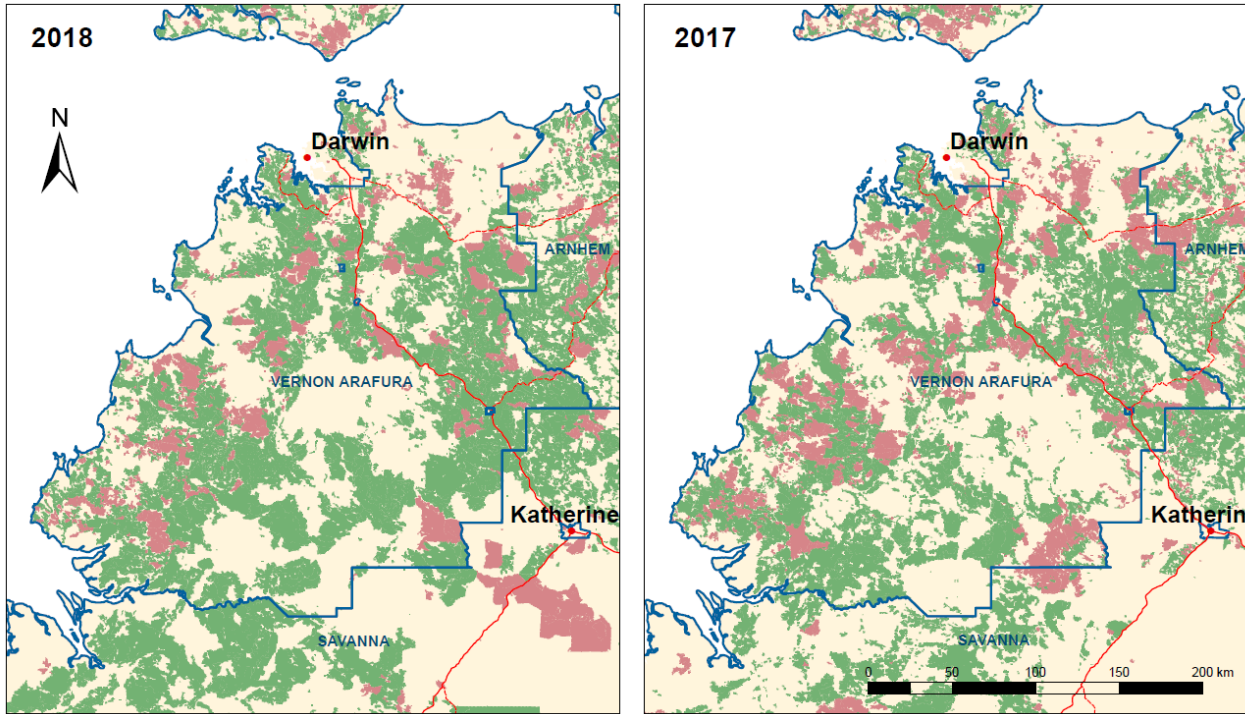
- Last season's NT preparation and actual fire activity and some highlighted key incidents attended by BFNT
- Building organisational capacity
- Identified emerging risks for the NT
- BFNT lessons learnt
- NT Parks and NTFRS reports






# Fire Scars 2018-2019



# 2018 NW Top End Planned Works



## Legend

-  Fire Management Zone
-  Early Burns (Jan - June)
-  Late Burns (July - Oct)

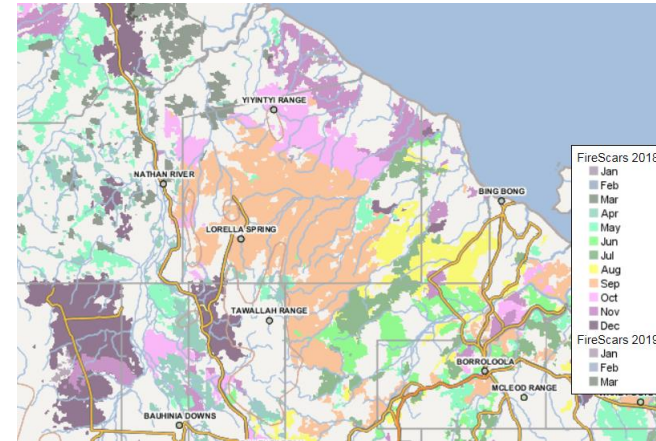
## Comparison of Early and Late Burns in 2018 and 2017

Percentage of Early Burns 2018: 41%	Percentage of Early Burns 2017: 33%
Percentage of Late Burns 2018: 10%	Percentage of Late Burns 2017: 13%

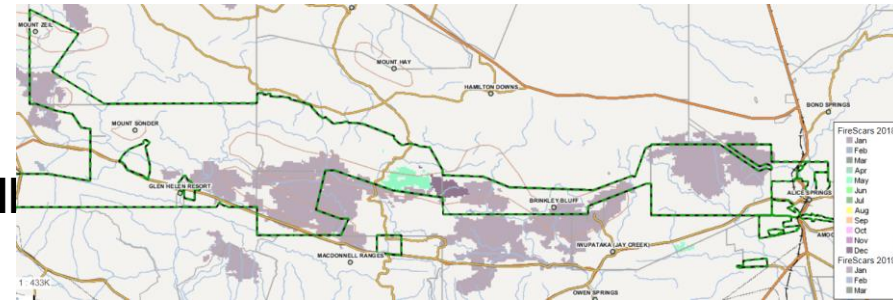


# Key incidents 2018-2019

- **Darwin Rural Area (30+ multiple fires):**  
July 9 and 30 September
- **Gulf (Lorella Springs Station/Limmen Bight):**  
August to November
- **Savanna (Keep River):**  
September to October
- **Central Australia (West MacDonnell):**  
January and February



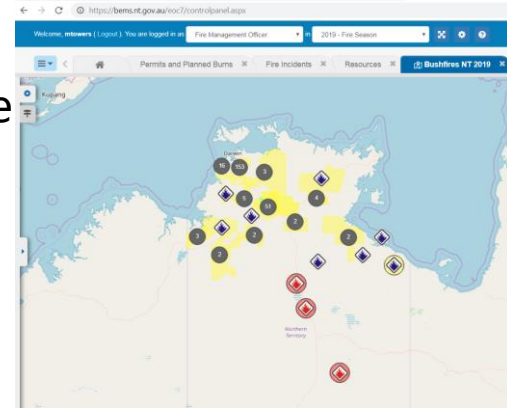
Lorella Springs, Gulf



West MacDonnell Range, Alice Springs

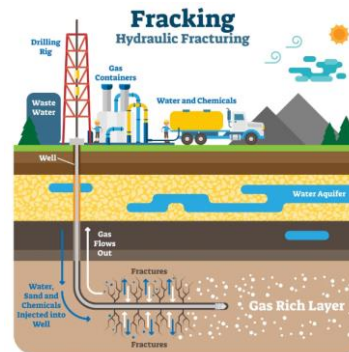
# Building organisational capacity

- **Bushfire Emergency Management System (BEMS)**
- **Improved public messaging**
- **Strengthening partnership:** NTFRS, DIPL (Roads and Vacant Crown Land), NTCA, Land Councils, Department of Defence, Aboriginal Ranger groups, Volunteer Bushfires Brigades, pastoralists.
- **Bushfires NT Volunteer Strategy**
- **Accredited training:** (AIMS functional roles, Enforcement)
- **Monitoring** (first steps)
- **Regional Planning**
- **Vacant Crown Land Fire Management**



# Emerging risks

- Economic downturn impacts on community and govt.
- Gamba Grass expansion (Pew Charitable Trust)
- Continuing rural subdivision
- New Industries (Aquaculture, Fracking)
- Turnover/ constant change



# Lessons learnt

- Our business has relatively little to do with fire, but is absolutely everything to do with people.
- Without considerable analysis, reflection and investment, we risk making the same mistakes over and over.
- As a very small jurisdiction, we can cherry pick and fast track new technologies and knowledge.



# NT Parks

- Experience extreme fire weather in Central Australia during January, and above average fuel loads in MacDonnell Ranges combined to produce significant fire risk and wildfire events.
- Low rainfall in Victoria River District- low fuel risk.
- Below average rainfall in Top End- moderate fuel risk.

# NT Parks

- Organisationally moving from a regional model to a NT wide model divided on operational, commercial and community development, and strategic planning and partnerships.
- Currently reviewing all parts of parks business to develop consistent practices across operational, commercial and community engagement programs.

# NT Parks

- As a part of this we have commenced reviewing our operational bushfire plans and activities across the Territory to achieve better interoperability and collaboration with Bushfires NT and other stakeholders and neighbours.
- Strategically leveraging new infrastructure developments (e.g. new sites/roads/tracks) to better manage fire, and increase public safety outcomes.
- Build on Aboriginal engagement models including carbon farming and aboriginal ranger programs to achieve better environmental and community development outcomes.

# NTFRS

- Significant wildfire activity in bushland around Darwin and Katherine Emergency Response Areas in 2018 (including September fire in Humpty Doo)
- Due to budgetary constraints NTFRS will do limited prescribed burning in 2019 except in areas identified under the MOU with Department of Infrastructure Planning and Logistics (Vacant Crown Land). This will happen in all ERA's identified in MOU Darwin, Katherine, Tennant and Alice and will have a large impact on the ERA's outside the VCL MOU.

# NTFRS

- Moving to model where institutional landholders such as NTG, Councils, Parks NT and Defence do prescribed burning themselves or use *qualified* contractors.
- We will enforce our legislation more and more.
- Enforcement of minimum 4 m firebreak for landholders in Emergency Response Areas is a key strategy for reducing bushfire risk.