

Arnhem Land Fire Abatement

ALFA (NT) Limited
Annual Report 2022



ALFA
Arnhem Land
Fire Abatement

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ALFA (NT) Limited
ABN 81 166 922 569
PO Box 40222
Casuarina NT 0810

0437 272 043
ceo@alfant.com.au
alfant.com.au

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this report may contain images and names in print of deceased people.

Front cover: Bawinanga ranger Jonah Ryan guides aerial burning operations in the Djelk IPA. Photo © Steph Rouse and Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation

Right: As one of the longest serving female rangers in Arnhem Land, Felina Campion of Bawinanga rangers has been involved in savanna burning projects since they were first researched and piloted in the region in the early 2000s. Photo © Steph Rouse and Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation

Back cover: A day's fire work over. Photo © Steph Rouse and Northern Land Council

1 — Jon Altman, Jennifer Ansell and Dean Yibarbuk (2020) No ordinary company: Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (Northern Territory) Limited, Postcolonial Studies, 23:4, 552-574

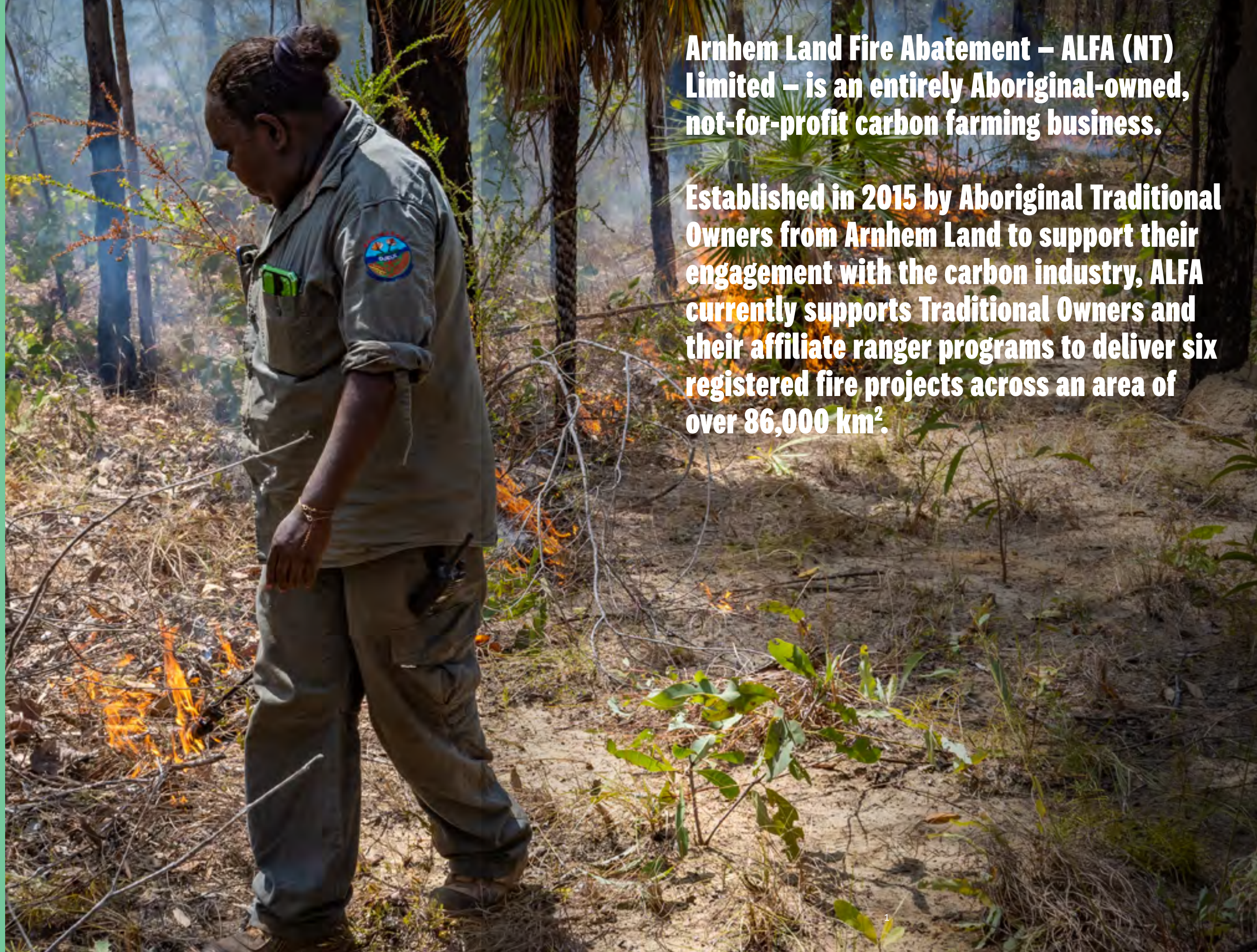


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Arnhem Land Fire Abatement – ALFA (NT) Limited – is an entirely Aboriginal-owned, not-for-profit carbon farming business.

Established in 2015 by Aboriginal Traditional Owners from Arnhem Land to support their engagement with the carbon industry, ALFA currently supports Traditional Owners and their affiliate ranger programs to deliver six registered fire projects across an area of over 86,000 km².



With the arrival of the cool winds and clear skies of the dry season, Traditional Owners and rangers from across the remote tropical savannas of Arnhem Land begin to paint the landscape with fire, using highly sophisticated management practices handed down across generations.

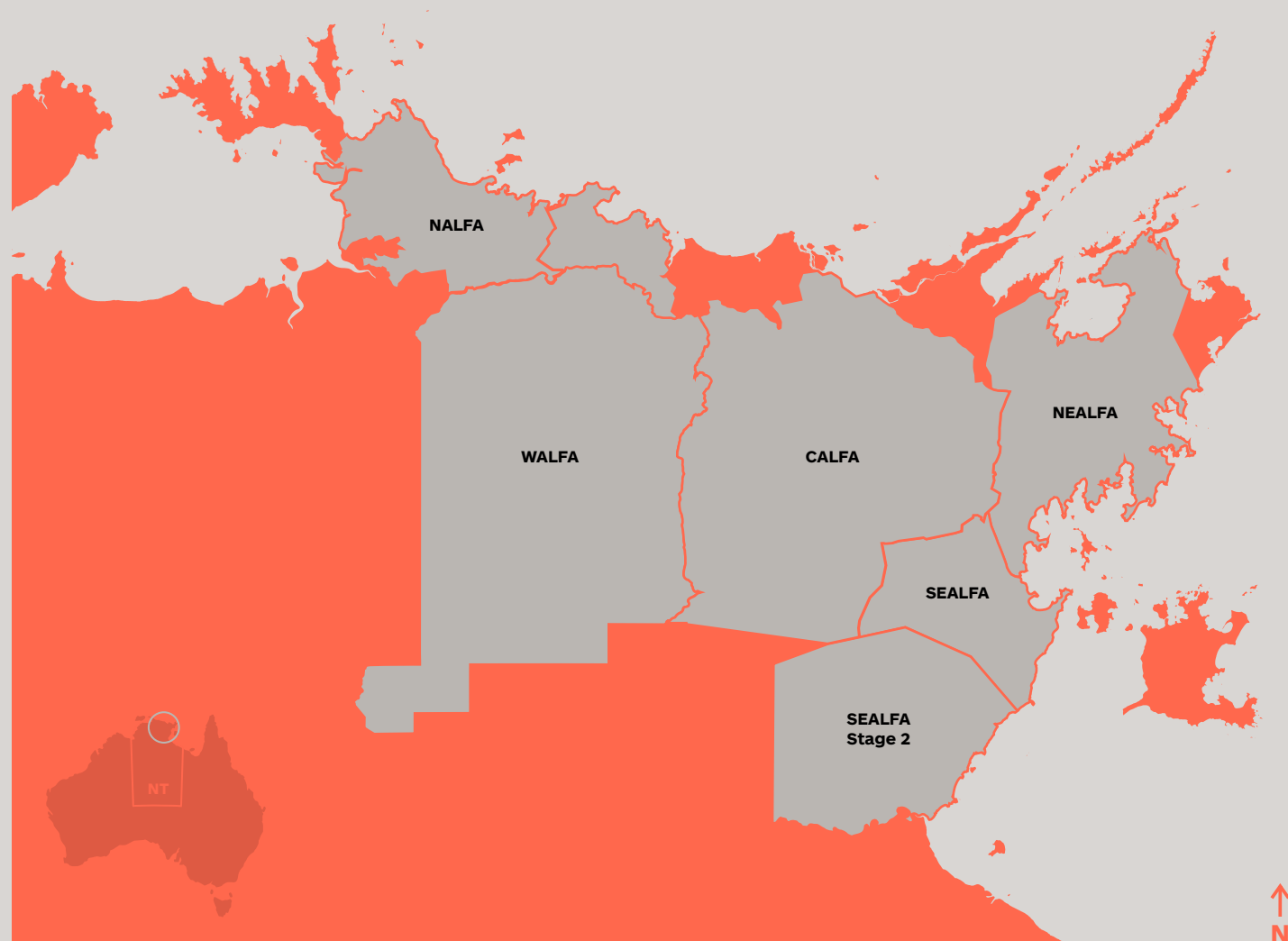


In a landscape defined by this deliberate and nuanced burning, the work performed by ALFA's partners is vital to the continued ecological and cultural health of Country. By combining ancient knowledge with modern technology, their fire management programs address critical environmental solutions at the local, national and global scale.

To fund this resource-intensive work, ALFA facilitates engagement with the carbon industry on behalf of its partners, supporting Traditional Owners and rangers from across Arnhem Land to access the funding required to continue delivering global best-practice fire management projects.

ALFA represents 11 Aboriginal ranger groups consisting of Traditional Owners and their families, who together operate a total of six ALFA fire projects that generate Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) through the Savanna Burning Methodology.

Map of project areas



- **West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (WALFA) project**
- **Central Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (CALFA) project**
- **South East Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (SEALFA) project**
- **South East Arnhem Land Fire Abatement 2 (SEALFA2) project**
- **North East Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (NEALFA) project**
- **Northwest Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (NALFA) project**

Collectively, these groups manage an area of over 86,000 km² encompassing rugged sandstone escarpments, floodplains, monsoon rainforest, intact riparian ecosystems, remote coastal regions and vast expanses of savanna woodland.

Values

*The following values represent the objectives for which ALFA was established.
All income generated through the sale of carbon is spent in line with these objectives.*

To protect, preserve and care for the environment through abatement of the level of global greenhouse gas emissions by utilising bushfire management activities.



To preserve and conserve native Australian fauna and flora through bushfire management activities that accord with Aboriginal traditional rights and obligations and Australian law.



To collaboratively pursue the investigation, development and implementation of other activities which will protect, preserve and care for the environment and which are consistent with Aboriginal traditional rights and obligations and Australian law.



In relation to Aboriginal persons who have a traditional Aboriginal connection with any part of the project area, to provide for the relief of poverty, sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, destitution, helplessness or the aged.



To provide for the advancement of education of Aboriginal persons who have a traditional Aboriginal connection with any part of the project area.



Rangers from ASRAC patrol and manage an asset protection burn around the Ramingining solar array. Damage to this infrastructure by a late season fire would have a major impact on the electricity supply of the community. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC

ALFA (NT) Limited has nine membership classes, representing the operational areas of the ranger groups and organisations managing each of the fire projects. Each membership class has two representatives on the ALFA board of directors.

“The specific Indigenous form of participatory governance that guides ALFA’s operations, always cognisant of Landowner authority, is fundamental to ALFA’s ability to support forms of Aboriginal-led development focused on conservation.”¹



ALFA board members (and proxies), with two representatives from each of the company’s nine membership classes. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA

With the registration and launch of the Northwest Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (NALFA) project this year, ALFA members formally resolved to add a new membership class to the company’s constitution and two new board members to represent the project, bringing ALFA’s total membership classes to nine, and total number of board members to 18.

Membership of ALFA is open to Aboriginal people with customary responsibilities for those parts of Arnhem Land under active bushfire management as one of the six registered projects.

ALFA is governed by 18 Aboriginal Directors. Two Directors are elected from each of the nine membership classes.

The Company also employs a Chief Executive Officer, a Chief Financial Officer, a Capacity Development and Training Manager, a Bushfire Project Officer, and Seasonal Fire Officers (as required).

Board of Directors and Staff as at 30th November 2022

- Adjumarllarl — Shaun Namarnyilk, Anderson Nalorlman
- ASRAC — Gladys Malibirr, Otto Campion
- Bawinanga — Victor Rostron, Felina Campion
- Jawoyn — Tony Walla, Steven Andrews
- Mimal — Alfred Rickson, Leon Lawrence
- SEAL — Clarry Rogers, Clive Nunggarrgalu
- Warddeken — Conrad Maralngurra, Terrah Guymala
- Yirralka — Lirrpiya Mununggurr, Shane Wuthurra
- Wunungmurra
- NALFA — Charmaine Minkirrkirr, Eslyn Wauchope
- CEO — Jennifer Ansell
- CFO — John O’Brien
- Capacity Development and Training Manager — Mark Desailly
- Bushfire Project Officer — Stephanie Rouse
- Seasonal Fire Officer — Travis Enright
- NALFA Fire Support Officer — Jack Nugent
- Governance Facilitator — Sally Clifford



Rexy Djarrkadama and Rico Rranggutja of ASRAC rangers conduct roadside burning. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC

ALFA Membership is made up of Traditional Landowners from the eleven partner ranger groups

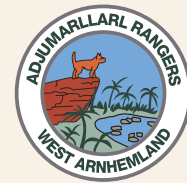
Membership class



Bawinanga



Warddeken



Adjumarllarl



Mimal



Jawoyn



ASRAC



SEAL



Yirralka



NALFA

Directors



Victor Rostron



Conrad Maralngurra



Shaun Namarnyilk



Alfred Rickson



Tony Walla



Gladys Malibirr



Clarry Rogers



Lirripiya Mununggurr



Charmaine Minkirkirr



Felina Campion



Terrah Guymala



Anderson Nalorlman



Leon Lawrence



Steven Andrews



Otto Campion



Clive Nunggarrgalu



Shane Wuthurra Wunungmurra



Eslyn Wauchope



Roadside burning is performed along the network of roads and tracks in project areas. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC

ALFA staff



Top left to right: Jennifer Ansell (CEO), John O'Brien (CFO), Mark Desailly (Capacity Development and Training Manager), Stephanie Rouse (Bushfire Project Officer), Travis Enright (Seasonal Fire Officer), Jack Nugent (NALFA Fire Support Officer), Sally Clifford (Governance Facilitator).

There is rarely a dull year in the Australian carbon market, and 2022 was no exception.

Highly influenced by government policy and intervention, the year began with carbon prices reaching an all-time high of more than \$55 per ACCU, which quickly halved in price following the introduction of an administrative exit to Government carbon purchasing contracts. Prices strengthened again off the back of a change of government, only to fall significantly following widespread concerns around the integrity of some carbon abatement methods, and then stagnate during an extensive Independent Review into the Integrity of the Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme led by Professor Ian Chubb.

Whilst a challenging period for carbon sales, ALFA welcomed the increased focus on carbon project integrity and the opportunity to present information to the Integrity Review within the context of ALFAs leading role in the carbon market as a significant producer of high-integrity ACCUs. The result of the Integrity Review has been positive for ALFA, with carbon buyers approaching the market with greater scrutiny and the production and

supply of ALFA carbon credits continuing to gain market recognition for both their integrity as well as their significant environmental, social and cultural outcomes.

The pilot exit arrangements to Government carbon purchasing contracts have also been successful for ALFA in terms of realising additional income from the sale of ALFAs high integrity 'premium' carbon credits. However, given the size of ALFAs current Government Carbon Abatement Contracts, the administrative exit fee required to be paid by ALFA annually to the Clean Energy Regulator is a substantial sum of money – money that could be fully reinvested to significantly increase the funding that ALFA can deliver to its project partners to undertake fire management and deliver on broader land management and community development aspirations for the people of Arnhem Land. We continue to advocate for the recognition of ALFAs charitable status in ongoing reforms to Government carbon purchasing policy.



Jennifer Ansell
CEO

ALFA was proud to register a new carbon project area in northwest Arnhem Land this year, and to formally incorporate Traditional Owners for the new project area within the governance structure of the company. New ranger program partners from the Mardbalk and Garngi rangers worked together with existing partners Adjumarllarl rangers to operate the new fire project in 2022 and achieved an excellent abatement result in their first year.

The delivery of accredited training through ALFA's Capacity Development project had a very successful first year of on-the-job training. There was strong interest in training from all partner ranger groups with a particular interest in attaining the helicopter-based qualifications first. Congratulations to all the rangers in Arnhem Land that completed accredited units in 2022.

2022 also saw the commencement of one of ALFAs most ambitious and important projects – undertaking pre-consultation work with Traditional Owners in preparation for the renewal of ALFA's Land Use

Agreements. Involving personalised conversations with hundreds of Traditional Owners across Arnhem Land, this provides an opportunity for people to hear updates about fire project operations and outcomes, share their feedback, ask questions and to think and talk with family about the continued operation of the project on their Country prior to an official consultation process.

Finally, as always it is a great privilege to work with ALFA's Board of Directors, ALFA's small team of dedicated staff members, and ALFA's project partners – the Aboriginal ranger programs and their host organisations in Arnhem Land. Together, these exceptional people coordinate, undertake and support world class fire management operations with Traditional Landowners that produce carbon offsets of the very highest integrity. I am extremely proud to present ALFA's 2022 Annual Report on their behalf.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Ansell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Core strategic actions of ALFA customary fire management

Left to right: Rangers share fire scar maps with Landowners to plan annual burning activities. Photo © Steph Rouse and Yirralka; Rangers perform fuel reduction burning in the early dry season. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA; Rangers use choppers to conduct strategic aerial burning, which breaks up Country into a mosaic of burnt and unburnt areas. Photo © Northern Land Council; Many plants, animals and ecological communities, such as the White-throated Grasswren, are fire sensitive and require particular fire regimes. Photo © Warddeken Land Management; Rangers perform fuel reduction burns at a rock art gallery and occupation site. Photo © Warddeken Land Management; Fire projects operate over the long term, and so ensuring a new generation of Landowners have the skills and knowledge to manage them into the future is imperative. Photo © ASRAC



1.

Engage the right people for Country in the planning and delivery of all fire management activities.



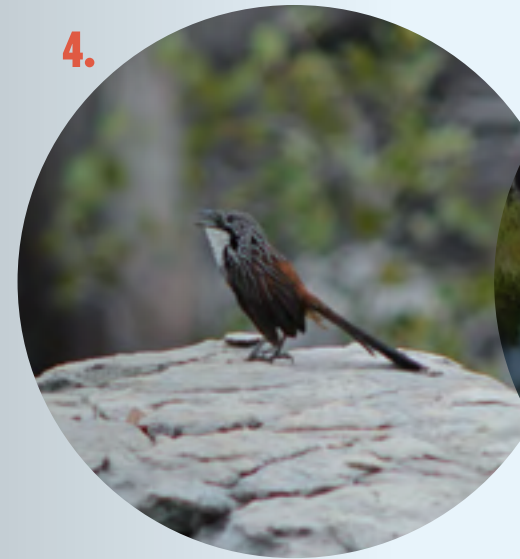
2.

Burn early in the dry season at times of heavy dew and little wind, so that fires burn slow and cool, and go out overnight.



3.

Burn strategically, using natural breaks such as moist ground along creeks, cliff lines and tracks to leave patches of unburned country surrounded by burned breaks.



4.

Protect fire sensitive ecological communities, flora and fauna by utilising cool burning and creating early-burned breaks.



5.

Protect sacred sites, rock art galleries, burial sites and other sites of cultural significance by creating early-burned breaks.



6.

Teach the next generation of Traditional Owners to master customary fire management skills and knowledge, preparing them to take over the project in the future.



Attendees at one of the first meetings to bring together Landowners from across west and central Arnhem Land to discuss fire management, held at Weemol in 2005. Many of the leaders in this image are now deceased, though their legacy lives on. Image courtesy of Peter Cooke.

A homegrown success story

The history of fire projects in Arnhem Land

“It is difficult to overstate the impact of the WALFA Project on today’s carbon market. As the landscape scale model upon which the government-approved Savanna Burning Methodology was based, WALFA has provided a template for every current and future savanna burning fire management project across northern Australia.”

ALFA’s origin lies in the ground-breaking West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (WALFA) project – the world’s first savanna burning abatement project.

In the mid-1990s, Elders and cultural leaders from across Arnhem Land began a conversation with a small group of non-Aboriginal scientists about the importance of fire in the landscape. They explained that before the depopulation of the Arnhem plateau and surrounding areas, fire had been the key tool they had used to care for their estates.

They spoke of ‘orphaned Country’ whose Landowners had been drawn to missions and settlements, and of their grave concern that without customary management – especially of fire – the physical and spiritual Indigenous estate was sick.

Satellite fire histories substantiated the concerns of Traditional Owners, confirming that fire regimes across the region were now dominated by late dry season wildfire. Data showed that these wildfires often burned intensely for months on end, across thousands of square kilometres, only extinguished by the arrival of the annual wet season rains.

These early discussions led to the development of a vision of Traditional Owners returning to live on Country, and in doing so, reinvigorating the fire management practices essential to its ongoing health. Over the next decade, Indigenous ranger groups in Arnhem Land used the limited resources available to them to refine their ability to once again manage fire at a landscape scale, and in the process innovating practices that allowed them to emulate customary fire management using modern tools and technology.

Concurrently, scientists were developing methods to demonstrate the efficacy of this work by measuring the extent of fires, calculating the seasonal differences in

greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions between early and late dry season fires, and understanding GHG emissions for a range of vegetation communities.

A core group of Indigenous fire experts and non-Indigenous scientists continued to work together to explore and define the relationship between customary burning and emission reductions – this pioneering early research went on to become the foundation of the current Savanna Burning Methodology.

Despite these exciting developments, for the Traditional Owners and rangers of west Arnhem Land, managing fire at the necessary scale remained beyond their financial capability. In 2006, after years of negotiation, a trailblazing solution was reached when ConocoPhillips entered into the West Arnhem Fire Management Agreement with the Northern Territory Government. This first-of-a-kind agreement saw ConocoPhillips support Landowners to restore fire management over more than 28,000 km² of west Arnhem Land (the WALFA project area) to offset GHG emissions from their newly established Darwin Liquefied Natural Gas plant.

The WALFA project proved to be an innovative and effective solution to securing long-term funding to support fire management and immediately allowed Traditional Landowners and Aboriginal rangers to get back out on Country, initiating fire management programs that reconnected people to Country and bringing back strategic, cool early dry season burning at a landscape scale.

It is difficult to overstate the impact of the WALFA Project on today’s carbon market. As the landscape scale model upon which the government-approved Savanna Burning Methodology was based, WALFA has provided a template for every current and future savanna burning fire management project across northern Australia.

The origin of ALFA

“From a Western ecological perspective, fire management in Arnhem Land resourced through ALFA’s engagement with the carbon industry, has successfully addressed the prevalence of hot, widespread and destructive wildfires in the landscape – a threat to the environmental assets of northern Australia recognised in both Aboriginal and Western science knowledge systems.”¹

Following the introduction of carbon legislation in Australia in 2011, the five ranger groups partnered in the WALFA project decided they wanted to transition the then-voluntary WALFA project to an eligible offsets project, which would allow them to earn and sell ACCUs.

Extensive Landowner consultations ensued, focusing on how best to create an Aboriginal-owned company to represent them collectively in their engagement with the carbon market. In 2013, WALFA Limited was established for this purpose, and in 2015 the name of the company was changed to ALFA (NT) Limited, to reflect its growth throughout Arnhem Land.

ALFA registered WALFA as an eligible offsets project in late 2014, and since then the company has grown to support Traditional Owners to register and operationalise projects in central, south-east, north-east and north-west Arnhem Land. Together, these projects cover a significant and contiguous area of almost 86,000 km² of Arnhem Land.

Currently, eleven Aboriginal ranger groups consisting of Traditional Owners and their families, undertake all operational aspects of the landscape scale fire management that occurs across the six ALFA project areas. Membership of ALFA is open to any Traditional Owner of land where an ALFA project operates – as such, ALFA is at once an alliance and a collaboration between Traditional Owners and their affiliated ranger groups.

In developing ALFA, Traditional Owners were clear in their directive that the company should be not-for-profit, and that all revenue from the sale of ACCUs must be reinvested back into the Aboriginal ranger groups to provide local employment while preserving culture and the environment. ALFA continues to operate under this directive, operating with minimal overheads such that 95 per cent of all income generated is paid to the ranger groups to support and improve fire management activities across the project areas.



ASRAC ranger Rexy Djarrkadama directs aerial burning in the CALFA project. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC

ALFA's core actions

Manage the generation and sale of ACCUs on behalf of partner groups

Contract and fund partner ranger groups to deliver fire management activities

Support pre- and post-season meetings for partner groups and stakeholders

Fund a bushfire project officer to support ranger groups throughout the year

Fund a seasonal fire officer to support ranger groups fight wildfires

Coordinate data collection and reporting

Deliver accredited, custom developed training

Facilitate Producers Group meetings

Manage a grants program to fund partner ranger groups develop and undertake community led projects consistent with ALFAs charitable objects

Provide policy and industry advice and support the ongoing development of the Indigenous carbon industry

Savanna Burning Methodology

“95 per cent of all income generated is paid to the ranger groups for the purpose of supporting and improving fire management activities across the project areas.”¹



Whilst rangers perform the formal elements of SFM projects, their work is complemented and enhanced by the continued customary burning practices of Traditional Owners across Arnhem Land. Here, Elizabeth Djakurrur uses a 'bush drip torch' to light Country in the ASRAC region. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC

All fires emit greenhouse gases, with savanna fires emitting methane and nitrous oxide in particular. The Savanna Burning Methodology is based on the strategic use of early dry season fire to reduce the emission of methane and nitrous oxide from the burning of savannas, compared to the emissions from a baseline period.

Each carbon credit unit generated under the Savanna Burning Methodology represents one tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent net abatement, achieved by undertaking planned fire management within the project area.

Net abatement is determined by measuring the difference between methane and nitrous oxide emissions from a project's baseline period against each subsequent project year. The difference between baseline and annual project emissions reflects the change resulting from a change in fire management practices and in Arnhem Land, the reintroduction of customary burning. Importantly, projects only generate carbon credits if they are successful in avoiding emissions of methane and nitrous oxide compared to their baseline period.

Many of ALFA's partners facilitate activities that connect Landowners with Country, such as bushwalks, which provide an opportunity to perform widespread fine scale burning. Photo © Cody Thomas and Warddeken Land Management

Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) Generation

How does it work?

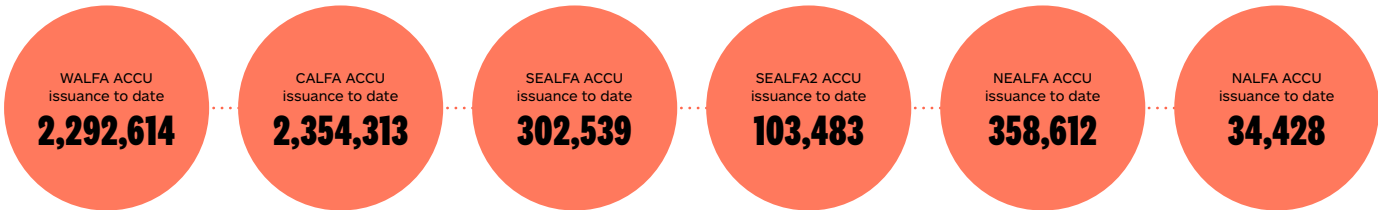


Ashaleena Guymala of Warddeken rangers works to protect entire stands of the at-risk, fire sensitive and endemic Anbinik forests. Photo © Warddeken Land Management

The Clean Energy Regulator issue Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) for greenhouse gas abatement activities undertaken as part of the Emissions Reduction Fund, a federal scheme that provides financial incentives to organisations and individuals to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and improve their energy efficiency.

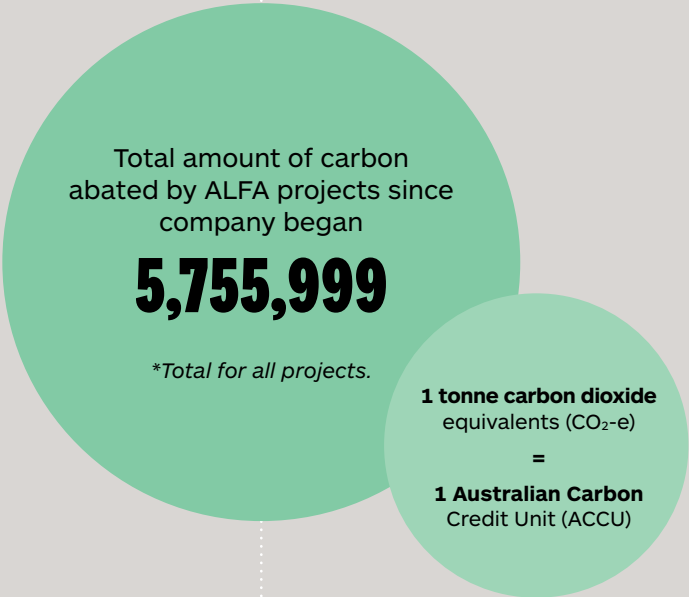
ALFA's six projects generate carbon credits through Federal Government legislation focused on carbon farming, with the issuance of ACCUs being governed by the *Carbon Farming Initiative Act (CFI) 2011*, the *Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Regulations 2011 (CFI Regulations 2011)* and the *Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Rule 2015 (CFI Rule 2015)*.

ACCU issuance to date



Producing ACCUs

How is success measured?



The production of ACCUs is highly regulated to ensure that emissions reductions are genuine; additional to business-as-usual; can be counted towards Australia's emissions reduction targets; are measurable and verifiable; evidence-based; account for project emissions; and are conservative – these are the principles of the Offsets Integrity Standard.

Several requirements must be satisfied before a project can be formally declared an 'eligible offsets project', and there are ongoing, annual requirements in undertaking such a project. These requirements include:

- There must be an approved methodology for the type of project.
- The project must deliver abatement that is additional to what would occur in the absence of the project.
- The project must be undertaken in accordance with the methodology and comply with other scheme eligibility requirements.

- The project proponent must report to the Regulator about the conduct of the project and the abatement achieved. Certain reports must be accompanied by a report prepared by a registered greenhouse gas and energy auditor.

Every year ALFA generates ACCUs from the six registered savanna burning project areas. A public record of these ACCUs is available online in the Emissions Reduction Fund Project Register cleanenergyregulator.gov.au

With all partner groups recording strong abatement outcomes in 2022, the total amount of ACCUs generated by ALFA projects grew to over five million (over the lifetime of the projects). This represents a major contribution to global emissions reduction, highlighting ALFA's position as the largest Indigenous carbon producer in Australia.

For ALFA and our partners, integrity isn't a buzzword or a branding device – integrity has always been at the heart of why the company was created, what we achieve and how we operate.

In 2022, ALFA welcomed the announcement of the Chubb Review, an assessment of the integrity of Australia's carbon market led by a panel of independent experts. This provided an opportunity to present information to the integrity review panel within the context of ALFA's leading role in the carbon market, as a significant producer of high integrity ACCUs.

For ALFA, there are three key factors enabling the production of high integrity ACCUs in Arnhem Land:

1. All ALFA projects operate under the rigorous Savanna Fire Management (SFM) method.
2. ALFA's operations and performance outcomes produce ACCUs that maximise environmental, social, cultural, and economic co-benefits.
3. The charitable reinvestment of ACCU income supports culturally appropriate fire management and community-led priority projects.

High integrity ACCUs

ALFA seeks to maximise returns to partner organisations, and in the eight-year period from June 2014 – June 2022, ALFA has generated \$56.9 million dollars from the sale of ACCUs, of which 93% has been directly reinvested to ALFA's Aboriginal project partners.



Cyril Ganawa is nine years old and has cultural connections to the Warddeken IPA. Over the years, Cyril has participated in many cultural events facilitated by Warddeken rangers, including three bushwalks, four culture camps and one kangaroo fire drive. This engagement, says his mother Simone Namarnyilk, is helping him grow up strong and confident. Photo © Cody Thomas and Nawarddeken Academy

1. Savanna Fire Management (SFM) method

- Transparent
- Scientific rigour
- Alignment with environmental and cultural aspirations
- Nature-based solution

A Traditional Landowner initiative, the SFM carbon methodology was created to solve the previously intractable cultural and environmental problem of how to reinstate and fund Aboriginal fire management practices in Arnhem Land across a vast, remote landscape subject to uncontrolled fire.

The SFM method proved to be an innovative, nature-based market solution to the problem, with the rigorous carbon accounting made possible by decades of published peer-reviewed scientific research. This data includes understanding vegetation population dynamics in northern Australian savannas; quantifying vegetation fuel types, fuel accumulation, fuel consumption and fire patchiness; measuring the combustion and emissions from different fuel classes under different fire regimes; and methods for mapping and verifying fire extent.

The SFM method focuses on carbon accounting, allowing Traditional Landowners to maintain autonomy over the management of fire on their Country. The SFM method does not prescribe how, when or where burning should occur within a project area, meaning that Traditional Landowners and rangers remain in control of all fire management activities. Within this broad scope, the methodology allows flexibility to undertake burning that is culturally and environmentally appropriate for that project area, in accord with Landowner priorities.

SFM Emissions Avoidance projects create permanent emissions reduction with no risk of reversal. Importantly, they only generate an abatement if they are successful at reducing GHG emissions compared to emissions from their pre-project baseline. As a further conservative measure, an uncertainty buffer is built into the SFM method, whereby the Clean Energy Regulator collects and holds 5 per cent of the projects baseline emissions to manage for any negative abatement years.

The success of ALFA projects is also independently verifiable using publicly available information – registered project locations are available from the Emissions Reduction Fund project register, and the application of SFM by individual projects is visible on the North Australian Fire Information (NAFI) website in the form of mapped fire scars. The online Savanna Burning Abatement Tool (SavBAT) can provide estimates of abatement success given an underlying public vegetation map and annual fire scar mapping. The transparency with which ALFA projects operate under the SFM method, and the integrity of abatement claims, can be verified by the public at any time and at no cost.



Reinstating customary fire regimes and active fire suppression across Arnhem Land has been successful in reducing the frequency and extent of severe fires. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA

2. ALFA performance and operations under the SFM method

- ALFA was created by Traditional Owners as their own not-for-profit carbon business
- Co-benefits are maximised on Aboriginal land when Aboriginal people own and operate eligible offset projects
- Generation of significant environmental, cultural and socio-economic benefits – fire management outcomes, employment, cultural site protection, people on Country etc
- Permanent and conservative abatement results

ALFA is an Aboriginal-owned, not-for-profit company initially created by the Aboriginal ranger groups operating the WALFA project. Since then, the company has expanded to support other fire projects throughout Arnhem Land. The fire management delivered across ALFA's six eligible offset project areas provides work opportunities for over 300 Traditional Owners in Arnhem Land, is a source of pride amongst many, and is considered one of the best examples of savanna fire management in the world.

All ALFA projects are located on inalienable freehold Aboriginal Land in Arnhem Land, vested by the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (NT) 1976* in the land trusts managed by statutory land councils. As prescribed under this legislation, the Section 19 Land Use Agreement process gives Traditional Owners the opportunity to consider proposals on their land, develop terms and conditions, and the right to consent or reject proposals. ALFA was granted and holds Section 19 Land Use Agreements by the Northern Land Council following extensive consultations and negotiations with Traditional Owners (Altman et al. 2020).

The joint strategies of reinstating customary fire regimes and active fire suppression across Arnhem Land through the operation of the fire projects has been successful in reducing the frequency and extent of severe fires, as well as facilitating more heterogeneous patches of vegetation, managing long-unburnt patches in the landscape and creating significant GHG abatements (Ansell et al. 2020, Evans and Russell-Smith 2020).

Abatement in Arnhem Land is both permanent and conservative. For the suite of registered ALFA projects, over 95,000 ACCUs have been held permanently by the federal government's Clean Energy Regulator as an uncertainty buffer. For ALFA projects in Arnhem Land, the occurrence of negative abatement years is very rare, occurring on only three occasions in the last decade, due to extreme fire weather conditions in the late dry season. The total amount of negative abatement from these three events amounted to less than 10,500 tonnes of CO₂-e, 11 per cent of the held uncertainty buffers.

3. ALFAs charitable reinvestment of ACCU income

- Culturally appropriate landscape-scale fire management
- Community-led priority projects, including: the creation of independent Aboriginal land management organisations; funding contributions to develop, register and run independent remote homelands-based schools; ecological monitoring and research; reconnecting Traditional Owners with depopulated estates; infrastructure and capital items to increase capacity

Engagement in ALFA projects is now a critically important source of income and employment, as well integral to the environmental, social and cultural fabric of Arnhem Land. As in other remote areas of Australia,

many Aboriginal people in Arnhem Land live in deep poverty. Socio-economic data for the region is stark, with only three in ten adults in paid employment, a high dependence on state income support, and more than 50 per cent of the population living below the poverty line.

It is within this socio-economic context that ALFA operates as a charity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). In line with the original vision of the Elders and cultural leaders who pioneered the Savanna Burning Method, income from the sale of carbon credits is reinvested for the express purpose of supporting ALFA's charitable objects, with a particular focus on reinvestment to fund culturally appropriate fire management.

ALFA seeks to maximise returns to partner organisations, and in the eight-year period from June 2014 – June 2022, ALFA has generated \$56.9 million dollars from the sale of ACCUs. Of this income, 93 per cent has been directly reinvested to ALFA's Aboriginal project partners, with the remainder funding ALFA's operations and maintaining cash operational reserves.

ALFA's eleven Aboriginal partner organisations (who are themselves charitable entities registered with the ACNC) are the recipients of all ALFA funding, and undertake land management activities that will protect, preserve and care for the environment and which are consistent with Aboriginal customary rights and obligations. ALFA also supports broader charitable outcomes through funding community

identified projects that address disadvantage in aged care and education and alleviate poverty, sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, destitution and helplessness.

Examples of community identified projects funded through the sale of ACCUs include the establishment of independent Aboriginal land management organisations, funding contributions to develop, register and run independent remote homelands-based schools, ecological monitoring and research, reconnecting Traditional Owners with 'orphaned' (depopulated) estates as well as infrastructure and capital items to increase the capacity of Aboriginal ranger groups to support Traditional Owners to manage the land and sea country of Arnhem Land.



Left: Maureen Namarnyilk has grown up at a homeland community in the Warddeken IPA. Her father Zacharia is a senior ranger with Warddeken, and Maureen wants to follow in his footsteps. Photo © Cody Thomas and Nawarddeken Academy

Right: Anbinik is the Kunwinjku word for *Allosyncarpia ternata* – both the individual tree and the forest ecosystem. Anbinik are ancient ancestors of today's eucalypt, and of cultural and ecological importance. Rangers from Warddeken have been protecting these forests with fire for 13 years. Photo © Cody Thomas and Nawarddeken Academy



ALFA Section 19 Land Use Agreement renewal project

The *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976* provides the legal framework for progressing social, commercial and economic development activities on Aboriginal land on behalf of Traditional Aboriginal Owners. The Northern Land Council (NLC) carries out consultations and negotiations on behalf of Traditional Aboriginal Owners with those interested in carrying out social, commercial and economic development activities on Aboriginal land and waters.

This process is called the Section 19 agreement process, and it gives Traditional Landowners an opportunity to consider, develop terms and conditions and the right to consent to or reject proposals on their land and seas. ALFA holds Section 19 Land Use Agreements for all ALFA project areas, that grants ALFA the legal right to undertake fire management in the project area and to earn and sell carbon credits from the management of fire.

The current Section 19 Land Use Agreements were granted in December 2014 for the 14-year period from 1st January 2011 until the 31st December 2024. At the time, the crediting period under the Savanna Burning Method was for 7 + 7 years – hence the application for a total period of 14 years. However, the crediting period under the Savanna Burning Method has since been revised to a total of 25 years.

ALFA needs to secure new Section 19 Agreements for the remainder of the current 25-year crediting period (until 31st December 2035). At the start of 2022, ALFA contracted experienced consultants to begin work on the Section 19 Renewal Project. The first job of the consultants was to work with all ALFA partner ranger groups to update and compile a list of Traditional Landowners for each of the registered fire project areas.

Throughout 2022, the consultants travelled to 26 communities across west, central and south Arnhem Land, working alongside local Indigenous rangers and key informants to hold individual and small family group consultations with Landowners for each of ALFA's partner ranger programs. Using a highly visual consultation book, consultants shared the story of the fire projects, outlining a history of fire projects in Arnhem Land, the origin of ALFA, the success of the projects to date, and an overview of the proposed Section 19 renewal.

The response from Landowners from all communities was resounding support for continuation of the WALFA and CALFA projects, with near unanimous support expressed for the continued:

- delivery of fire management programs by relevant ranger groups;
- participation in the carbon economy through the WALFA/CALFA projects;
- work of ALFA in negotiating bureaucratic and business requirements on behalf of Landowners and their respective ranger groups.

These information sharing consultations also highlighted that for many Landowners, the work of rangers in delivering the WALFA/CALFA projects is a source of great pride. Many Landowners also advised that they view ranger work as one of the most important forms of employment throughout the region, particularly on homeland (also known as outstation) communities.

A total of 992 Traditional Owners were consulted in 2022 – approximately half of the 1800 Landowners currently on the master spreadsheet. ALFA information sharing consultations will continue in 2023, with an aim of engaging and consulting as many Landowners as possible. In 2023, the NLC will also commence formal Section 19 processes.



SECTION 19 RENEWAL

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TRADITIONAL LANDOWNERS CONSULTED
*WALFA AND CALFA PROJECTS



Above: Consultant Jake Weigl and daughter Scout during consultations with Traditional Landowner Kevin Bulliwana at Manabadurma in Jabiru.
Left: Consultations were held in small family group settings, which allowed Landowners to ask questions and provided a more relaxed, informal context for the conversations.



Australasian Emissions Reduction Summit



Left: Warddeken rangers ferry in a helicopter to fight a wildfire in the Warddeken IPA. Photo © Steph Rouse and Warddeken Land Management
Above left and right: Jonah Ryan of Bawinanga rangers, Jen Ansell and Steph Rouse of ALFA and Jai Nabalwad of Warddeken rangers represented ALFA at the 2022 Australasian Emissions Reduction Summit. Photos © ALFA

In October 2022, ALFA attended the Carbon Market Institute's annual Australasian Emissions Reduction Summit in Sydney. The theme for the event was Integrity, Urgency, Ambition, and ALFA was proud to be able to showcase and discuss how ALFA's projects operate in Arnhem Land to meet these goals.

ALFA thank market engagement partner TEM for the opportunity to host a booth at the Summit, and to bring rangers from Arnhem Land to the event. This provided Indigenous rangers Jai Nabalwad and Jonah Ryan, and ALFA staff Steph Rouse and Jen Ansell the chance to engage one-on-one with summit participants about the ALFA projects, the critical work of ranger groups in Arnhem Land, and the amazing on ground results achieved.

ALFA's custom training program

Capacity Development and Training Manager Mark Desailly works one-on-one with Warddeken ranger Recain Nabarlambarl as part of the unit 'Operate aerial ignition equipment in an aircraft'. Training focuses on supporting rangers to learn to confidently and competently use and maintain Raindance incendiary machines, which are used by rangers to conduct aerial burning. Photo © ALFA and Warddeken Land Management

After working closely alongside our partners over many years, ALFA identified a need to dedicate more time and resources to developing capacity and recognising the existing skills of Aboriginal rangers undertaking fire management within Arnhem Land. Critical to this was a need to design custom training, entirely relevant to the context in which the skills and knowledge would be used.

In 2020, funding was secured for a three-year project to develop a model of training delivery that adapts Nationally Accredited Units of Competency to an Arnhem Land context, aiming to increase the capacity of rangers to deliver best-practice fire management. Funding was obtained from the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) and the Karrkad Kanjdji Trust (KKT) and in 2021, ALFA entered into a third-party delivery agreement with a local NT-based Registered Training Organisation (RTO), Train Safe NT.

Consultations with partner ranger groups indicated that a clear priority for all groups was accredited training in helicopter-based fire management operations. In response, we trialled modes of delivery and methods of assessment for the 'Work safely around aircraft' and 'Operate aerial ignition equipment in an aircraft' units with six different ranger groups, allowing an optimal model to be developed.

ALFA's hands-on approach to these two units involves instruction in the use, maintenance and safety features of the Raindance incendiary machine; theory of the principles of operation; and an operational flight under instruction, which includes an in-flight emergency fire drill. Students must also complete a further two operational flights of at least one hour to gain competency.

In 2022, ALFA had four Units of Competency available for enrolment, delivery and assessment, with a high demand from all partner groups in accessing the training. There was also considerable interest from outside groups.

As a result of ALFA's custom training program, large numbers of Aboriginal rangers in Arnhem Land have now attained nationally recognised qualifications in units related specifically to the savanna burning projects. Importantly, all training is undertaken on Country and on-the-job, in the course of scheduled ranger work activities.

Recognising the benefit of teaching in local languages, work also commenced on the production of a series of demonstrative videos in a range of languages spoken across Arnhem Land. These resources will be used alongside simultaneous mentoring during face-to-face training periods.

TRAINING UNITS AND PARTICIPANTS 2022

34

WORK SAFELY AROUND AIRCRAFT

3

PREVENT INJURY

31

OPERATE AERIAL IGNITION EQUIPMENT IN AN AIRCRAFT

3

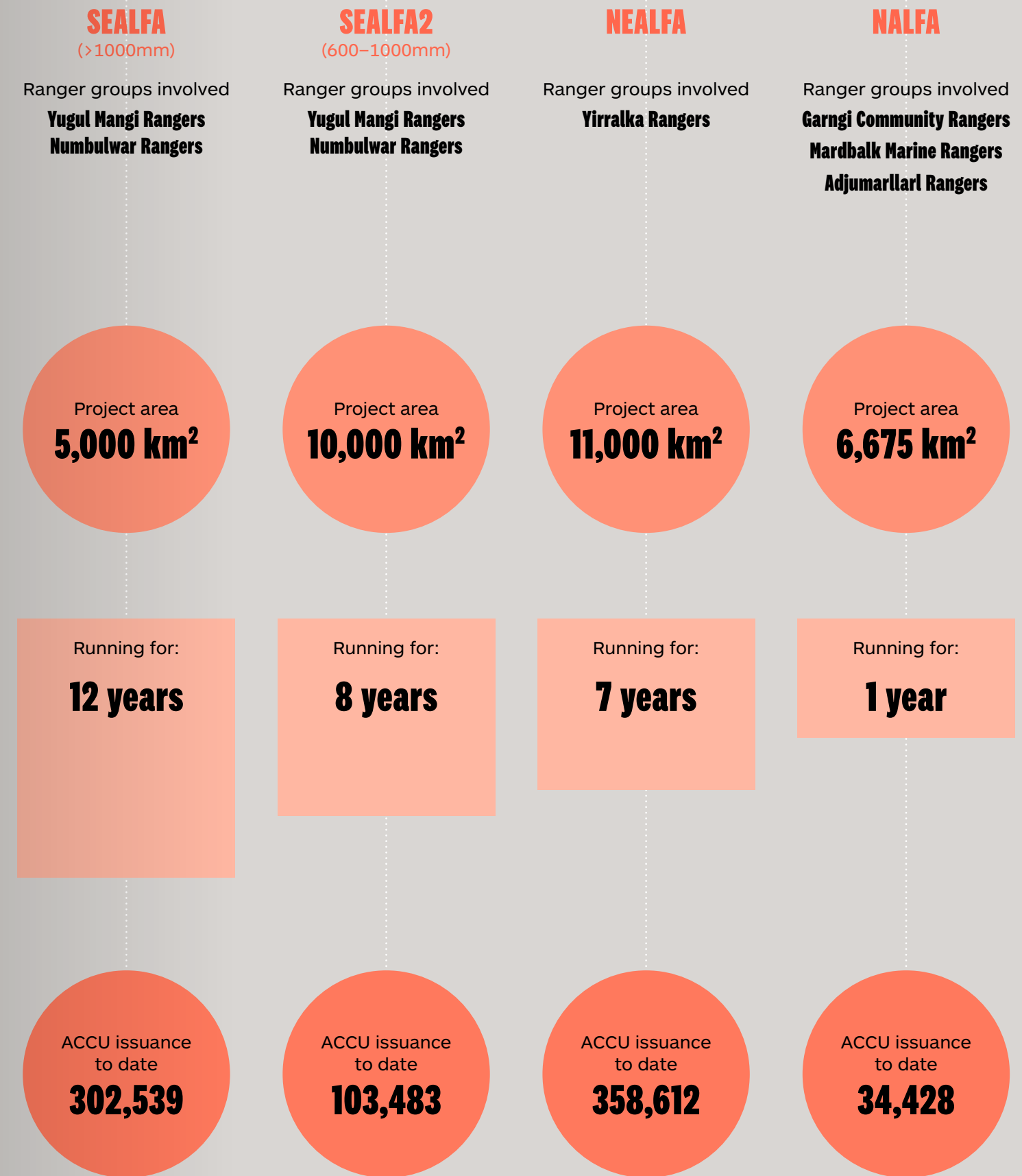
RESPOND TO WILDFIRE



Summary of ALFA project areas – overall key statistics

“From a Western ecological perspective, fire management in Arnhem Land, resourced through ALFA’s engagement with the carbon industry, has successfully addressed the prevalence of hot, widespread and destructive wildfires in the landscape – a threat to the environmental assets of northern Australia recognised in both Aboriginal and Western science knowledge systems.”¹

1 tonne carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂-e) = 1 Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU)



Summary of ALFA project areas – 2022 management statistics

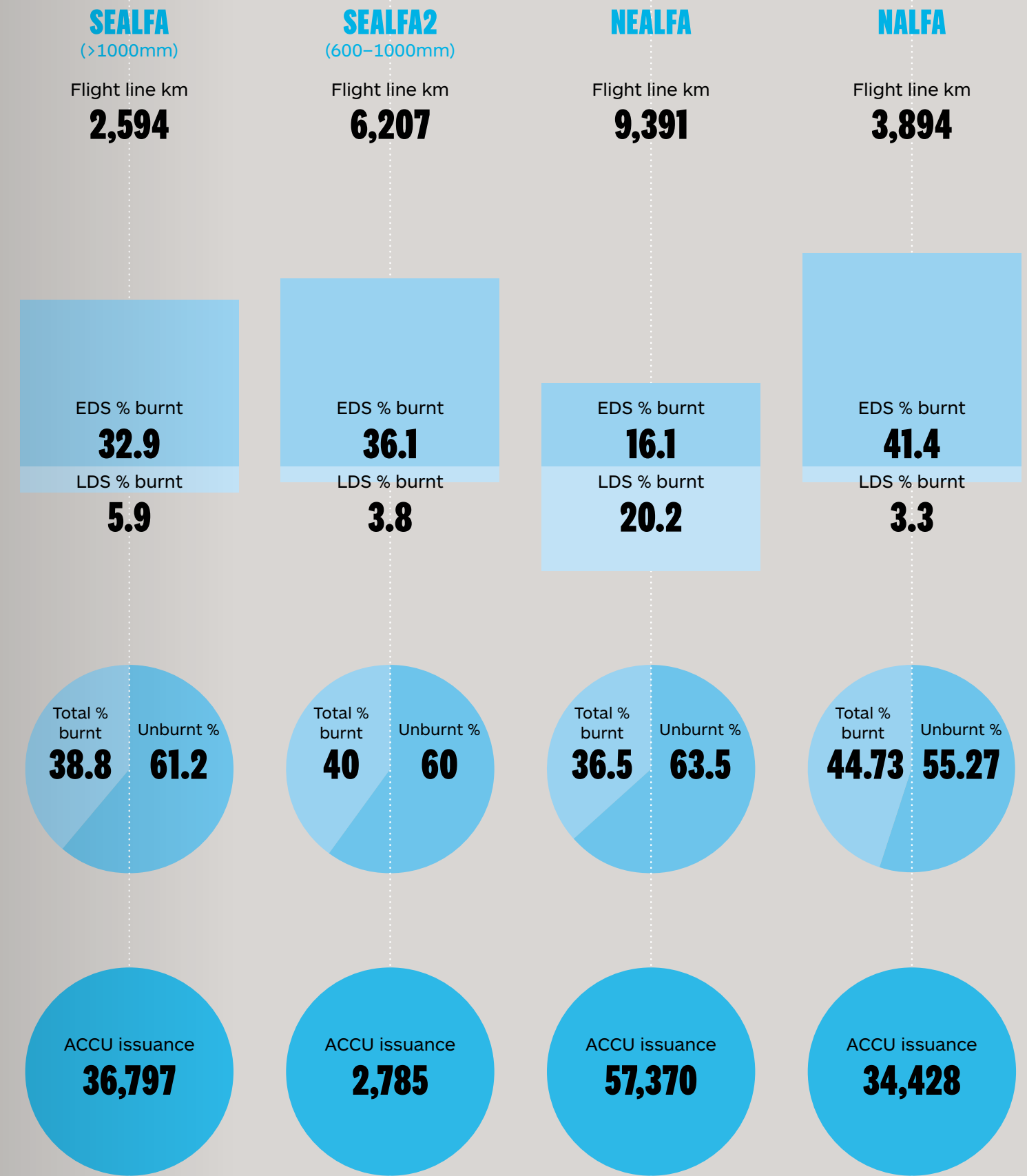
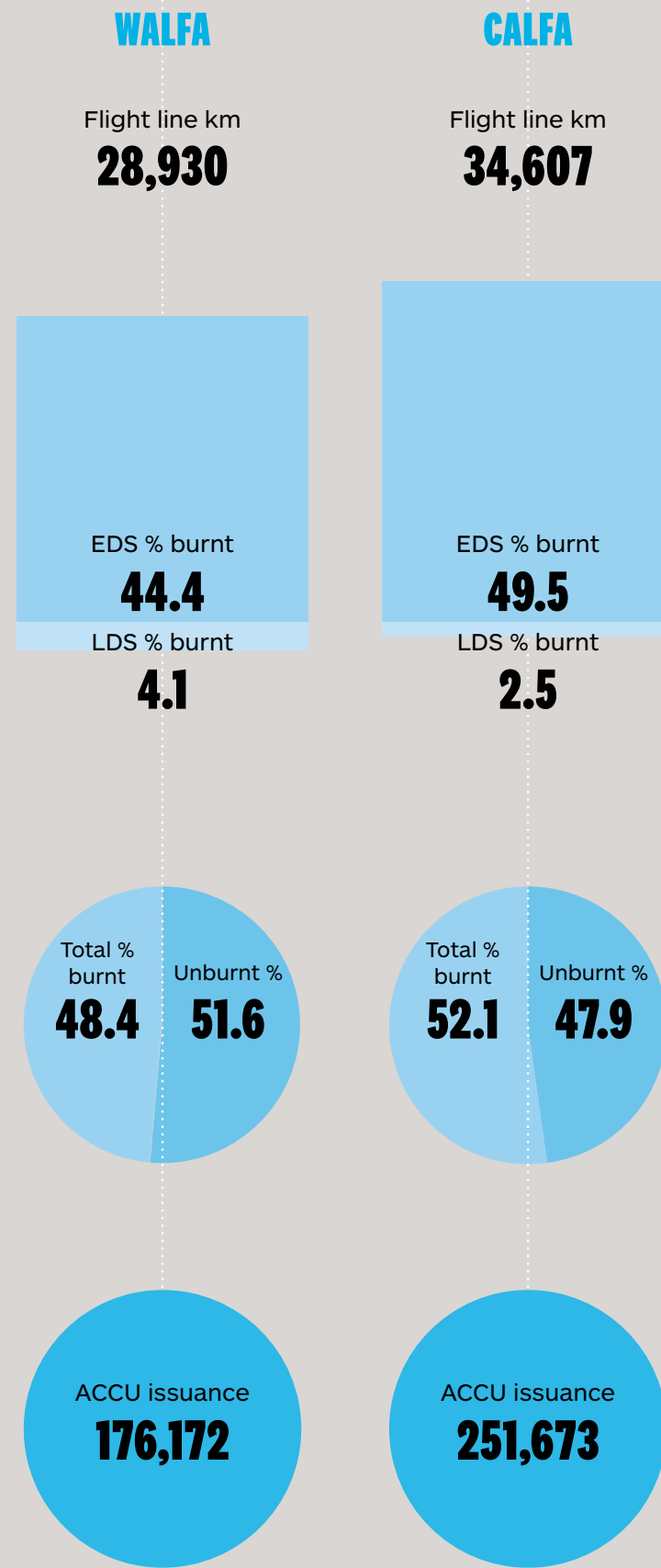
*Combined totals of ALFA partners.

Flight line kilometres represent the total distance flown by each project during aerial prescribed burning operations.

EDS % is the per cent of the project area burnt in the early dry season (January to July). LDS % is the per cent burnt in the late dry season (August to December).

Unburnt % represents the total area of each project unburnt by early or late fire. Research suggests maintaining long unburnt areas of country is a key requirement to protect threatened fauna, and so undertaking planned burning early in the EDS and active wildfire prevention in the LDS to maintain large tracts of unburnt country is critically important.

1 tonne carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂-e) = 1 Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU)



Fire Management Activities Summary 2022

- Planning and consultation
- Asset protection
- On ground burning
- Aerial burning
- Cultural programs
- Wildfire suppression

This section of the report provides an overview of the success of our partners against each core strategic action. Figures represent the combined totals of all ranger groups.



Rangers and Traditional Owners from homeland communities play a key role in the delivery of SFM projects in Arnhem Land. The richly patterned burning they deliver throughout the early dry season is not only critical to ACCU generation, but represents the continuation of a land management technique practiced for thousands of years. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC

Prior to commencing early dry season fire management, rangers from ALFA's partner groups travel across Arnhem Land to consult the Traditional Owners of clan estates within their respective project areas. These conversations allow Landowners to inform rangers about where, when and how they want burning to occur on their Country, and to advise rangers if they would like to be involved in fire management work. Pre-season Landowner consultations guide and inform each ranger group's annual burning plan.

ALFA held a pre-fire season meeting at Barrapunta homeland in the Mimal operational area on 5-6th April 2022. Over 70 participants came together for the meeting, consisting of representatives from all ranger groups involved in ALFA fire projects, as well as other stakeholders. The meeting was the first large-scale gathering since the beginning of the COVID-19 epidemic, and rangers were excited to once again sit down with neighbouring groups to discuss their management plans, present proposed burning activities for the year, and identify strategic ways to work together to maximise outcomes.

Each ranger group also undertook internal Landowner consultations, ensuring Landowners (patrilineal

ownership) and Djungkay (matrilineal ownership) for clan estates within their respective operational areas gave their informed consent for burning work to occur. Consultations also allow Landowners to provide important feedback to rangers about how they should deliver the year's fire management program. This includes identifying who will undertake aerial controlled burning, expressing interest in joining planned fire management activities, cultural camps and bushwalks, as well as requesting resources and support to independently deliver cultural burning activities. Across Arnhem Land, there is a strong connection between Landowners and the rangers who work to protect their Country, with hundreds of Landowners working across the fire projects each year.

**PLANNING
AND CONSULTATION**

483

**TRADITIONAL
LANDOWNERS CONSULTED**



Above: Yugul Mangi rangers present their 2022 fire plan to attendees at the 2022 pre-fire season meeting. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA
Below: Attendees from all 11 ALFA partner groups at the 2022 pre-fire season meeting at Barrapunta. Photo © ALFA



A key feature of on ground burning is the widespread asset protection work performed by rangers across their respective management areas. Often, asset protection burns are the first step in an early dry season burning program, to ensure that the most important environmental, cultural and infrastructure assets are secured before widespread burning is undertaken.



Left: A fire burns behind road signs in Ramingining community. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA

Above: A team of Warddeken rangers create a fire break around a stand of at-risk, fire sensitive Anbinik (*Allosyncarpia ternata*) forest. Across the Warddeken IPA, rangers protect 24 such forests annually. Photo © Matthew Abbott

Asset protection burning involves the creation of firebreaks (often mineral earth breaks), and subsequent controlled backburning from those breaks, to surround the asset requiring protection.

The most common form of asset protection burning involves securing the communities and associated infrastructure within the operational area of the projects. Rangers secure infrastructure including houses, buildings and water and energy assets.

Environmental assets protected by our partners include identified long-unburnt habitat refuges for endangered fauna such as the white-throated grass wren and northern quoll, and fire sensitive ecological communities such as *Allosyncarpia* forests of the west Arnhem Plateau.

Some cultural sites also benefit from protection against late season fire, including rock art galleries, occupation sites, burial sites and sacred sites, and many of our partners deliver strong cultural asset protection programs.



**EARLY DRY SEASON
BURNING — ON GROUND**

10,450

KILOMETRES ON GROUND BURNING

260

**RANGERS AND
LANDOWNERS INVOLVED**



For millennia, landscape scale burning was performed as people moved across country in the dry season, burning as they walked and camped. On ground burning remains a core component of the fire management work undertaken by rangers, who work throughout the early dry season to establish fine scale and deliberate patterns of burning.

Above left: Jonah Ryan of the Bawinanga rangers. Photo © Steph Rouse and Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation

Below left: Roadside burning is a crucial component of early season ground burning operations. Roads form good natural breaks to build upon with cool burns, and, as they are common ignition points for late season fires, must be well managed through early burning activities. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA

Below right: Asheena Guymala of the Warddeken rangers uses matches to conduct fuel reduction burning. Photo © Warddeken Land Management

Traditional Owners and rangers from across the project areas begin to light early season fires as soon as vegetation cures. Rangers perform strategic burning along roadsides and hunting tracks (often ignition points for late dry season fire) as well as around infrastructure and important cultural and environmental sites.

On ground burning is widely undertaken from vehicles (4WD, quad bike or side-by-side), using a drip torch or wind-proof matches as the ignition source. Many ranger groups enhance vehicle burning by running small and large scale bushwalks, allowing fine scale burning to be performed in areas inaccessible by vehicles, and which may not otherwise be visited.

Partner ranger groups also run events such as cultural camps to involve young people and Elders in activities of great importance, as they allow a new generation of Traditional Owners to learn how to carefully burn Country, as the old people did.

Rangers record data on ground burning activities, using GPS, CyberTracker and work diaries.



Arnhem Land is extremely remote and undeveloped – to overcome this inaccessibility, rangers utilise helicopters to deliver aerial incendiary burning across vast tracts of Country – a synthesis of customary and contemporary ecological management practices.

Aerial prescribed burning (APB) accounts for the majority of early dry season burning activity across Arnhem Land. Delivered from helicopters and utilising incendiary delivery machines, APB allows rangers to access remote regions of their project areas, creating a mosaic of burnt and unburnt country, and securing the boundaries between neighbouring groups.

Many factors contribute to APB flight routes, including topography and sacred sites, previous years' fire scars, local knowledge and experience, and real-time observation of fuel and conditions. Landowners are also able to request that specific areas of Country remain unburnt during a particular fire season for cultural reasons. Existing landscape features such as rivers, roads and rock country are incorporated into APB routes to create landscape scale firebreaks encompassing burned and natural breaks.

Although a thoroughly contemporary management tool, Landowners and rangers are able to effectively translate customary fire practice to an APB context. Importantly, through adjustments to the delivery rate of incendiaries, APB can be tailored to deliver very specific burning results taking into account weather and fuel conditions for different environments in the landscape.

Thanks in part to ALFA's custom training program, rangers from all partner groups are now highly experienced in APB operations. Ranger groups record aerial burning activities using either a combination of GPS and work diaries or CyberTracker to document flight lines.

Above right: Numbulwar ranger Joanne Pomery operates the Raindance aerial incendiary machine to conduct controlled burning in the SEAL IPA. Photo © Northern Land Council
Below right: The results of controlled aerial burning in the SEAL IPA. Photo © Northern Land Council



EARLY DRY SEASON BURNING - AERIAL

85,789

KILOMETRES FLOWN

190

TRADITIONAL LANDOWNERS INVOLVED





50+
ELDERS AND CULTURAL LEADERS

Fire holds many meanings to Aboriginal people across Arnhem Land. Fire is a totem, and has sacred ceremonial associations. The ability to make fire is an essential cultural skill, and fire is a commonly used hunting tool. Fire can destroy or renew bush food and medicine plants, depending on its application. Food is cooked on a fire, with many game animals still prepared according to strict cultural protocols.



Above: Yawurrinj (boys) from the Warddeken IPA on a week-long bushwalk following a bininj manbolh (customary walking route). The bushwalk is an annual collaboration between Warddeken rangers and the Nawarddeken Academy, who run three registered independent schools within the IPA. Photo courtesy © Cody Thomas and Nawarddeken Academy

Below: In another exciting partnership between Warddeken and Nawarddeken Academy, male rangers, educators and cultural leaders from Manmoyi worked with students to plan and hold a kangaroo fire drive. Photo © Warddeken Land Management

Fire-drives were once major hunting events that brought together families and clans to feast on macropods, the primary protein source in Arnhem Land. Since colonisation fire-drives have become rarer, and the unique knowledge, skills and protocols of fire drives are at risk of being lost. Warddeken rangers and senior cultural leaders decided to address this, and, in one of the year's highlights, 30-plus Indigenous men and boys in the Warddeken IPA came together in wurrkeng (July) for a kangaroo fire-drive at a renowned manbambarr (fire drive gully) called Namilewohwoh, near the Mann River on Djordi clan estate. Much preparation went into this major cultural event, with Bininj and yawurrinj (young men) from Manmoyi community working over many months to craft spears and spear throwers.

All this is in addition to the use of fire as the primary land management technique, with a suite of associated knowledge systems. Central to the vision of ALFA's founders and partners is the idea that young people must be provided with the opportunity to learn from Elders, leaders and experienced cultural fire practitioners about the multifaceted ways in which fire dominates life in Arnhem Land.

This year our partners facilitated a range of cultural revival and renewal events, all of which created valuable space for intergenerational learning. These included large scale bushwalks, Learning on Country camps, cultural camps and collaborative fire knowledge camps.

In the months leading up to the fire drive, Warddeken rangers planned and executed a carefully managed fire regime around the fire-drive gully, leaving plentiful cured grass to burn during the drive, and also installing breaks to ensure the fire didn't become out of control (fire-drives are often held in the late dry season). In the lead-up to the event, senior ranger and cultural advisor Terrah Guymala studied archival audio recordings of late professors to learn the various morrdjjanjno (ritual hunting/increase songs) for individual macropod species and was able to perform these specialised songs before the hunt, the first time these endangered songs have been performed as part of Warddeken's work program.

The late dry season begins in August when rangers shift their focus to the minimisation of wildfires, which burn hot and fast as weather conditions become warmer and drier. Ranger groups raise community awareness of dangerous fire conditions and, when necessary, launch intensive wildfire suppression campaigns to protect priority areas of Country.



Backpack leaf blowers have become an essential firefighting tool for rangers in Arnhem Land, particularly in rough and rocky terrain. Rangers are able to create a mineral earth break and push flames and embers back in on themselves. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA

**WILDFIRE
SUPPRESSION**

46

**WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION
CAMPAIGNS**



Donavon Milpurrurru of ASRAC fights a fire in the Arafura Swamp. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC

Increasingly, wildfire suppression has become a core component of annual fire management programs. Most firefighting is undertaken dry, meaning rangers use techniques of controlling fires that don't involve water, such as installing mineral earth breaks that act as a barrier to pull up fires by removing combustible fuel.

One of the most unique aspects of firefighting in Arnhem Land is the use of backpack leaf blowers in containing

wildfires – by blowing out flames and blowing embers and combustible fuels such as grass and leaf litter back into the active fire.

Helicopters are often required to ferry teams of firefighters in to access remote fire lines. Rangers often fight fires that threaten important cultural or environmental sites, and on many occasions have preserved significant cultural and environmental assets by extinguishing wildfires.

The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals are a global call to action to protect the planet, end poverty and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere. The 17 Goals were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which sets out a 15-year plan to achieve the Goals.

sdgs.un.org/goals



ALFA's partners are proactively addressing a number of the UN Sustainable Development Goals through the delivery of their land and cultural heritage management programs. With income created from the sale of ACCUs, ranger groups are able to deliver their respective fire management programs, as well as other community-led projects leading to positive environmental outcomes through reduced carbon

emissions and improved ecological health of country. However, equally importantly, ranger programs also generate a host of cultural, economic and social co-benefits for Traditional Owners and their families.

ALFA's partners are addressing the following Sustainable Development Goals through the annual delivery of their fire management programs.



When rangers travel long distances on foot to conduct early burning, windproof matches, such as the ones used by Anthony Kennedy of Mimal rangers, are the tool of choice. Light and easy to carry, matches allow rangers to quickly and easily light small fires as they move through Country. Photo © Steph Rouse and Mimal Land Management



Goal 1. No Poverty

Millions of dollars annually are reinvested in communities through wages.

Ranger programs provide employment opportunities in remote communities.

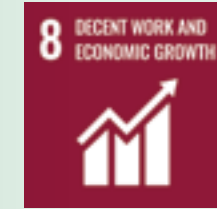


Goal 3. Good Health and Wellbeing

People are able to harvest and access bush tucker through ranger programs.

Landowners are supported to live and work on their Country.

Connection to cultural identity is enhanced.



Goal 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth

Ranger programs offer meaningful, highly sought-after roles in economically disadvantaged regions.

Ranger programs support staff to access training and education.



Goal 13. Climate Action

The work of ALFA partners leads to significant GHG emission reduction every year.

ALFA has led others to replicate our model of business, leading to more GHG avoidance.



Goal 2. Zero Hunger

Ranger groups operate food security programs such as tucker runs.

Regular income allows families to buy food.

Ranger programs support people to live on Country and access bush foods.



Goal 5. Gender Equality

All ALFA's partners have dedicated women's ranger programs.

More women rangers are involved in fire operations every year.



Goal 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities

Ranger groups provide essential services in remote communities.

Ranger groups offer the only employment in many homeland communities.



Goal 15. Life on Land

Ranger work respects the choice of Traditional Owners to remain on Country.

Ranger groups are providing a future for people on Country.

ALFA partners with eleven community and homeland-based Aboriginal ranger groups, supporting them to collectively deliver six fire management projects across 86,000 km² of Arnhem Land.

The fire project areas include ranger groups managing four declared Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) – the Djelk, Warddeken, South East Arnhem Land and Laynhapuy IPAs, as well as two IPAs currently under consideration – the Mimal and ASRAC IPAs.

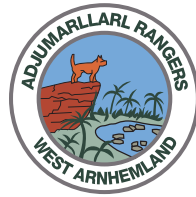
This section of the report profiles each of our partners, demonstrating the exceptionally high quality at which each delivers their fire management program.

Warddeken rangers care for one of the largest bodies of rock art in the world, and have established a dedicated project team committed to documenting and conserving these galleries. Part of this work includes conducting fuel reduction burns around major complexes and occupation sites. Photo © Warddeken Land Management



Adjumarllarl, Garngi and Mardbalk Rangers

NALFA project



Excitingly, the first year of operation for the NALFA Project was an eventful and highly successful year. The three NALFA partner ranger groups, which have strong cultural and familial connections, share a long history of working collaboratively on management programs on the mainland.

Together, the Garngi, Mardbalk and Adjumarllarl rangers implemented all operational aspects of the 2022 fire season, with the support of an ALFA Fire Officer position funded through the Karrkad Kanjdji Trust.

The Garngi rangers are hosted by the NLC and based at Minjilang on Croker Island, and undertake work across approximately 1,100 km² of land and sea country on Croker Island and nearby mainland areas of cultural connection.

Mardbalk rangers are based at Warruwi on Goulburn Island, and manage more than 4,400 km² of land and sea country, including the Goulburn Islands and adjacent mainland areas of cultural significance. Mardbalk are also hosted by the NLC.

The Adjumarllarl rangers were one of the Northern Territory's first Aboriginal ranger programs, and have been working out of Gunbalanya in western Arnhem Land for over 30 years. Adjumarllarl rangers manage approximately 10,000 km² including floodplains, savanna woodland and sandstone escarpment.

Key elements of the 2022 NALFA fire program included undertaking consultations with Traditional Landowners, asset protection, ground and aerial burning, as well as reporting back to Traditional Landowners on the results of the project in its first year.

The administrative aspects of the NALFA project were also finalised in 2022, with the issuance of the Land Use Agreement from the NLC and the subsequent registration and declaration of the project by the Clean Energy Regulator as an Eligible Offsets Project under the Carbon Farming Initiative Act. As such, this was the first operational year for the NALFA project as an eligible offsets project and the project generated more than 30,000 ACCUs for the work undertaken in 2022.



Above: Rangers from Adjumarllarl, Garngi and Mardbalk worked together to deliver early burning activities in the first year of the NALFA project. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA
Below: Mardbalk rangers conducted fuel reduction burns around outstation assets and infrastructure across the project area. Photo © Steph Rouse and Northern Land Council

Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation

CALFA project



The Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation (ASRAC) comprises several ranger groups that work together with Traditional Owners to keep Indigenous knowledge strong and to make sure it is being used to look after Country. Together these ranger groups look after Gurruwiling (the Arafura Swamp), its catchment and southern ranges to the adjacent sea country.

For the last three years, ASRAC has been consulting Landowners about a proposed new IPA that will cover 14,000 km² including the Arafura Swamp – a vast wetland surrounded by a catchment extending from Castlereagh Bay to the upper reaches of the Goyder and Glyde Rivers. The IPA application is currently under consideration by the federal government.

A highlight of the year was working with students from Ramingining School to teach them about the cultural and operational aspects of ASRAC's fire work, through the Learning on Country program. Under the guidance of senior rangers and Landowners, students carried out early burning and cultural activities around Malnyangarnak outstation, including learning about traditional fire practice and a demonstration of how to create fire with fire sticks.

ASRAC began fire management activities for 2022 in April, with consultations, planning and readying equipment, and by 23rd May, vegetation had dried enough to begin asset protection burning. Asset protection burning was conducted at 21 outstations and nine other infrastructure assets, continuing until 9th of June, when aerial prescribed burning operations commenced.

Ground based burning started in late May, with much of the work being conducted on foot. On ground burning activities included main roads leading to Ramingining from Maningrida, the Barge landing and the Central Arnhem Highway. Ground burning was conducted with Landowners and family groups, who were involved during camps and outings in Malnyangarnak and Djiplin areas.

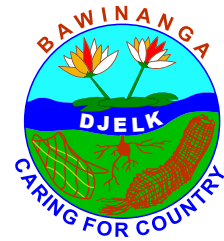
One of the issues again faced by ASRAC rangers were fallen trees blocking access to Country following Cyclone Lam in 2015. ASRAC Directors have allocated funds from carbon abatement sales to begin clearing an early season accessible track on the eastern side of the swamp on higher ground, which will enable finer scale fire management and involvement of Landowners in burning within this area.

Right: Rangers undertake asset protection burns around the Ramingining community solar array. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC
Below top left: Isaiah Malibirr and Rico Rranggutja patrol an early season fuel reduction burn. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC
Below top right: Evonne Munuygu uses a bush drip torch to light fires on her Country. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC
Below left: Margaret Dalparri prepares to manage an asset protection burn at an outstation community. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC
Below right: Aaron Pascoe in the navigators seat for aerial burning operations. Photo © Steph Rouse and ASRAC



Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation

CALFA & WALFA projects



Both images: Bawinanga rangers responded to 27 wildfire events in 2022, both within the Djelk IPA and alongside neighbours from Warddeken, Mimal and ASRAC. Photos © Steph Rouse and ALFA

Bawinanga rangers are pioneers of Australia's Indigenous land management movement. Formed by Traditional Owners in the early 1990s in response to growing environmental concerns such as feral animals, invasive weeds and wildfire, for 30 years Bawinanga rangers have worked to keep their land and sea country healthy. Rangers are based in the community of Maningrida and service an area of over 10,000 km², which includes more than 30 family-based outstation communities.

In 2009, Bawinanga Rangers declared the Djelk IPA, which extends over 6732 km² of Aboriginal freehold land in central northern Arnhem Land, covering coastal and sub-coastal land and seascapes from islands to estuaries, wetlands and rivers, monsoon rainforests and tropical savannas. The IPA encompasses 36 homelands, 13 language groups and the Countries of 102 clans, representing an unbroken history of Indigenous use and management, and continuous stewardship that since 1995 has included the Bawinanga Rangers.

This year, Country dried out much earlier than usual, with burning operations commencing in early May rather

than June. Due to the early start, rangers had extra time to conduct burning operations and as a result were able to be very thorough and get some solid burn lines in. Rangers left on ground burning until later in the year, to ensure roadsides and bush tracks burnt well to help prevent late season fire ignitions occurring from roadsides. On ground burning included establishing fire breaks at 36 Outstations and other third-party infrastructure (i.e. Telstra towers and Arnhem Land Barra Lodge) throughout the Djelk IPA.

In the late fire season, Bawinanga rangers responded to 27 wildfires, working alongside partners from Warddeken, Mimal and ASRAC ranger groups to respond to fires in the CALFA and WALFA project areas.

A highlight of this year was the high level of Landowner engagement, with many Traditional Owners taking the opportunity to participate in APB, using the helicopter to see and burn their Country. Many young Landowners were involved in early burning activities, with some expressing a desire to continue working with the ranger program. Excitingly, some of these Landowners have now gained full time employment with Bawinanga.



Steph Rouse of ALFA demonstrates how to perform maintenance on a Raindance incendiary machine during one of the many training blocks completed by Jawoyn rangers. Photo © ALFA

Jawoyn Association Aboriginal Corporation

WALFA project



Jawoyn rangers have been caring for Country by incorporating customary values and culture with the latest in scientific practice since the late 1990s. Operating out of Jawoyn Association headquarters in Katherine, Jawoyn rangers manage 16,000 km² of country including part of the west Arnhem Land plateau – stone and gorge country that contains one of the world’s largest and most significant bodies of rock art.

The Jawoyn rangers work on Jawoyn Country which includes the regional centre of Katherine, the southern part of Kakadu National Park, Nitmiluk National Park and south-west Arnhem Land. The rangers work with a range of stakeholders and partners in the Katherine region, including collaboration with Kakadu National Park and Nitmiluk National Park on fire management activities.

Jawoyn also conduct annual bushwalks and canoe trips in the cool early dry season, when the nights are dewy and it’s the right time to burn. These cross-country

events involve rangers and family groups moving through country as the old people did, burning as they go. This allows the rangers to undertake fine scale burning and protect cultural sites and small patches of sensitive vegetation communities. Bushwalks have become an annual feature of Jawoyn’s fire management program, and are eagerly anticipated by rangers and their families.

Integrating fire management with cultural activities delivers positive co-benefits for Jawoyn people. Participating in early dry season burning enables Jawoyn people young and old to be meaningfully involved in the management of their customary estates, and conduct cultural maintenance activities in tandem with other fire management activities, bringing greater cultural and social benefits to the community.

This year, Jawoyn rangers also focused on building the capacity of the workforce to deliver fire management activities, with numerous training events held throughout the year.

Mimal Land Management

CALFA & WALFA projects



The Mimal Land Management operational area sits at the geographic centre of Arnhem Land. Mimal Country is made up of many different ecosystems – from grassy plains, rock country, woodlands and forest, to freshwater country. The main communities and homelands in the area include Bulman, Weemol and Barrapunta (Emu Springs). Mimal is currently being supported by the Federal Government to establish a new IPA that will cover over 18,000 km² in south-central Arnhem Land.

Mimal was administered by the Northern Land Council (NLC) for many years, however, Traditional Owners expressed a desire to create their own company, operated under local Indigenous management. Mimal's journey to independence is inherently linked to their involvement in the WALFA project, as it allowed Traditional Owners to use income generated through the fire project to fund a separate incorporation and autonomy. In October 2017, Mimal Land Management celebrated a new chapter as a group with control over its own land, working toward a clear vision for Mimal people, Country and culture.

2022 was a difficult year for early burning for all WALFA and CALFA partners, with prescribed burning having to be brought forward because of weather conditions. The wet season effectively finished for the Mimal area in

January, which meant that by March the south-western area had cured enough that it was ready to burn. Despite it being so early in the year, early season fires behaved uncharacteristically, continuing to burn overnight and running through previous year's scars. Even as the weather cooled, the overnight dews, which are typical for early season burning, did not occur because there was so little moisture in the ground. This meant that fires tended to run further than usual, creating bigger paddocks and tended to burn hotter than was ideal.

Despite these challenges, Mimal was still able to achieve strong outcomes. This included successfully hosting several fire camps focused on ground burning, including the women rangers at Mary Lake for a week, and a camp at Womena with Landowners. The Men's ranger team completed a four-day walk upstream from Kliklimarra in partnership with Jawoyn Rangers, conducting burning along the way.

As well as responding to 18 wildfires within the Mimal operational area, rangers also assisted with fires in neighbouring areas including Warddeken and Jawoyn, and did some shared firefighting with Djelk in the northern area. The Mimal women's ranger team were also more involved than ever in firefighting this year, with the team responding to five different fires.



Above: Mimal rangers assess the outcome of the year at the 2022 post-fire season meeting at Nitmiluk. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA



Below: Installing mineral earth breaks and patrolling them with leaf blowers is a contemporary fire control method pioneered and honed by rangers in Arnhem Land. This method is used to manage controlled asset burns as well as wildfire suppression campaigns. Photo © Steph Rouse and Mimal Land Management

Yugul Mangi and Numbulwar Numburindi Rangers

SEALFA & SEALFA2 projects



Above: Joanne Pomery in the operators seat during SEAL IPA aerial burning activities. Photo © Northern Land Council.
Left: Steven Ngalmi ready to guide aerial burning in the SEAL IPA. Photo © Northern Land Council

The South East Arnhem Land (SEAL) IPA is jointly managed by the Yugul Mangi and Numbulwar Numburindi rangers who are based at Ngukurr and Numbulwar respectively, and administered by the Northern Land Council (NLC). The rangers work on behalf of Traditional Owners of the Ritharrngu, Rembarrnga, Ngandi, Ngalakgan, Warndarrang, Yugul and Nunggubuyu peoples whose country is situated in south-east Arnhem Land.

The SEAL IPA covers an area of 18,199 km² on the western edge of the Gulf of Carpentaria in the Northern Territory. With a history of strong local leadership within both groups, the rangers have thrived, remaining focused on the vision of their elders and founders. Fire management is a major focus of the Yugul Mangi and Numbulwar Numburindi rangers' work.

Rangers implemented an extensive early dry season burning program from April to July 2022. This included on ground burning by foot and roadside, track burning by vehicle and aerial prescribed burning. Asset protection burning and clearing was undertaken around 17 potentially at-risk outstations to protect infrastructure.

APB was used to create a mosaic of burnt country throughout the project area and to secure the boundaries of the SEALFA and SEALFA2 project areas. APB was undertaken over 21 days from April till August 2022 by both ranger groups, commencing along the western SEAL IPA boundary over the Urapunga Aboriginal Land Trust and then progressing towards the east into the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Land Trust. Aerial burning began earlier than in 2022 due to a short wet season, an issue faced by ranger groups across Arnhem Land.

This year, 13 Indigenous staff from both ranger groups were employed to undertake fire related work, including full time and part time staff. Many of these staff also completed accredited training related to fire management throughout the year, including the following units: Prepare, maintain and test response equipment; Respond to wildfire; Assist with prescribed burning; Prevent injury. One Yugul Mangi ranger and one Numbulwar Numburindi ranger also completed a certification in using the R2 incendiary machine and Helicopter operations safety.

Warddeken Land Management

WALFA project



Warddeken Land Management was formed in 2007 to assist Nawarddeken Traditional Owners in the protection and management of their Country in western Arnhem Land. The Warddeken IPA was declared in 2009 and covers approximately 14,000 km², including seven outstation communities and a range of important habitats supporting numerous species of flora and fauna, many of which are rare and endemic to the Arnhem Land escarpment region.

Rangers work from bases at Mamadawerre, Manmoyi and Kabulwarnamyo homelands, offering ongoing employment in these extremely remote communities. Warddeken consistently delivers an ambitious annual fire management program, generating positive ecological, social and cultural outcomes for Landowners and their communities. This includes widespread asset protection burning for important rock art complexes, as well as for ancient, endemic Anbinik (*Allosyncarpia ternata*) rainforests.

Within a robust program of core fire management activities, Warddeken rangers drew upon the expertise of staff from the Mayh (native animal) Species Recovery Project and Kunwarddebim (rock art) Project, to further enhance burning outcomes for environmental and cultural assets within the IPA.

The Yirlinkirrkirri (White-throated Grasswren) is a small bird of great cultural importance to Bininj Landowners. A ground-dwelling bird endemic to the stone country of the Arnhem Land Plateau, Yirlinkirrkirri require long unburnt spinifex (>3yrs) amongst areas of bare rock. Yirlinkirrkirri are listed as a vulnerable species under the EPBC act and have been identified by the Australia Federal Government as a priority species for conservation action. Through Warddeken's ecological monitoring and research program, Landowners and rangers have detected three new Yirlinkirrkirri locations and confirmed the persistence of the species at two other locations. These known populations, as well as high value Yirlinkirrkirri habitat, were factored into the 2022 early season prescribed burning activities, both on ground and aerial.

The Warddeken IPA contains tens of thousands of rock art sites, and the Kunwarddebim Project supports Landowners to survey, document and apply conservation actions. Throughout 2022, rangers and Landowners surveyed and recorded rock art at 86 new sites in nine different clan estates. Fuel reduction burns were often carried out around surveyed rock art sites to minimise the impact of any late season wildfire. Targeted early dry season aerial burning also reduced fuel loads surrounding rock art rich areas.



Above: Tahnee Nabalwad sets out motion sensor cameras in the Warddeken IPA. As part of the Mayh Species Recovery Project, rangers and Landowners have established longterm biodiversity monitoring sites, the data from which is used to plan and deliver early dry season burning. Photo © Warddeken Land Management

Right: Yirlinkirrkirri, or White-throated Grasswren, are a vulnerable species endemic to the Arnhem plateau, which require long unburned habitat. Warddeken rangers are working to protect important Yirlinkirrkirri habitat across the Warddeken IPA. Photo © Warddeken Land Management



Yirralka Rangers

NEALFA project



Yinimala Gumala watches over early dry season burning in the Laynhapuy IPA. Photo © Yirralka rangers



Yinimala Gumana, Shane Wuthurra Wunungmurra, Layndjana Mununggurr, Dale Tucker, Yilpirr Wanambi and Yalapuru Gumana display Yirralka's planned burning operations at the 2022 pre-season meeting. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA

The Yirralka rangers represent the Yolngu Traditional Owners of north-east Arnhem Land and were established in 2003. Yirralka rangers manage the land and sea in the Laynhapuy Indigenous Protected Area, which extends from the Gove Peninsula to Blue Mud Bay and covers over 11,000 km² of land and 480 kilometres of coastline. For residents of the 14 homeland communities within the Laynhapuy IPA, Yirralka rangers provide sustained opportunities for meaningful employment, and ranger positions are highly sought after. The Yirralka rangers currently employ 50 permanent Yolngu staff who are based across all 14 homelands.

In April and May 2022, the Fire Head Ranger and the Fire Program Facilitator travelled to 23 homelands in the Laynhapuy IPA to share information about fire outcomes in 2021 and to discuss fire management activities in the season to come. Paired with informal consultation, consent for fire management activities to occur on Country for all homelands in the Laynhapuy IPA was achieved.

Once conditions were right for burning (which occurred around mid-June), rangers began ground burning operations. A priority was first given to community and asset protection, and then to Country and roadside burning. Ground burning operations continued until mid-August when vegetation became excessively dry

and weather conditions did not support healthy fire. Large efforts were undertaken to burn road sides, especially the Central Arnhem Road, a known ignition point of large late season fires.

Informed by consultations conducted with Traditional Owners, the Fire Program facilitator produced proposed aerial burning GPS lines for helicopter pilots to follow. These lines were shared, refined and endorsed in conjunction with Traditional Owners. This method enables a systematic landscape scale burn network, providing ecosystem function and creating resilience in the landscape when faced with late dry season fires.

A highlight of the year was in August, when Yirralka rangers supported a work workshop at Warrawurr on Wangurri Country. Worrk is a Yolngu word that refers to the cultural application of fire, guided by seasonal indicators. The major knowledge-sharing event took place over three days and brought together Landowners, Yirralka rangers the neighbouring Dhimmuru rangers, ngalapalmi (knowledge holders) and students from the Gapuwiyak, Yirrkala and Laynhapuy Homelands schools. Ngalapalmi shared stories, songs and dance about worrk, and the students mapped the floodplain area. Rangers also shared contemporary fire management tools and approaches.

Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Revenue	11,309,055	10,091,532
Other income	5,527	32,868
Grant Funding	(5,031,307)	(6,627,367)
Subcontracting costs	(3,003,588)	(1,436,649)
Other expenses	(709,114)	(321,603)
Employee benefits expense	(394,512)	(298,383)
Hire fees	(20,550)	(42,658)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(28,167)	(16,616)
Net surplus for the year	2,127,344	1,381,124
Other comprehensive income, net of income tax	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	2,127,344	1,381,124

Statement of Financial Position

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Assets		
<i>Current assets</i>		
Cash and cash equivalents	4,204,168	5,295,147
Trade and other receivables	598,609	1,399,615
Total current assets	4,802,777	6,694,762
<i>Non-current assets</i>		
Plant and equipment	234,075	66,466
Total non-current assets	234,075	66,466
Total assets	5,036,852	6,761,228
Liabilities		
<i>Current liabilities</i>		
Trade and other payables	1,875,546	916,978
Employee benefits	65,659	39,874
Other liabilities	270,000	5,106,073
Total current liabilities	2,211,205	6,062,925
Total liabilities	2,211,205	6,062,925
Net assets / (liabilities)	2,825,647	698,303
Equity		
Accumulated surplus	2,825,647	698,303
Total equity	2,825,647	698,303

Directors' Declaration

The directors of the registered entity have determined that the Company is not a reporting entity and that these special purpose financial statements should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 2 of the financial statements.

The directors of the registered entity declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 5 to 16, are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and:
 - (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures applicable to the entity; and
 - (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Registered Entity as at 30 June 2022 and of its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. In the directors' opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with subs 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Director *CLIVE NUNGSATGALU*

Director *Shane Wuthurra*

Dated this 7th day of September 2022

Independent Audit Report to the members of ALFA (NT) Limited

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of ALFA (NT) Limited (the Registered Entity), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Registered Entity is in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Registered Entity's financial position as at 30 June 2022 and of its financial performance for the year ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section

of our report. We are independent of the Registered Entity in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission Act 2012* and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the *Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission Act 2012*, which has been given to the directors of the Registered Entity, would be in the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information obtained at the date of this auditor's report is included in the Director's Report, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed on the other information obtained prior to the date of this auditor's report, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Registered Entity are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Registered Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Registered Entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Registered Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Registered Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Registered Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide the directors with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, actions taken to eliminate threats or safeguards applied.

From the matters communicated with the directors, we determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial report of the current period and are therefore the key audit matters. We describe these matters in our auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, we determine that a matter should not be communicated in our report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

Perks Audit

PERKS AUDIT PTY LTD
84 Smith Street
Darwin, NT 0800


P Hill

PETER J HILL
Director
Registered Company
Auditor

Dated this 7th day of September 2022



Smoke from aerial burning on the north eastern coast of Arnhem Land. Photo © Steph Rouse and ALFA



**“We use fire for many reasons: not only for conservation and management, but also as a healing process for land, for people, for native plants and animals. Fire is a tool that we have used from the beginning, from the deep past until today.”
— Dean Yibarbuk, Traditional Owner**