



# HOT TOPICS

Celebrating our network

September 2018

## ALICE SPRINGS JUNIOR RANGERS

Alice Springs Volunteer Bushfire Brigade members joined with Bushfires NT staff and Parks and Wildlife rangers to give Junior Rangers from Alice Springs an insight into fire management recently.

The Junior Rangers is an environmental education program for 9-12 year olds that runs after school hours.

About 30 Junior Rangers took part in the 'Fascinating fire' activity at Simpson's Gap which was held over two evenings in September.

During the sessions volunteers and Bushfires staff gave the young rangers an insight into topics which included: What is fire? What are the elements required to make fire?; How is it used in land management?; and how fire is safely used in a national Park.

The young rangers also had the chance to use some of the fire-fighting equipment and learn about the importance of using the correct Personal Protective Equipment.



*Junior Rangers joined Volunteer Bushfire Brigade members at Simpsons Gap for the Fascinating Fire sessions*



*Junior Rangers getting the chance to try out some of the fire fighting equipment used by Volunteers*

## NEWS FROM NT BUSHFIRE VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION

The committee members, Brigade Volunteers and Bushfires NT Executive Director, Director of Operations and Volunteer Program Coordinator met on September 5 to discuss safety and welfare issues raised by volunteers.

The meeting provided a positive platform for all parties to continue their excellent work keeping Territorians safe from the dangers of wildfires.



## THE STARS FOUNDATION PROGRAM

The Tennant Creek Volunteer Bushfire Brigade spent a night with the Stars earlier this year when they hosted a community information event for kids involved in the Stars Foundation.

The Stars Foundation program aims to improve the education and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women.

In Tennant Creek it provides full-time mentors for the young women of 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.

The Stars program endeavours to provide activities throughout the year that interests the students and to give them something enjoyable to do after school.

Some of those activities include community and volunteering opportunities, sports, art, music and dance.

And on a cold night in Tennant Creek earlier this year the STARS came out to play with members of the town's Volunteer Bushfire Brigade.

Brigade captain Ngaire Donald and Deputy Captain Keven Stout hosted a classroom session where they explained the roles and responsibilities of bushfire volunteers and the types of equipment they need and use to keep the community safe from wildfires.

Then it was off into the night where Ngaire and Keven gave the girls some practical demonstrations in the use of some of the fire-fighting equipment and techniques before they took a ride on one of the brigade vehicles.



## IMPLEMENTATION OF BEMS

Volunteers will be at the forefront of the next stage of the rollout of the new Bushfires NT Bushfire Emergency Management System (BEMS).

The final stage of BEMS rollout will allow volunteers to access and use it regardless of whether they are in a mobile phone coverage area or not.

This offline interface stage will be available on pre-configured iPads and provides another tool to help volunteers carry out their duties within their communities.

BEMS commenced development in 2017 and has been designed to digitise and streamline a number of Bushfires NT operational processes.

A soft launch of the system took place in July around the time of the declaration of the Top End Fire Danger period.

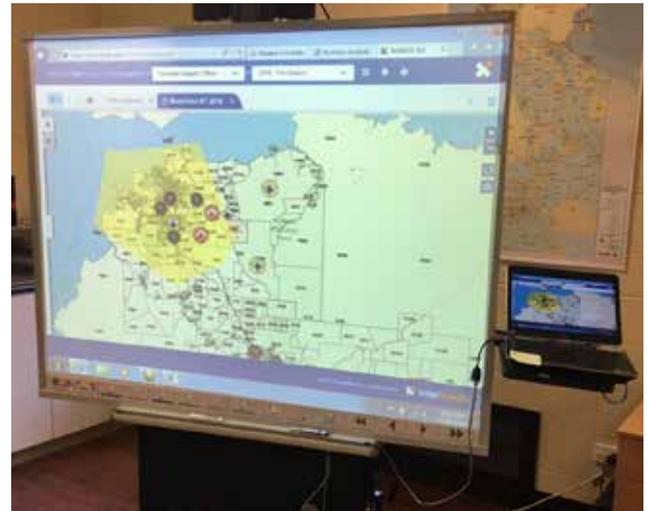
The system has now been rolled out to all BFNT operational staff, including several support staff, and has proven to be a more efficient way to manage key operational processes.

To date, over 40 permits to burn and 21 planned burns have been processed mainly in Central Australia, and over 150 fire incident reports have been compiled.

BEMS has significantly improved Bushfires NT capability to record and share decisions and actions, identify and allocate resources and provide a platform to publish public information.

That public information is pushed out through a variety of channels, including immediate publishing to the NT Fire Incident Map.

This makes sure that we provide timely information and advice to the public which gives them time to take appropriate action to keep themselves and their property safe.



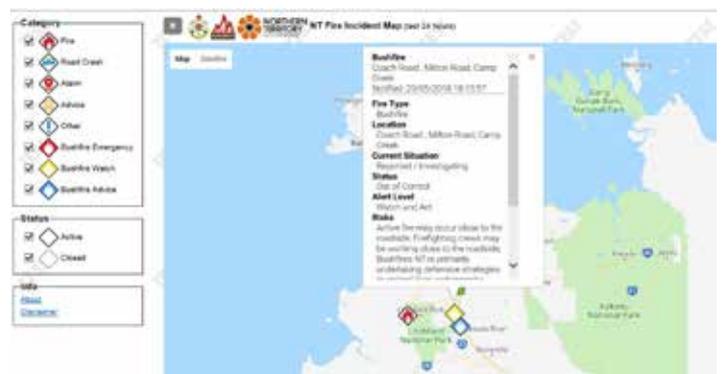
BEMS display on the smartboard at Bushfires NT office in Batchelor displaying fire incidents

### ..... and BEMS is already winning awards

Even though it was only implemented in July this year, Bushfires NT recently won the Australasian Fire & Emergency Authorities Council (AFAC) Knowledge & Innovation Award for the application of BEMS.

BEMS won the award for its ability to share information across the whole organisation.

That “ability” in turn improves situational awareness of staff and volunteers, which increases the agency’s reporting effectiveness and maintains its relevance to Northern Territory legislation, procedures and demographics.



BEMS display on the NT Fire Incident Map with public information



## THE LIVINGSTONE VOLUNTEER BUSHFIRE BRIGADE



The Livingstone Volunteer Bushfire Brigade has sent out a big THANK YOU to the Northern Territory Government after it was successful with its application for a minor grant that meant the Brigade was able to obtain a much needed new mower.

**The Brigade's oldest Active Fire Fighter David Burnip also celebrated a milestone birthday in September. Happy 70th Birthday Dave.**

The Brigade would also like to invite people to get along and support their monthly 8-ball tournament.

There is a fully licenced bar, door prizes and a fantastic meat tray for the winner of the tournament.

The competitions are held on the first Friday of every month at the Livingstone Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade HQ on Livingstone Road.

The new Lawnmower will no doubt make it easier for the Livingstone Brigade Members to keep the grounds around their HQ in the immaculate condition they are known for.

## ELIZABETH VALLEY VOLUNTEER BUSHFIRE BRIGADE

A good news story for the Elizabeth Valley Volunteer Brigade.

Following the disappointment of having their grass fire unit EV2 stolen late last month, the saga finished on a high-note a few days ago (September 26) when great work from NT Police located the GFU in bushland in the rural area.

The vehicle was originally stolen sometime around August 28 from the Elizabeth Valley HQ with all the gear on it, including 2 HH radios.

The brigade's shed was broken into as well! Items taken included BF base radio and power pack, Air compressor, 240 volt extension cords, Gazebo, Eskies, Blower, Toolbox + tools, Electric drill and a couple of lengths of shade cloth. Unfortunately none of those items have been recovered yet.

Justin from JC Electronic Security has very kindly sponsored equipment and labour to update security at the HQ. The Brigade would like to send out a Big Thank You to Justin and crew.

And another big THANKS to the NT Police for finding GFU EV2.

