

CLC RANGER PROGRAM REPORT

Supplement to the CLC Annual Report

2017-18



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North Tanami rangers Anthony Navo Rex, Dione Kelly and Donald Robbo learned from elders Leslie Robertson (deceased) and Jerry Jangala Patrick how to create coolamons and *kurdiji* (shields) from soft *yininti* (bean tree) wood.



FOREWORD



I continue to take pride in the work of rangers on country. This year I was happy to learn that a three-year funding agreement was signed with the Australian government, funding the rangers from 12 communities until 2021, though I would prefer a five-year funding agreement. I also was happy to attend the launch of a new ranger group — the Tjakura Rangers group at Mutitjulu: it's good that Minister Scullion kept his word to fund this group. Of course, there are many more communities hoping to get a ranger group up and running. The CLC is a partner in the 10 Deserts project funded by the BHP Foundation, which is helping traditional owners to kick-start ranger work in those communities. I look forward to seeing those areas develop and get their own ranger groups to help them look after their country.

Keep up the good work.

Francis Kelly
CLC chair

I am pleased to submit the *CLC Ranger Program Report 2017–18* detailing the natural and cultural resource management work of CLC rangers. This report supplements the *CLC Annual Report 2017–18* and highlights the achievements of Aboriginal people in remote communities across our region.

This year, we signed agreements with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) and the Indigenous Land Corporation, securing ranger funding for three years until June 2021. I was very pleased, as this was one year longer than initially promised. However, I am still hoping for longer term agreements to ensure the security and ongoing development of ranger work.

Through our reports to PM&C, and CLC ranger program reports of previous years, everybody is aware that the main work activities of rangers are in land management planning with traditional owners, cultural heritage management, indigenous ecological knowledge transfer, and fire, feral animal, weed, soil and water management. This year, we asked each ranger group to provide a story showcasing one of their projects. Reading these stories is a source of inspiration and pride for me. Rangers are role models for younger generations — be proud of what you do.

David Ross
CLC director

RANGER PROGRAM OVERVIEW 2017–18

In its eighth year of consolidated funding from PM&C's Working on Country program and the Indigenous Land Corporation's (ILC) Real Jobs program, the Central Land Council's (CLC's) 12 ranger groups continued to manage cultural and natural resources on Aboriginal land. Four groups manage indigenous protected areas (IPAs) that make up more than 195,000 square kilometres of the national reserve system. The 12 ranger groups and their areas of operation are listed in table 1 below.

After several years' hiatus, the Anangu Rangers group on Angas Downs recommenced with new enthusiasm and active participation during the second half of 2017. The group revived many dormant projects, such as boundary fencing with neighbouring stations and along the Lasseter Highway, and conducted country trips for women who aspire to ranger employment. These projects enabled several rangers to step up into project management and team leader responsibilities.

As well as the welcome return of Angas Downs' Anangu

Rangers group, a new team joined the CLC's ranger program. The Tjakuṛa Rangers group, based at Muṭitjulu, started work in early 2018.

The CLC's employment model emphasises training and mentoring and provides career pathways, both within the program and on to other employment. The skills and capacities rangers develop are transferrable to other employment and leadership roles.

Of the CLC's 105 rangers, seven were employed fulltime, 66 worked parttime, and 32 were employed as casuals. Twelve coordinators and nine other staff support the ranger groups.

That Aboriginal communities value the ranger program is evident from the large numbers of residents who apply for a limited number of ranger jobs. Community demand for ranger employment and for additional ranger groups is high, and the CLC continues to lobby for funding to expand its program.

RANGER PROGRAM FUNDING

A five-year Working on Country agreement with PM&C came to an end in June 2018. The agreement funded salaries, capital, and operational and administrative resources and supported 45.2 fulltime equivalent (FTE) positions across the North Tanami, Warlpiri, Muru-warinyi Ankkul, Anmatyerr, Tjuwanpa, Anangu Luritjiku and Kaltukatjara ranger groups. New funding under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) for 54.4 FTE for nine ranger groups runs till June 2021.

The ILC Real Jobs (Rangers) program also agreed to fund 22 FTE ranger positions in the Murnkurrumurnkurru, Arltarpilta Inelye and Ltyentye Apurte ranger groups until 2021.

The effectiveness, recruitment and retention of rangers remain heavily dependent on workplace health and safety compliant infrastructure for coordinator housing, ranger offices and workshop facilities. Persistent funding shortfalls continue to leave some groups operating in substandard facilities.

FIGURE 1. CLC RANGER PROGRAM FUNDING, 2017–18

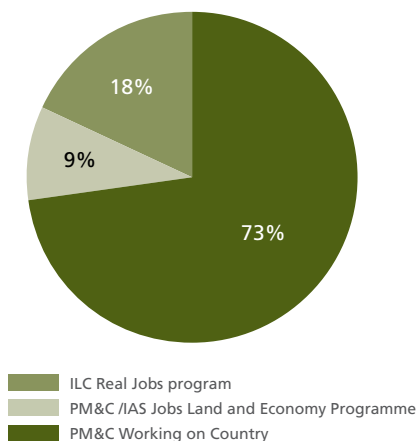


TABLE 1. CLC RANGER GROUPS AND AREAS OF OPERATION

Ranger group	Area of operation
North Tanami Rangers	Lajamanu and Northern Tanami IPA
Warlpiri Rangers	Yuendumu, Nyirrpi, Willowra and Southern Tanami IPA
Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers	Tennant Creek region
Tjuwanpa Rangers	Hermannsburg ALTs and adjoining national parks
Kaltukatjara Rangers	Kaltukatjara (Docke River) and Kaṭiṭi Petermann IPA
Ltyentye Apurte Rangers	Santa Teresa ALT and surrounds
Anmatyerr Rangers	Ahakeye ALT (Ti Tree) and wider Anmatyerr region
Anangu Luritjiku Rangers	Papunya and surrounding Haasts Bluff ALT
Murnkurrumurnkurru Rangers	Daguragu ALT and surrounds
Arltarpilta Inelye Rangers	Harts Range region, Huckitta Station and surrounds
Angas Downs Anangu Rangers	Angas Downs IPA, Imanpa community
Tjakuṛa Rangers	Kaltukatjara (Docke River) and Kaṭiṭi Petermann IPA



Ranger Silas Jampijimpa Ross (left) and Jerry Jangala Patrick visited a sinkhole-erosion hole in a remote section of the north-eastern part of the North Tanami IPA.



The CLC's newest ranger group, Mutitjulu community's Tjakura Rangers with CLC chair Francis Kelly (right).

RANGER PROGRAM – SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

CROSS-BORDER COLLABORATION – 10 DESERTS PROJECT

The CLC is proud to be part of the 10 Deserts project which supports the world's largest connected network of protected areas and indigenous-managed lands. The project area spans the continent's 10 deserts– an area of approximately 2.8 million square kilometres.

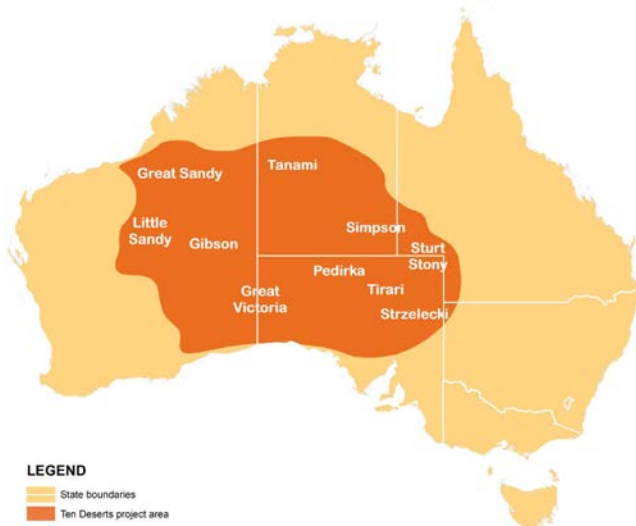
The project aims to increase the area's environmental resilience by developing the capacity of its indigenous land managers to secure long-lasting environmental, cultural and socio-economic outcomes.

The project is enabled by the BHP Foundation's Environmental Resilience Global Signature Program and led by Desert Support Services. It was launched in March 2018 at Old Parliament House in Canberra.



David Ross, Josie Grant and Benji Kenny travelled to Canberra for the 10 Deserts project launch.

FIGURE 2. THE 10 DESERTS PROJECT AREA



Project partners include:

- Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resource Management Board
- Indigenous Desert Alliance
- Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa
- Kimberley Land Council
- Nyangumarta Warrarn Aboriginal Corporation

Regional and international agencies such as the Arid Lands Environment Centre, Pew Charitable Trusts and The Nature Conservancy also support the project. The CLC, a member of the Indigenous Desert Alliance, has helped to design and develop the project. CLC ranger co-ordinator Benjamin Kenny is the deputy chair of the project's steering committee.

The CLC wants the project to create opportunities for traditional owners to undertake ranger work where there are no ranger groups, support the transfer of cultural and ecological knowledge, build on existing fire management capacity, test the viability of a carbon abatement methodology for low rainfall areas and fund camel control work.

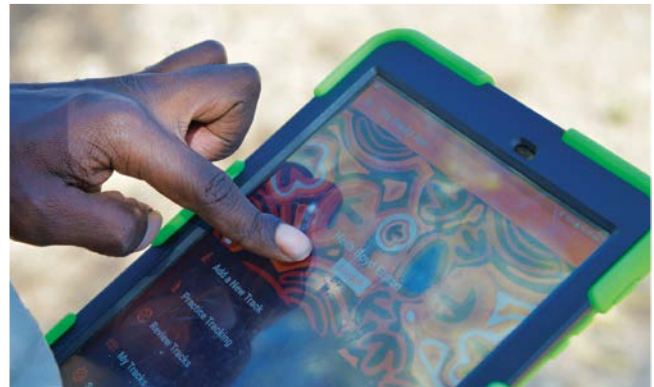
BILBY BLITZ – TRACKS APP SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

This year the ranger program focused on the Bilby Blitz project: baseline surveys to determine the current range of the greater bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*). The project is a series of coordinated bilby surveys conducted by rangers on Aboriginal-managed land in the Northern Territory (NT) and Western Australia (WA). The idea for the project was developed following discussions between Aboriginal rangers and scientists at the Ninu Festival 2016 at Kiwirrkurra. In 2018 rangers and the Threatened Species Commissioner launched the Bilby Blitz at the CLC’s ranger camp. The aim of the surveys is to add to known data on bilby distribution — particularly along the edge of its range and in poorly surveyed areas. It will help determine if the bilby’s range is contracting. The Bilby Blitz will also build on the critical role that Aboriginal people and rangers play in bilby conservation: around 70 per cent of its range is on land managed by Aboriginal people.

The project received Commonwealth funding through the national Landcare program. Along with other activities the project aims to develop a data collection, storage and management system with the use of a mobile phone app (Tracks) as the data collection tool. The Tracks app is a multilingual app designed for easy and accurate data collection in the field. It has been translated into Warlpiri, which is spoken by rangers from the Northern and Southern Tanami IPAs, part of the bilby’s range. It will be also translated into Warumungu spoken in the Tennant Creek area.

Eleven ranger groups from the NT and WA (eight from the CLC) surveyed 249 two-hectare track-plots, resulting in 119 signs of bilbies found in 58 different track-plots. The rangers also detected 44 other species, including cats (in 111 track-plots), foxes (50), dingoes/wild dogs (53), camels (63), donkeys (19), cattle (16) and rabbits (8). They found bilbies mostly on sandplains and areas of laterite with spinifex (*Triodia* spp.) vegetation.

The Bilby Blitz has provided opportunities for elders to visit remote country with rangers and young people, to train them in tracking and to pass on ecological and cultural knowledge. The surveys also enabled traditional owners to visit important sites and conduct protection works.



The CLC rangers used the bilingual Tracks app for the Bilby Blitz.

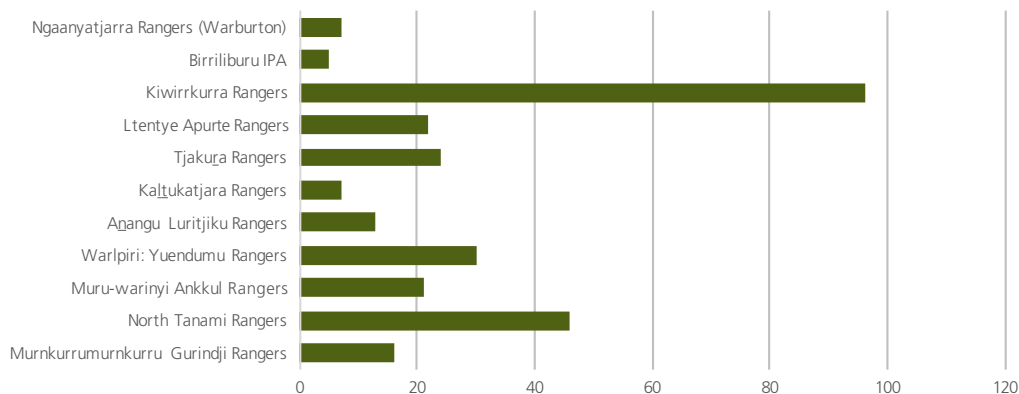


The Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers and elders showed Tennant Creek students how the Tracks app works.



Ranger coordinator Craig LeRossignol and ranger Jeremy Kenny used the Tracks app on the surveys.

FIGURE 3. PARTICIPATING RANGER GROUPS AND NUMBERS OF TRACK-PLOTS



BENEFITS OF RANGER WORK



Ranger work is associated with health benefits: optometrist Jo Murphy checked ranger coordinator Benji Kenny's vision at the 2018 ranger camp at Hamilton Downs.

Aboriginal rangers, their communities and the CLC know the importance and benefits of their work. They also believe that ranger work creates significant social, cultural and economic benefits for the whole central Australian region. In 2017, the CLC commissioned and partnered with two independent research groups to test the scientific evidence for these claims.

One research partner, from the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population, undertook an epidemiological study of rangers. They developed a survey in partnership with CLC staff that was later used to collect data from rangers and a comparison group of Aboriginal people from central Australia. The research found that rangers reported greater life satisfaction and family wellbeing than non-rangers. The findings demonstrate that ranger work is associated with positive health and wellbeing outcomes. CLC rangers also participated in follow-up discussions of the research findings with researchers and jointly presented at an Australian National University seminar in Canberra with members of the research team.

In addition to the epidemiological study, two independent anthropologists with extensive experience in Central Australia qualitatively evaluated the program's progress and opportunities for improvement with CLC rangers. They used participatory research methods that enabled broad participation from rangers, including those less confident in literacy and numeracy.

In order of importance, the rangers identified the following benefits:

1. Opportunities for learning and teaching on country
2. Relationships, connections and networking
3. Access to country, looking after sites with traditional owners
4. Being role models and working for family and community
5. Health and wellbeing benefits
6. Bushfood and environmental benefits
7. Language learning
8. Maintenance of songlines
9. Financial benefits.

WORKING ON THE NATIONAL RECOVERY PLAN FOR THE GREATER BILBY – INDIGENOUS SUBCOMMITTEE

In 2018 the CLC helped to develop the Greater Bilby Recovery Plan. The national bilby recovery team established an indigenous subcommittee, a first for a national threatened species recovery team. Rangers and traditional owners see this as a positive step towards gaining recognition and formal involvement in the conservation of a species which they have managed for thousands of years and which is now threatened. Aboriginal people manage the majority of the area where the bilby (and other threatened species) occurs, have an in-depth knowledge of its habitat, and therefore are critical to its survival.

Through involvement in the plan's indigenous subcommittee, CLC rangers appreciated the opportunity for professional development, and the chance to link with other Aboriginal rangers and to gain greater knowledge of the bilby and the issues around its survival.



The inaugural meeting of the bilby recovery team's indigenous subcommittee: Albert Wigger (KLC), Zynal Cox (KLC), Thalie Partridge (CLC), Tim Collins (AusGov), Jessica Chapman (WWF, Kimberley), Rita Cutter (Birriliburu IPA), Feach (Richard) Moyle (CLC) (photo: Vanessa Westcott, Bush Heritage).



National bilby recovery team: Back row (from second left): Leah Kemp, Rick Southgate, Thalie Partridge (with scarf), Feach (Richard) Moyle, Kevin Bradley, Simon Nally, Scott Pullybank, Simon Ward, Pete Copley, David Shevill and Vanessa Westcott; front row: Jodie Buchecker, Rachel Paltridge, Rita Wiluna, Karl Newport, Manda Page, Albert Wigger, Tim Mcgrath, Jessica Chapman and Zynal Cox.

Ranger portrait: Becoming a ranger opened my eyes



Hi, my name is Cleveland Kantawara from Ntaria (Hermannsburg), which is 120 kilometres west of Alice Springs. My ranger story doesn't really start with me wanting to be a ranger. It starts with me just being bored around the community and just stumbling across work with the rangers.

One day I went over to the ranger office, just visiting, and found out that the crew was getting ready to go out on a protection burn along the Owen Springs boundary, burning

in firebreaks. So I tagged along for a few days and that was my first experience working with the rangers.

The next would be a couple of years later when we went on a fencing job to protect a sacred site. We erected a fence to keep the larger feral animals out of a very significant site, to keep it from being damaged, for the traditional owners of the area.

Now, the next time, I was *really* looking for work, because I was not enjoying my job at the time, which was a night patrol officer in Ntaria. I needed a change in jobs and remembered that the Tjuwanpa Rangers group were doing some good stuff. So the following week I updated my resume and went to find the coordinator of the ranger group to hand it in.

The next week the coordinator contacted me and said that there was one position open, but it was only parttime. I jumped on it immediately because I knew that ranger jobs are in high demand in every community where a ranger group is based. It is very hard even just to get a parttime position. This is still the case today because everyone wants to be a ranger, even the little ones in school say that when they grow up they want to become a ranger.

As soon as my employment was confirmed, I laced up my boots and rolled my swag for my first proper camping trip as a Tjuwanpa ranger. We supported a traditional owner's country visit to old Tempe Downs Station and a water place not too far away from Illarrady Spring. Since that first trip I was hooked. That week of camping, even though I was being tossed around the back of the troopie for most of the week, was some of the best times I have had — just bonding and getting to know each other. I was a new member of the crew but they made me feel very welcome.

The longer I worked the more my eyes were being opened to the problems and the threats that we faced, not only as rangers, but also as traditional owners. Threats like weeds getting into

waterways and blocking up freshwater springs and taking over permanent waterholes, and problems like erosion, washing away roads into homelands and sacred sites. Before, I didn't really notice the small things like that.

About six months into my employment I decided to dedicate myself to the care of land and the ranger program. I started showing a lot more interest in what we could do as a ranger group to make sure that the problems and the threats were taken care of, and what we could fix or at least lower the impact of on country.

After a while an opportunity came up for me to become acting leading ranger, which quickly led into a fulltime leading ranger position. I learned to use the email system and to report on the jobs at the time. I filled in for the coordinator if he was away which gave me good experience to maybe one day run my own ranger team. While all this was going on, I was studying certificates I to III in conservation and land management, and doing training in between.

Now I am set on finishing certificate IV and, if all goes well, maybe a Batchelor Institute degree. I plan to improve the ranger program and make a difference to country that needs our help. Last year I decided I wanted to step up the ranks of the ranger program. I received an email about a job with another ranger group. Me and one other ranger would be filling in for the coordinator and running the team by coordinating jobs on the work plan, reporting and making sure the rangers were coming to work and jobs were getting done.

Right about then I heard about a ranger support officer position opening up in the north of the CLC region. I applied and went through the whole interview process. About a month later I was contacted by the regional coordinator telling me that I got the job and that it was a very hard choice to make as the other applicants were very good candidates as well.

At the start of this year I started in the new role, which has opened up my mind to running and managing other ranger teams. I have worked with five different ranger groups and every one of them is different in their own way. That has taught me a lot about handling different situations and about working as a part of a team.

I am hoping to gain a lot more experience in land management from other rangers, from different places, so that I get better at doing my job. Not only as a ranger support officer but also, maybe one day, as ranger group coordinator — or, maybe even better, the whole ranger program itself by learning better ways of doing land management. With that being said, I hope that the things that my fellow indigenous rangers and I do can better the future for our up-and-coming rangers and future coordinators. I also hope that one day there will be many more ranger group coordinators that came up the ladder from starting as a ranger. All the best for the future and God bless.

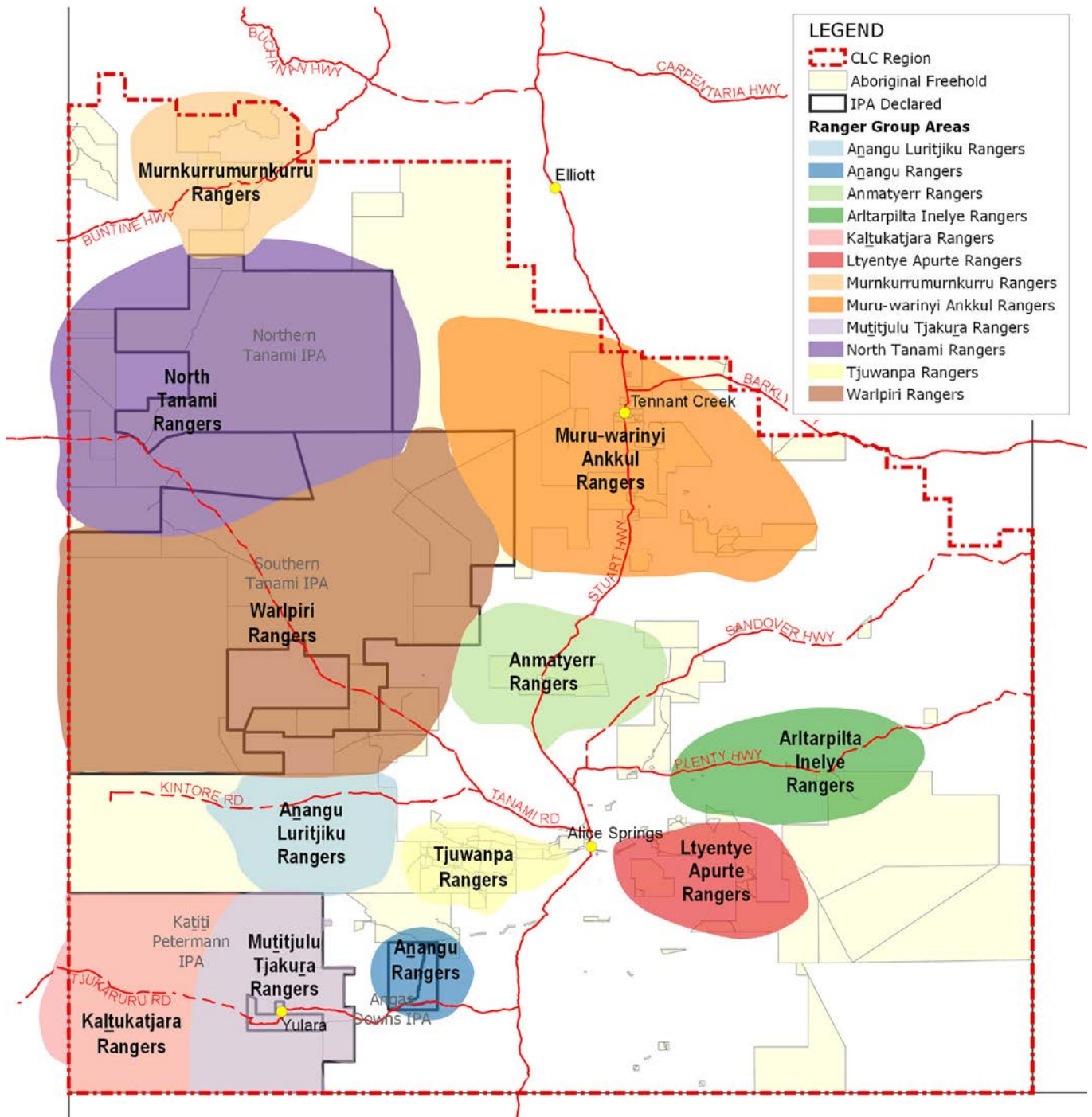
WHERE CLC RANGERS WORK

CLC rangers are the eyes and ears of the bush, responding to natural and cultural resource management issues across the CLC region — a large area of the NT. Rangers work across most of the organisation’s region. Unfortunately, the CLC’s resources don’t allow management of its entire region, so traditional owners must identify priority areas and develop projects that best meet their aspirations for their country.

Four ranger groups manage IPAs that contribute more than 195,000 square kilometres to the national reserve system.

Community demand for locally based rangers is high and the CLC continues to lobby for funding to meet the demand and expand its ranger program.

FIGURE 5. RANGER GROUP AREAS



RANGER ACTIVITIES 2017–18

ANANGU RANGERS (ANGAS DOWNS)



The CLC's Anangu Rangers group delivers cultural and natural resource management for the Angas Downs IPA by implementing biodiversity surveys, weed and feral animal control, fire management and rock art conservation. The group's rangers work with traditional owners and neighboring pastoralists to maintain fences protecting water places and sites of cultural significance.

Project spotlight: Stepping up to the challenge – fencing and development opportunities

The Anangu rangers regrouped in February 2018 after a year and a half of inactivity. One of its first big jobs was the construction of 25 kilometres of fenceline along the Lasseter Highway and Luritja Road. This was a big job. The fenceline had to be surveyed to ensure no sacred sites or environmentally sensitive areas were compromised. It also had to be cleared and graded before the fence could be constructed. An experienced team leader was urgently needed for the job and the CLC had short term funding to employ someone. It found a keen and capable ranger team leader waiting for a development opportunity: Jeremy Kenny, a Tjuwanpa ranger, enthusiastically took on the role.

This was a step up in responsibility for Mr Kenny. He asked for assistance where needed, but took the new learnings and



Jeremy Kenny inspected the fence line with a contractor.

experiences in his stride. He ensured that all preliminary work was completed to the required standard. This included facilitating sacred site clearances with traditional owners and an anthropologist, supervising the dozer contractor, assisting the grading work, planning the fence and ordering all materials, recruiting a team of fencers from Imanpa, and acting as team leader/supervisor on the construction. The assistance of other CLC

staff was invaluable in building his skills, but he was given the space to make the project his own.

The work began in the hot weather of February and ended in the cold of August. The team camped on the Angas Downs IPA throughout the project. In addition, they took part in other ranger work and training — a very demanding period. Several members of the fencing team were new to the job, and learned from scratch how to construct a fence safely and to standard. While the fence is yet to be completed, Mr Kenny and the Imanpa fencing team have worked hard to finish 22 kilometres so far. Mr Kenny has since returned to the Tjuwanpa ranger team equipped with new skills and experiences to assist him in whatever role he will take on next. Maybe ranger group coordinator?

The Angas Downs team is continuing the fencing and are proud of their work.



Rangers travelled along the fence line, to lay out posts.



Team members Jeremy Kenny, Johnathan Bulla and Mathew Mumu.

ANANGU LURITJIKU RANGERS (PAPUNYA)



The Anangu Luritjiku Rangers group delivers cultural heritage projects, feral animal management, weed control and general biodiversity survey and monitoring activities on the eastern half of the four-million-hectare Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Land Trust (ALT). The trust is part of a north-south corridor of IPAs and land trusts linking the NT's northern and southern borders. The area contains the internationally significant Talipata Springs wetland and is home to threatened species such as the mulgara (*Dasycercus blythi*), great desert skink (*Liopholis kintorei*), Slater's skink (*Liopholis slateri slateri*), princess parrot (*Polytelis alexandrae*) and the black-footed rock-wallaby (*Petrogale lateralis*).

Project Spotlight: Looking for Slater's skink

While undertaking protection work for *mangkata* (quandong, *Santalum acuminatum*) trees in the Utili Creek area in early 2017, rangers came across some unknown and unidentified burrows. To assist with identification, the rangers called in Peter MacDonald, a scientist from the NT government's threatened species branch. Mr MacDonald came out to have a look in May 2017, and the rangers discovered that they were very likely Slater's skink (*Liopholis slateri slateri*) burrows.

The rangers set up sensor cameras to take photos and confirm the species. A few weeks later, after collecting the cameras, they discovered the burrows did indeed belong to the Slater's skink.

In April 2018, a consultant ecologist, Tjuwanpa ranger Obed Ratara, and other staff assisted the rangers to create survey plots in the area. There were four 100 square metre plots, 50 metres apart.

The group marked burrows in each survey plot with flagging tape, counted scats around each burrow (as an indicator of population), and recorded the scat sizes (which indicates the age and size of the animals).



NT government scientist Pete MacDonal joined Terrence Abbott, Norm Raggett and Ryan Raggett in May 2017 to take a first look at Utili Creek.



Terrence Abbott inspected a burrow and counted scats with Preston Kelly, Rachel Partridge and Wendy Stuart.

They collected the information on hard copy data sheets and it was recorded electronically in CyberTracker. After analysing the results, the rangers realised that the area holds a significant number of animals of varying ages, with more than 30 burrows in each

plot. The rangers will continue to monitor the area for feral animal, fire and weed impacts and establish further plots to determine the Slater's skink range in the area.



A Slater's skink next to its burrow.

ANMATYERR RANGERS (TI TREE)



The Anmatyerr Rangers group delivers cultural and land management activities, such as protection of culturally significant water places, weed management, feral animal control, community education, fire management, mapping and the recording of indigenous ecological knowledge. The group's rangers work predominantly across the Ahakeye ALT.

Project Spotlight: Illeuwurru homeland – joint project with the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers

Illeuwurru homeland is located centrally between the work areas of the Anmatyerr and Muru-warinyi Ankkul ranger groups.

In June 2018, rangers and other CLC staff worked with traditional owners of the homeland on a successful collaborative project. The project aimed to build the skills and knowledge of the whole team by working with existing expertise; for example, its skills with and knowledge of fire, water, threatened species management and cultural knowledge transfer and planning.

Here is what happened:

- The traditional owners taught younger generations about the cultural aspects of country and gave direction to the land management activities.
- Staff members who recently completed a firefighting course with Bushfires NT practised their new skills under the guidance of other experienced rangers.
- Rangers trained each other in how to use the Tracks app to survey bilbies.
- Staff mapped groundwater-dependent cultural values with traditional owners to inform the NT government's water planners of places that need to be monitored

for information to inform water allocation planning.

This joint project is just one example of the activities and learning outcomes that can be achieved when people with different knowledge and skills come together in one place.



The rangers worked at Ellerware to create a firebreak that now protects Illeuwurru homeland.



The whole group in front of the house.



Kylie Sambo learned from her colleagues how to use the drip torch.

ARLTARPILTA INELYE RANGERS (ATITJERE)



The Arltarpilta Inelye Rangers group is based at Atitjere (Harts Range) on the Plenty Highway and delivers cultural and natural resource management through biodiversity surveys, weed control, feral animal control and fire management. The group's rangers work with traditional owners and neighbouring pastoralists to maintain fences that protect water places and sites of cultural significance.

Project Spotlight: Working together to preserve knowledge about bush medicine

Ilpwengk (*Eremophila dalyana*) is a highly sought-after plant with many uses for Central Australian Aboriginal people. It is used to treat fever, headaches, chest pain and scabies and to improve general wellbeing.

The rangers from Atitjere and Ltyentye Apurte organised a bush trip for women of all ages from both communities to travel to areas where *ilpwengk* is growing. The *ilpwengk* bush medicine recipe cannot be given away: it must be learned firsthand by the women of the area. The rangers want to map the area where the plant grows to be able to protect it.

During the bush trip, Barbara Petrick, traditional owner, ranger and guardian for *ilpwengk*, followed ancient protocol by welcoming the visitors to the country,



Barbara Petrick chopped *ilpwengk* prior to grinding it.



Lilly Petrick demonstrated how to prepare the bush medicine.

introducing them to the land and explaining to the spirits the purpose of their visit.

A whole day was dedicated to collecting *ilpwengk*. As the group travelled, the old women told stories of the country. When they returned to the camp, they made medicine and passed the knowledge to the young women who had never

before seen how to make bush rub and medicine. The experienced women made sure that the proper protocols and procedures of preparing the medicine were observed and that they will be upheld in future. The women produced enough for themselves and also prepared medicine for sick and old people at home.



Kathy Inkamala collected *ilpwengk* on a bush trip.



Grinding stones are still used to prepare *ilpwengk*.

KALTUKATJARA RANGERS (DOCKER RIVER)



The Kaitukajara Rangers group delivers cultural and natural resource management activities on the western portion of Kaiti Petermann IPA. The area supports diverse plant and animal communities, including threatened species such as the great desert skink (*Liopholis kintorei*), brush-tailed mulgara (*Dasymercus blythi*) and the black-footed rock wallaby (*Petrogale lateralis*). The group's rangers maintain tourist facilities and take part in fire management activities in the tri-state cross-border region to reduce the impact and frequency of summer wildfires. The group also supports feral animal management initiatives and protects important waterholes from camels and invasive weeds.

Project Spotlight: Rediscovery of a soakage – Making waters flow again



Kaitukajara rangers (in blue uniforms) dug out a rarely visited soakage at a site near Amata, SA: Troydon Briscoe, Benji Kenny, Harold (Dicky) Lyons, Thelma Meneri and Florance Farmer. Local people who helped were Adrian Watson, Amos King, Jamie Dingaman, Simone Burton, Sebastian Heffernan, Micheal Lyons, Cecil James, Elijah Brady, Rachael Lyons, Delvina Lyons, Rosanna Lyons, Hayden Parker and Bruce Brady.

In July 2017 Kaitukajara rangers and Kaiti Petermann IPA staff went on a five-day country trip to an area west of Amata in South Australia. The trip was for families to visit their country, pass on knowledge, burn, plan for and look after their country.

Traditional owners wanted to visit old sites — one, in particular, was a freshwater soakage at Walan'gna that they used to hear about from their old people. Only one old man who had been there before, some 25 years



NPY Women's Council's Amata youth worker Geoff Pryor and local Sebastian Heffernan inspected the soakage at Walan'gna.

ago, was still alive. It had been a long time since the soakage had been dug out and looked after, and nobody was confident that they would be able to locate the soakage on this trip. However, to everybody's delight, it was found.

Once the rangers and traditional owners dug out the dirt and silt from the soakage fresh water began to rise. The rangers and traditional owners put some long sticks in the

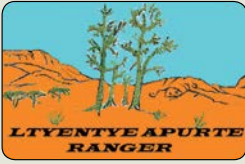
newly dug hole to enable birds to drink and to make sure lizards don't fall in.

Nomadic families used to rest in this area and drink from the soakage. After they settled in communities, they no longer cleaned out the soakage and nearly forgot about it. The whole area had been dry for a long time, so everybody was surprised to find water. It shows that there is still a lot of water underground.



Rangers dug out the soakage to create a waterhole.

LYENTYE APURTE RANGERS (SANTA TERESA)

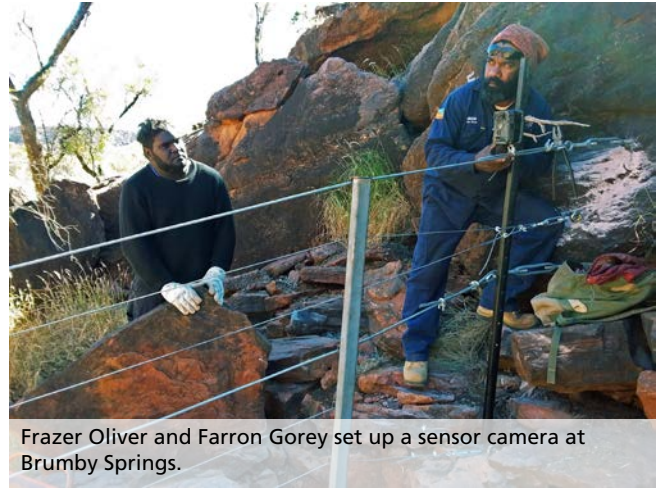


The Ltyentye Apurte Rangers group works on the Santa Teresa ALT that surrounds the Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa) community, about 80 kilometres southeast of Alice Springs.

Project Spotlight: Akwetethne fence line

In 2018, Ltyentye Apurte rangers worked with traditional owners to construct two feral animal exclusion fences on the Santa Teresa ALT at a location that includes a sacred site. The fences were constructed to protect Akwetethne (Brumby Springs) from horses and camels, with one fence at each end of the valley that leads to the springs. The rangers learned new skills, such as how to select the most appropriate fence for each purpose or landscape, leveling, measuring, concreting, how to erect fences and basic surveying techniques

Once the sites for the fence lines were selected and the sacred site clearance certificate was issued, six rangers, four traditional owners and two casuals went to work. They carried in more than 50 bags of cement, steel posts, generators, a jackhammer, drilling equipment, wheelbarrows and other tools down a steep rocky gully. They jackhammered the holes



Frazer Oliver and Farron Gorey set up a sensor camera at Brumby Springs.

for the posts into hard, rocky ground, moved large boulders to clear the fence line, and cemented in 14 posts. They drilled holes into rocks at either side of the fence lines to secure the bolts that hold the cables and barbed wires. Once the glue and cement had set, they measured the cables, secured them to the bolts and strained the wires.

The project required a strong group effort over four weeks, drawing on the knowledge and experience

of the traditional owners and rangers, both casual and permanent. Since its construction, the rangers have returned three times to check the fence and it is holding up well. Remote sensor cameras, set by the rangers, have revealed horses continue to walk to the fence line, but they now can't get through. The new fences will prevent feral animals from damaging the sacred site and the water quality of Akwetethne will improve.



A sacred site clearance was part of the Brumby Springs fencing project. Front row L-R: Keith Gorey, Farron Gorey, Kelvin Kopp, Petria Cavanagh; second row L-R: Frazer Oliver, Billie Scott, Johanna Shand and Malcolm Hayes.



Rangers carried bags of cement for positioning fence posts at Brumby Springs.



Rangers Farron Gorey, Stefan Alice, Frazer Oliver, Gavin Hayes and Nathan Morris, shown pausing by Brumby Springs, constructed fences in the area.

MURNKURRUMURNKURRU RANGERS (DAGURAGU)



The Murnkurrumurnkurru Rangers group is based in the community of Daguragu and operates across the Daguragu ALT and the northern portion of the Hooker Creek ALT. The group also occasionally participates in projects in the southern section of Judbarra National Park.

Project Spotlight: Bush tucker poster

In May 2018, the Murnkurrumurnkurru rangers worked together with traditional owners, linguist Felicity Meakins from the University of Queensland, and Penny Smith from the Karungkarni Art Centre, to develop a Gurindji bush tucker poster. This exciting project was the fourth in a series of Gurindji cultural posters the rangers have helped to produce.

Rangers travelled with traditional owners to Cattle Creek in search of suitable bush tucker plants to photograph for the poster. Plants in season found included *partiki* (bush nut,



Left to right: Kathleen Sambo, Topsy Dodd, Violet Wadrill and Cassandra Algy were part of the bush tucker poster project.



Cassandra Algy, traditional owner Violet Wadrill, Nikita Smiler and linguist Felicity Meakins dug for *wayita* (pencil yam, *Vigna lanceolata*).



Terminalia arostrata, *kilipi* (bush banana, *Marsdenia australis*), *kinyjirra* (red flowered kurrajong, *Brachychiton megaphyllus*), *ngamanpurru* (conkerberry, *Carissa lanceolata*) and *kunanturu* (bush bean, *Acacia coriacea*).

easy and accessible method, via a smart phone or tablet, to share and listen to audio recordings of descriptions and stories about the local bush foods in Gurindji. Another great way to promote Aboriginal languages.

The poster is a key community engagement and knowledge-sharing tool to teach Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people about local bush foods. Rangers now have a vital resource to pass on bush tucker knowledge to the next generation.

The rangers thoroughly enjoyed collaborating on this project: it allowed them to work on country, and accompany elders, learn from them, and listen to and share stories.

They also learned about the technology of QR codes. QR codes are an

MURU-WARINYI ANKKUL RANGERS (TENNANT CREEK)



The Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers group works on large areas of Aboriginal land around Tennant Creek, as well as on jointly managed NT national parks, and pastoral and government-owned land.

Project Spotlight: Muru-Warinyi Ankkul and Anmatyerr ranger exchange at Manga Manda (Mission Block)

In August 2017 the Anmatyerr Rangers group visited the Muru-warinyi Ankkul Rangers group to work with the traditional owners of Manga Manda, known locally as 'Mission Block'. Rangers support traditional owners to manage this site and protect its waterholes from damage.

The ranger teams learned from each other, collected important local environmental data and completed the following activities:

Fauna surveys — using pitfall and Elliott traps, rangers caught and identified a hopping mouse and dunnarts.

Bird surveys — rangers learned to identify RE: CLC ranger annual report. and record species such as whistling kites, little corellas, crested pigeons, darters, cormorants, white-necked herons, grebes, zebra finches and brolgas.

Water monitoring — rangers identified water animals, recorded landscape information, took photos from a specified photo point, and recorded as data sheets and with CyberTracker.

Edna Beryl gold mine tour — rangers toured the mine shafts and learned how gold is mined, what chemicals might be found in on-site water, and how to ensure pollutants don't overflow into waterholes on Manga Manda.

Everyone worked well together and learned a number of field survey methods to identify tracks, birds and water animals. The water animals identified



Rangers Carl O'Cleary, Floyd James, Jesse Carpenter and Dennis Mahoney identified species at Manga Manda.



Rangers from Tennant Creek and Ti Tree conducted a fauna survey at Manga Manda.



A hopping mouse was caught in an Elliott trap at Manga Manda.

included organisms without a spine but large enough to be seen with the naked eye, like worms and snails. The exchange encouraged Anmatyerr rangers to apply what they've learned to their own work plan, while for

Muru-warinyi Ankkul rangers it was an opportunity to reinforce existing knowledge by sharing it.

NORTH TANAMI RANGERS (LAJAMANU)



The North Tanami Rangers group is based in the community of Lajamanu. The traditional owners of the Northern Tanami IPA have entrusted the group to manage the IPA in accordance with the management plan. The four million hectare IPA stretches from just north of Lajamanu south to the Tanami mine.

Project Spotlight: Wildlife tracking training – Old and new

This year at Nyukulku, 120 kilometres southeast of Lajamanu, young and old came together to better understand the wildlife of the area. Elders provided generations' worth of tracking knowledge, shared their skills and instructed both North Tanami and Murnkurrumurnkurru rangers in how to identify animal signs. New information technology came in the form of the bilingual digital Tracks app installed on rangers' tablets. The CLC's Warlpiri-speaking rangers helped develop both the English and Warlpiri versions of the app. At Nyukulku, the rangers piloted the app which allows rangers to record and map the occurrence of native and feral animal species, in conjunction with traditional tracking knowledge.

Their work focused primarily on the distribution of bilbies as part of the first national Bilby Blitz. The IPA is believed to be one of Australia's last bilby strongholds.



Traditional owners Jerry Jangala Patrick (left) and Paddy Doolak shared their knowledge and directed the rangers, helping them to confidently track and identify animals.



The CLC team discussed survey sites and methods in preparation for training as part of the Bilby Blitz. Left to right: George Sambo, Nikita Smiler, Helma Bernard, Andre Marais, Feach Moyle and Dione Kelly.



Myra Herbert (seated) showed ranger Helen Wilson the tracks and signs of a bilby. Helen photographed and recorded the information using the Tracks app.



One of a number of active bilby burrows found during the April 2018 Bilby Blitz at Nyukulku.

TJUWANPA RANGERS (NTARIA)



The Tjuwanpa Rangers group delivers natural and cultural resource management activities on the five Aboriginal land trusts in the Ntaria region, and the Finke Gorge and West MacDonnell national parks. The group is responsible for removing Athel pine and other weeds in the Finke River catchment and managing threatened species, such as the largest known population of the endangered Slater's skink. The group's rangers also maintain local tourism infrastructure, monitor and protect water places, support intergenerational knowledge transfer, and plan and implement feral animal management activities.

Project Spotlight: Tempe Downs – Athel pine eradication

In June 2018, Tjuwanpa rangers travelled to Tempe Downs to support traditional owners to locate weeds along the Palmer River, such as Athel pine (*Tamarix aphylla*), which can wipe out native plants that live along riverbeds and creeks.

Native to northern Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, Iran and India, Athel pine was introduced to Australia around 1930 as a shade tree and planted extensively in the Barkly and Alice Springs regions. Athel pine has invaded the Finke River, the largest river system in Central Australia which extends for 600 kilometres.

To eradicate the pine, rangers cut it to ground level and sprayed the stumps with herbicide. They dragged the trees away from the river and burnt them. Small plants were hand pulled and destroyed.

Rangers mapped the locations where Athel pine was treated so they can revisit the sites and



Ranger Christopher Ungwanaka was part of a team that removed Athel pine from the Palmer River in June 2018.

check the results to determine if further work is required.

Rangers hope that they have created space for native plants

to regrow and shelter the birds and native animals that drink and nest at the river.



Rangers Cleveland Katawarra, Dean Inkamala, Raphael Impu and Christopher Ungwanaka removed Athel pines along the Palmer River, where the invasive weed is choking native vegetation.

WARLPIRI RANGERS (YUENDUMU, WILLOWRA, NYIRRPI)



The Warlpiri Rangers group is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Southern Tanami IPA. Covering some 10 million hectares, the IPA is the largest terrestrial protected area in Australia. The operational centre for the ranger group is the community of Yuendumu, with teams of casuals sourced from the neighbouring communities of Willowra and Nyirrpi.

Project Spotlight: Trekking up Ngarnka

The CLC partnered with the NT Department of Environment and Natural Resources to update the distribution records of the critically endangered central rock rat (*Zygomys pedunculatus*). Found only in unburnt rocky outcrops of mountaintops, the rat can be difficult to locate. To find it, camera traps and bait lures are placed in areas of interest for three to six months.

Ngarnka (Mount Leichhardt) was chosen as one potential habitat because of its high elevation and its relatively infrequent fires. Both Warlpiri and Anmatyerr people have cultural ties to Ngarnka, so Warlpiri and Anmatyerr rangers teamed up with a big group of traditional owners from Willowra, Ti Tree and Aileron and camped near the mountain. On the first night of the visit the group discussed the best route to the

top and which places to avoid for cultural reasons. Rangers discussed supplies of food and water, safety concerns and emergency protocols.

The following day — loaded with 13 camera traps, stakes and baits — they climbed Ngarnka. With the cameras now all in place, everyone has crossed their fingers that they will capture images of rock rats.



The group set off at 7am to walk up Ngarnka: (L-R) rangers Gary Wilson, Max Kennedy, Maurice Campbell, land management coordinator Sam Rando, ranger and traditional owner Angela Purvis who introduced everybody to country, Anmatyerr ranger group coordinator Josephine Grant, regional land management officer Sam Kendal and ranger Selina Mbitjana.



Selena Mbitjana, Sam Kendal, Maurice Campbell, Max Kennedy and Gary Wilson paused to contemplate their climb with 1105 metre high Ngarnka looming in the background.

TJAKURA RANGERS (MUṬITJULU)



Muṭitjulu's Tjakura Rangers group delivers cultural and natural resource management activities for the Kaṭiṭi Petermann IPA, which surrounds the iconic Uluru – Kata Tjuta National Park.

Project Spotlight: Launch of a new group – The Tjakura Rangers

The CLC launched a new ranger team in March 2018. The launch was a community event with local elders front and centre. Pantjiti McKenzie led the *inma* (dance and song) with Nellie Paterson and Ester Teamay. The three elders' voices rose as Rene Kulitja danced up to the gate of the ranger office to cut the ribbon with a group of young women.

Two young male dancers, David Cooley and Ken Wilson, led the new rangers into the ceremony, flanked by colleagues from the CLC's Kaṭukātjara and Parks Australia's Uluru ranger teams. Ms McKenzie was overjoyed 'to see the two young men and all the young women dance and sing for their country'. 'Wiru mulapa! I'm an experienced singer and it's great that they are learning their part in practising and celebrating their culture,' she said.

'I was really thrilled to see such a big group of young people in Muṭitjulu sign up for ranger work. It's great because it's such important strong work for young people. It's a really important chance for rangers to learn about their country.'



Malya Teamay (left) showed CLC chair Francis Kelly the logo he designed for the Tjakura Rangers group.

CLC chair Francis Kelly unveiled the Tjakura Rangers logo and explained that the group's name is the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara word for the great desert skink (*Egernia kintorei*). The logo is based on a design by senior Muṭitjulu artist Malya Teamay.

'The *tjakura* is one of the animals we have to look after and it's a threatened species,' Mr Teamay told the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA). 'It's a really good name to be giving the ranger group because it shows the importance of protecting what you have. I'm extremely proud to see them in

their new uniforms, being able to do some really good work.'

The new group will share the responsibility of protecting the five-million hectare Kaṭiṭi Petermann IPA with the Kaṭukātjara Rangers group of Docker River. The IPA is an international hotspot for mammal extinctions, with 18 species vanishing from the area since European settlement. The elders performing *inma* at the celebration still remember animals such as *kantilypa* (pig-footed bandicoot, *Chaeropus ecaudatus*), *tawalpa* (crescent nail-tailed wallaby, *Onychogalea lunata*), lesser bilby (*Macrotis leucura*) and *walilya* (desert bandicoot, *Perameles eremiana*), all of which have died out during their lifetimes.

The new rangers will help to look after more than 22 surviving native mammal species, 88 reptile species and 147 bird species found in the IPA, including threatened species such as the *murtja* (brush-tailed mulgara, *Dasyercus blythi*), *waru* (black-footed rock wallaby, *Petrogale lateralis*) and the princess parrot (*Polytelis alexandrae*).



Trainee rangers waited to perform *inma* with elder Rene Kulitja (centre back) at the Tjakura Rangers group launch.

RANGER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT 2017–18

The CLC's ranger program is a successful and popular model for Aboriginal employment and skills development. During the reporting period, the CLC employed 105 rangers across 12 ranger groups as staff or as casuals through Working on Country and ILC Real Jobs (Ranger) funding for 71.2 FTE positions. The ILC Real Jobs (Ranger) program funded 18 positions or one quarter of the CLC rangers.

The CLC created entry-level positions to build capacity and interest among young Aboriginal people who have little or no previous work experience. Casual employment is offered on larger-scale projects that require more staff, such as surveys, fire management and large scale weed control or fencing. Casual rangers often progress to permanent positions when they have gained experience.

EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES AND RANGER RETENTION

Seven rangers were employed fulltime at the end of the reporting period, 66 worked parttime, and 32 were employed as casuals. Between 2010 and 2018, 843 Aboriginal people worked as CLC rangers. They were aged between 20 and 67 years and had a wide range of knowledge and skills. The CLC's first female indigenous ranger coordinator rose through the ranks and is now managing a ranger group.

At first glance, Figure 6 (Ranger Employment Type, 2010–18) shows a decline in ranger employment over the last three years. In fact, several positions were lost due to cuts in funding. However, ranger teams have increased their work days from three to four. This means that although fewer people are employed, those who are employed earn more and are moving closer to fulltime employment. Figure 8 (Male and Female Rangers, 2010–18) and Figure 9 (Percentage of Women Rangers, 2010–18) show that female rangers continue to make up a third of all CLC rangers. The presence of women ranger role models encourages other women to apply for ranger vacancies as they arise, and the CLC is also making an effort to increase the percentage of women rangers through a gender equity strategy.

QUALITY TARGETED TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Training and professional development continue to be important components of the CLC's ranger program. Training focuses on developing basic work skills and competencies for new rangers, supporting experienced rangers to complete studies in conservation and land management, and facilitating the career progression of rangers into ranger support officer and coordinator roles.

Rangers participated in 47 separate training events across the program. The program delivered 11,335 hours of accredited training through 37 events and 1,871 hours of non-accredited training through 10 events.

One hundred and two rangers are enrolled in nationally

FIGURE 6. RANGER EMPLOYMENT TYPE, 2010–18

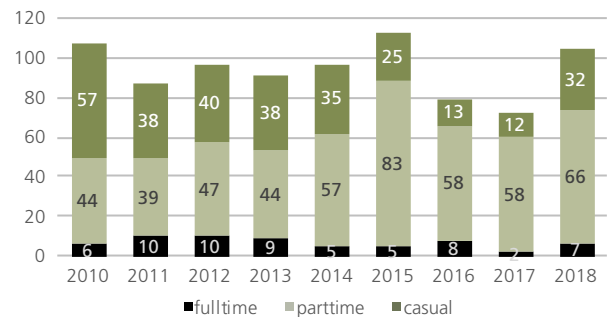


FIGURE 7. RANGER EMPLOYMENT TYPE, 2010–18

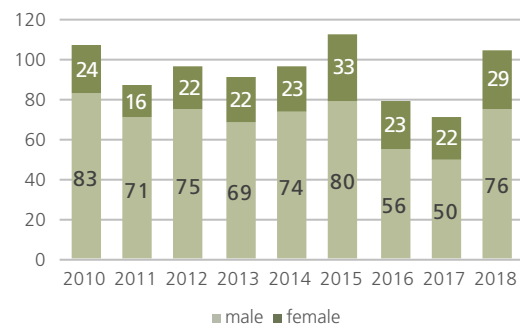


FIGURE 8. MALE AND FEMALE RANGERS, 2010–18

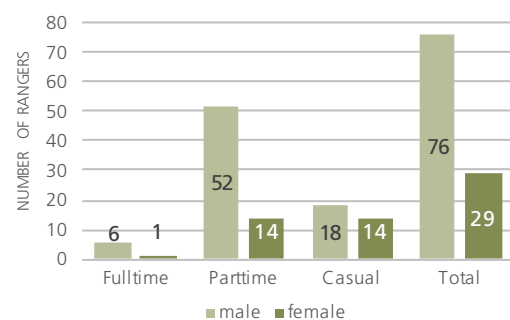
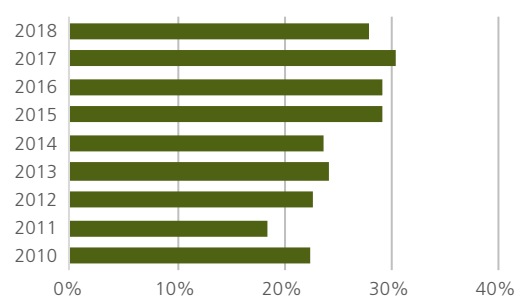


FIGURE 9. PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN RANGERS, 2010–18





Professor Stephen Hagan congratulated Petria Cavanagh on her graduation at the 2018 ranger camp.



The manager to the CLC's land management section Pete Donohoe (centre) and CLC chair Francis Kelly (right) honoured Malcolm Kenny for his 10 years' service with the Tjuwanpa Rangers group in Ntaria.

accredited conservation and land management courses: three in Certificate I, 75 in Certificate II, 66 in Certificate III, and 5 in Certificate IV level training. Seventeen rangers completed their studies graduating in Certificate I (1), Certificate II (8), Certificate III (6) and Certificate IV (2).

Fifty per cent of the training hours were undertaken at Certificate II level, 44 per cent were undertaken at Certificate III level and 3 per cent were in Certificate IV. These figures reflect a stable and maturing workforce.

For the second year in a row, the rangers who were enrolled in Certificate IV completed fewer training hours. The three per cent decrease is explained by the relatively higher retention of rangers who have completed Certificate IV, and Certificate IV was not delivered by the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) in the second half of the year. In June 2018, 12 rangers tried to enrol for this qualification. Only two per cent of all training hours was dedicated to Certificate I level training, which comprised introductory workplace health and safety courses.

As the ranger program continues to expand, equitable distribution of training resources is an increasing challenge. Several factors influence how much training different ranger

groups receive. There was significant increase in training undertaken by the Warlpiri, Anangu Luritjiku and Anmatyerr groups compared with previous periods. This can be attributed to these groups' relatively stable workforce and that each group has retained a group coordinator for a number of years.

Higher training participation rates also reflect higher ranger retention rates. Staff turnover places pressure on work programs and requires groups to focus on establishing good work routines before they move on to training. This is why the relatively new Angas Downs and Tjakura ranger groups undertook less training than more established groups.

The Warlpiri, Muru-warinyi Ankkul, North Tanami and Anmatyerr ranger groups have benefited from their workforce stability and the high capacity of their senior rangers. Better planning and logistical capacity has resulted in high training participation rates for these groups. The relatively high expense and other challenges of remote delivery models have limited the training opportunities for very remote communities. This explains why rangers in Kaltukatjara, some 800 kilometres from Alice Springs, did less training than rangers in less remote groups.

The CLC continues to improve training outcomes by working collaboratively with training providers who can deliver training

FIGURE 10. NUMBER OF RANGERS UNDERTAKING EACH CERTIFICATE LEVEL, 2017–18

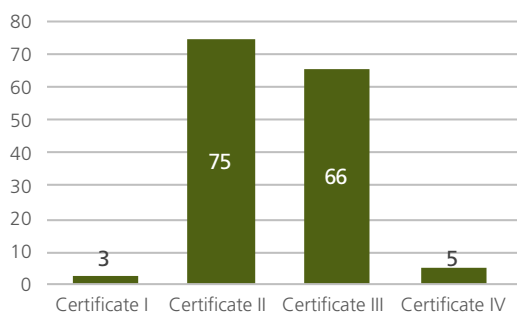


FIGURE 11. NUMBER OF RANGERS UNDERTAKING WHS TRAINING, 2017–18

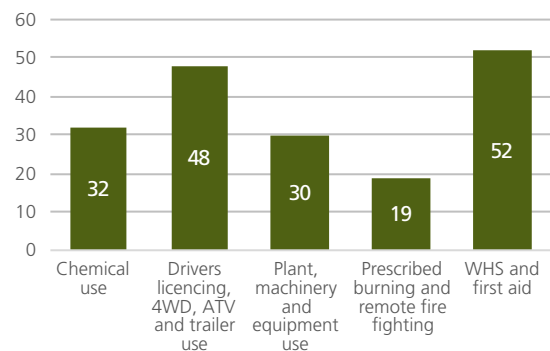


FIGURE 12. TRAINING HOURS BY RANGER GROUP, 2017–18

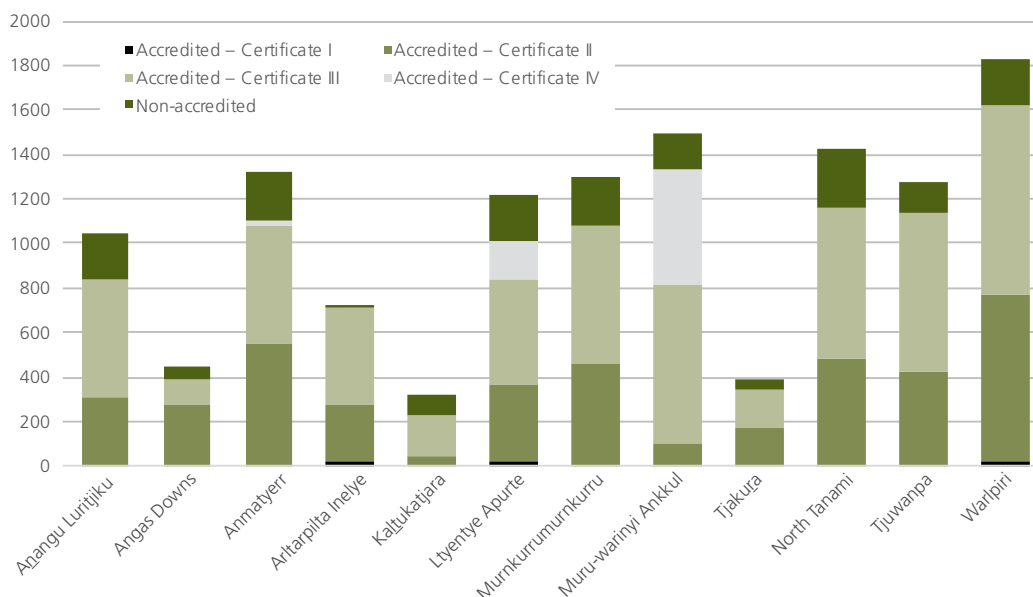


FIGURE 13. RANGER MENTOR ACTIVITY: VISITS TO RANGER GROUPS, 2017-18

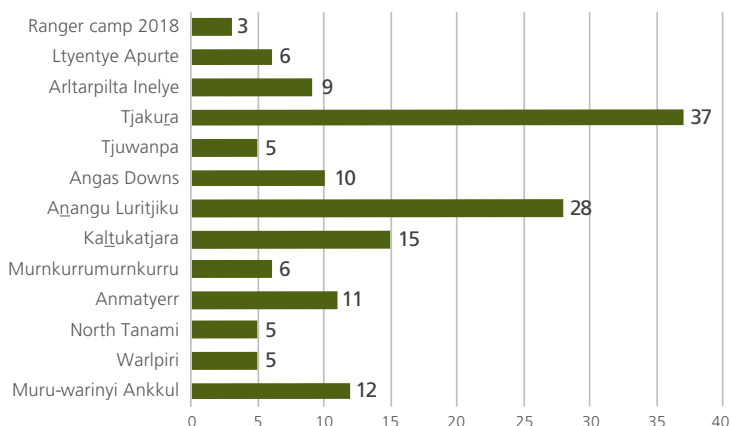
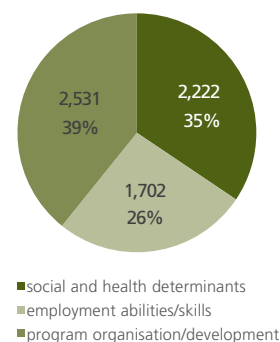


FIGURE 14. RANGER WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT BY TYPE, 2017-18



in remote communities and by providing services that support ranger retention, such as identifying career pathways through regular coaching, individual mentoring and training plans.

RANGER WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

In response to ongoing risk assessments and the implementation of standard operating procedures, the ranger program has developed a suite of compulsory workplace health and safety (WHS) training. Eight rangers took part in one-off accredited all-terrain vehicle training, and 32 rangers attended accredited training in the preparation, storage and safe handling of chemicals. First aid and WHS remained a core training priority. Fifty-two rangers undertook this training, 14 rangers undertaking the higher-level, remote first aid training — a notable increase compared with the previous reporting period. This training requires higher levels of literacy but is more relevant to the remote work that rangers undertake. The trend towards remote first aid training indicates increased workforce capacity and WHS compliance.

Rangers must be able to drive four-wheel drive vehicles to advance their careers and to transport their colleagues safely across vast distances. Forty rangers undertook accredited vehicle use and driver training, a significant increase compared to the 13 rangers who received this training last year.

WORKPLACE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

The ranger program delivered 1,871 hours of non-accredited training — training that sits outside the Australian qualifications framework, such as internally delivered workshops or training for specific work-related activities. Rangers participated in a digital knowledge group forum and in non-accredited training in cat-trapping techniques, bilby survey methods, safe venomous snake handling, and a multimedia song-writing and production workshop.

RANGER CAMP

More than 100 Aboriginal rangers and land managers attended the 11th annual CLC ranger camp — 78 CLC rangers, three rangers from the Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory, four Aṅangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara



Josie Grant signed her contract as the first female Aboriginal coordinator of a CLC ranger group in September 2017.



Preston Kelly, Cleveland Kantawarra, Obed Ratara and Jeffrey Foster received training in the use of excavators.



Rangers Helma Herbert (left) and Thelma Meneri caught a grumpy venomous snake at the CLC's 2018 ranger camp.

(APY) Land Management rangers, eight Tjuwanpa women rangers, four Uluru – Kata Tjuta National Park employees, and seven students from the Amunturrngu Community College at Mount Liebig.

The camp continues to provide an effective opportunity for Aboriginal rangers to network and build relationships across the vast and remote Central Australian region. Information sharing across groups is critical for building rangers' capabilities. Group presentations about achievements and challenges, guest speakers and the ranger forum — an independently facilitated feedback session — empower rangers to contribute to better program operation and management.

Ten providers delivered 12 training workshops on machine maintenance, operating all-terrain vehicles and bobcats, controlling and containing weeds and chemicals, obtaining an NT learner driver licence, snake handling, bilby survey methods, safe trailer use, and feral cat trapping. The camp also featured eye health checks, song writing and music video production, and healthy campfire cooking.

SCHOOL-BASED CAPACITY BUILDING

The ranger program continues to produce role models for students in remote community schools. Rangers interact with students in classrooms and on country, demonstrating employment pathways, motivating students to stay in school longer and contributing overall to learning outcomes.

All ranger groups promoted the values of ranger employment to schools, junior ranger programs, traditional owners, parents and other interest groups. They facilitated the intergenerational transfer of knowledge and provided work experience by sharing their skills.

RANGER MENTORING SUPPORT

The employment of three fulltime regional workplace mentors — a first for the program — increased mentoring support from 5,283 mentoring engagements in 2016–17 to 6,455 in 2017–18. Having mentors in the field for 227 days of the year meant more face-to-face contact with rangers. Mentoring support was also spread more equitably, with all groups receiving face-to-face support for 15 days or more, no matter how remotely they were based.

The mentors aim to support rangers to self-manage issues affecting work attendance and performance, for example, through workplace coaching. Rangers requested more support for social and health issues, such as wellbeing, alcohol and drug use and financial and legal issues. Mentors referred rangers to more than 20 different agencies and service providers, including health and legal services, educational institutions and government agencies.

The program also focuses on prevention and health promotion. An optometrist provided 62 eye health checks and treatment at the ranger camp. Twenty-nine checks indicated healthy eyes, 16 rangers needed non-prescription spectacles, 12 received spectacle prescriptions, and two were found to have trachoma. Referral to the Alice Springs Hospital ophthalmologist was required for two rangers, and to respective community clinics for a further three. The optometrist reported that the rate of diabetic retinopathy, cataracts and sight-threatening trachoma in remote communities is much higher than among the rangers. He suggested that this may be partly because rangers are younger but also because they are more physically active and in better general health.

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

The CLC acknowledges the major funding bodies of its ranger program: the Australian government's Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Indigenous Land Corporation.



Australian Government
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



Australian Government
Indigenous Land Corporation

Other funders and supporters of the CLC are:



GLOSSARY

ALT	Aboriginal Land Trust
BIITE	Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
CLC	Central Land Council
PM&C	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
IAS	Indigenous Advancement Strategy
ILC	Indigenous Land Corporation
IPA	Indigenous Protected Area
KLC	Kimberley Land Council
NPY Women's Council	Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council

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**CENTRAL
LAND
COUNCIL**

Address

27 Stuart Highway
Alice Springs
NT 0870

Postal address

PO Box 3321
Alice Springs
NT 0871

www.clc.org.au

Phone 08 8951 6211

Email media@clc.org.au

FRONT COVER IMAGE: Ranger Farron Gorey recorded a hip hop soundtrack at the 2018 ranger camp.

BACK COVER IMAGE: The 2018 ranger camp was held at Hamilton Downs Youth Camp.