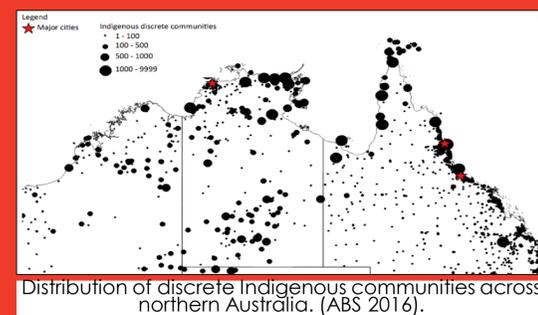




## FINDINGS

# Long term support from **Fire and Emergency Services Agencies** is necessary to develop the relationships required to appropriately engage with **Remote Indigenous Communities**



## Scenario Planning for Remote Community Risk Management in northern Australia

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This program involves collaborations between the Darwin Centre for Bushfire Research (DCBR) at Charles Darwin University (CDU), the North Australia Indigenous Land & Sea Management Alliance Ltd (NAISMA), the Aboriginal Research Practitioners Network (ARPN) at CDU, and regional stakeholders including Fire and Emergency Management agencies, conservation agencies and remote Indigenous communities in the NT, Kimberley and north Queensland.

### Introduction

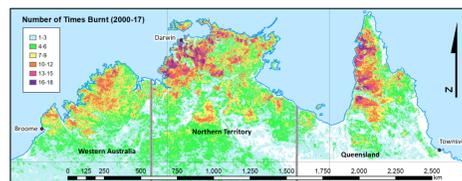
We developed a framework for **Fire & Emergency Services (FES) agencies** to engage with **Remote Indigenous Communities** to improve **FES** delivery.

The **FES** agencies recognise the need to improve the services provided remotely, but also recognise that some jurisdictions (particularly the NT) are not adequately resourced to achieve this.

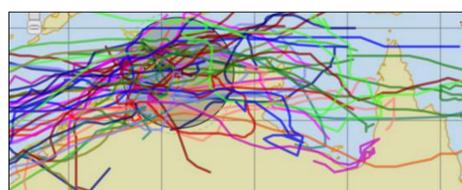
The classic model of volunteering does not suit **Remote**, significantly disadvantaged, **Indigenous Communities**. The expanding **Indigenous Ranger Groups** are a potential means to more appropriately engage with **Remote Indigenous Communities** to build emergency management (EM) capacity, community preparedness, resilience and response capability.

### Methods

1. A suite of case studies, including interviews and workshops with 8 Indigenous Ranger Groups to ascertain their aspirations, willingness and capacity to engage in EM.
2. A full economic assessment to understand the full costs and benefits of effective EM in remote communities under various scenarios.
3. A full accounting of the costs of the most commonly occurring natural hazards and disasters in north Australia.



North Australian Fire frequency, 2000 to 2017 (Derived from north Australia fire information - [www.firenorth.org.au](http://www.firenorth.org.au)).



North Australian Cyclone tracks, 1970 to 2015.



Waanyi and Waanyi Garawa Rangers, Borroloola NT



Community members and researchers, Galiwinku Elcho Island, NT

### Results

A model for **effective engagement and partnership with remote Indigenous communities** can be guided through the following salient points:

- ✘ Long-term agency support is required from trained personnel with appropriate understanding of and consideration for the social, economic and cultural issues.
- ✘ The classic model of volunteerism has limited applicability in remote Indigenous communities for various social, economic and cultural reasons.
- ✘ Support needs to build on foundations of mutual respect.
- ✘ A collaborative model of managing EM in remote communities must be developed in consultation with locals.
- ✘ Requires the implementation of a multi-sector approach, providing cost-effective mitigation and management of natural disasters.
- ✘ EM can be undertaken as part of activities addressing broader landscape and community management.
- ✘ Agencies need to provide patient support, regular, flexible and appropriate training, mentoring and resourcing assistance.
- ✘ Significant efficiencies can be gained through developing contracted, fee-for-service arrangements—especially where agencies have limited or no capacity to deliver required services themselves.

A detailed **assessment of the total costs** (monetary and non-monetary) associated with natural disasters in the NT:

- ✘ Average Annual Total Losses > \$150 million (2010-2019): Monetary losses \$53 million which are typically only considered for policy decision making.
- ✘ Non-monetary losses, estimated at \$103 million/year (accounting mainly for bushfires and cyclones), constitute two-thirds of remaining loss - largely omitted in our current natural disaster-related assessments and policies.
- ✘ Minor, yet frequent, events such as floods, cost >\$7 million/year, are not, but need to be considered in national disaster datasets—AUS-DIS and the Australian EM Knowledge Hub disaster events data (<https://data.gov.au/dataset/ds-dga-26e2ebff-6cd5-4631-9653-18b56526e354/details?q=Disasters>).
- ✘ Effective partnerships with remote communities, and cross-sectoral engagement, especially with the environmental sector, are essential for building resilience to natural disasters across northern Australia.



Above: Attendees at the Leadership Training Course for Indigenous Rangers from Remote Indigenous Communities

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