



MEDIA RELEASE

Bushfires NT Update

Bushfires NT Director Stephen Sutton today praised staff and volunteers for their recent efforts in trying to contain bushfires that have raged across the Top End.

"The fact is that the volunteers saved a lot of homes in the past week," Mr Sutton said.

"Each year volunteers give up their time to save lives, property and the environment.

"Some put in hundreds of hours during the fire season."

Fires in various locations throughout the Territory required Bushfires NT staff and volunteers to work well into the night last Wednesday and Thursday.

Resources including 19 grass fire units, five tankers, three helicopters, two fixed wing aircraft, several loaders, a grader and eight volunteer brigades were committed to Batchelor, Acacia Hills and Tennant Creek regions.

More than 40 people fought fires during the three days.

Intense, fast moving fires at Acacia Hills and Batchelor burnt nearly 40sq km, while fires also raged at Ban Ban Springs and Tennant Creek.

Rural production in the Acacia Hills area will also be affected by the fire which burnt pasture and mango crops.

"The network of bushfire volunteers that has been developed during the past 40 years really stood up well," Mr Sutton said.

"It showed that we can respond to a number of fires at the one time."

President of the Northern Territory Bushfire Volunteer Association Di Tynan has expressed her disappointment with those landholders who had done little to prepare for fires.

"There were quite a few people who had done the right thing and installed breaks, but there were a minority who had let fuel build up, and with the gusty winds we had that made things very dangerous for everyone," Ms Tynan said.

"People had grass growing under the eaves of their houses!"

Bushfires NT urges Territorians to take action to minimise the risk of bushfires.

"All landholders need to take measures to reduce the risk of a bushfire, which means having a fire management plan, ensuring they have fire breaks and removing fuel around buildings," Mr Sutton said.

The minimum standard for fire trails is four metres wide slashed with the slash removed, bare earth or graded, chemically treated or grazed.

"If landholders all do the right thing it makes our job a lot easier and reduces the impact of bushfire on their own lives," Mr Sutton said.

For more information on firebreaks go to www.nt.gov.au/bushfires

Ends

Media Note – For more information contact Steve Sutton on 8922 0832

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