





-  Master - Ranger Co-ordinator - Rob Lindsay
-  Intermediate - Senior Ranger - Aaron Green
-  Beginner - Ranger - Theresa Lemon




 Hi my name is Theresa Lemon. I work for the Malak Malak Rangers, I've been working for them for two years now and I'm based at Daly River.

Skills I use everyday are driving a boat, driving a car, or riding quad bikes.


The contact I have with senior personnel is with NLC rangers and my team workers.

If I have a question at work I go to my Co-ordinator, Rob Lindsay.

 My name's Rob Lindsay, I'm the Co-ordinator for the Malak Malak ranger group based at Daly River. I've done the qualifications that are required to be a Ranger Co-ordinator. So all the things that you need to be able to do to go to work: using a chainsaw, spraying weeds, using a quad bike, driving a boat all that sort of stuff, I've done.

While I like to get to go out with the rangers and work with them, I also have responsibilities in the office. So I need to keep a handle on our budget, I need to do day-to-day type things like time sheets, leave forms, travel forms... And then I have monthly and quarterly reports that need to go to the Northern Land Council.

As the Co-ordinator I need to be accountable to the NLC, to our organisation, that what we're putting on a time sheet, what we're saying we're doing, we are actually doing.

 My name is Aaron Green, I'm a Malak Malak Senior Ranger from Daly River. I've been on the job as a Ranger for nine years. My role as a Senior Ranger means I get to supervise, help the junior rangers actually develop their skills and their knowledge of how to do things right and not get hurt.

I see each week as a project. When Rob's not in, our Co-ordinator, I get to actually take over the team and manage it for the week.

We got normal Rangers below us then it comes up to the Senior Ranger, which is my title, then you've got the Ranger Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator actually reports to the boss in the main office in town. We also have a Senior Cultural advisor that we report where we are doing our work for the day and if he approves and we have to run some things by the Cultural Adviser, because he's the traditional owner too.





M The average working day for the Malak Malak rangers and myself as the Co-ordinator, is eight til four thirty. So a seven and a half hour day. A number of the rangers work a four day week, myself and the Senior [ranger] do a five day week.

B I make sure I'm on time for work by setting up my alarm on my phone every morning. Have my uniform ready, and then my lunch plus water and then I go off to work.

A typical day would involve me getting to work in my car and having meetings with my other team members.

If we are going out for spraying that day, we have to go and get the stuff loaded in the car.. like PPE stuff, mix up the chemicals get the water ready... we have to wear particular protection such as gloves and that.

I Sometimes we actually have to travel away from family. Our last trip was down to Ngukkur travelling with the Ranger group, you have to check if everybody is comfortable in the vehicle, worry about your vehicle because it is a working vehicle.

Each morning consists of getting your work gear all together, you check that your team is prepared for the day. That they've got all their personal protective equipment, you know, everybody is following the rules for the NLC. If we don't follow the rules we cannot be covered.

You got to get there safely. Do your job where you are going to then return safely back home.

M My role in determining what work needs to be done is, we have a work plan which I tend to use more of as a guide than a fixed thing, obviously there are seasonal things that impact on that. So our work plan is a guide, we need to by the end of each season have achieved what the work plan says we need to achieve and for us that's mostly about weeds. Although there are other aspects to it now.

It's easier in the dry season you can say "next week we're going out to such and such and we'll be spraying mimosa there for the week". The wet season is different it's challenging and we need to be able to have options.





Being a Ranger doesn't mean that you're always outdoors, you also have to carry on with your office work and do your reporting.

Sometimes we actually collect data in weed books. You need good writing because sometimes you know the information that you write down in the weed book, you have to hand it over to the weed department and that way they get a whole big picture of what you been doing over the years.

When you actually do the fishing river patrol, after we've done the trip down the river or upstream, you got to write down in a formal report to the Fisheries Department and water police: about the day, what was seen on the river if there's anything been done illegally report it to the police.

You need to know your numbers so you can calculate how much mix that you need in your chemicals and what not. Education is key to becoming a Ranger.



I don't think I can do my job properly without my knowledge and culture because I'm attached to the knowledge you know.

Someone who has inspired me for my work was Albert Myoung my uncle and he is a traditional owner of the Malak Malak people. Because from what I've heard, when I came back to country, was I heard that Albert started off the Ranger group by himself. He was actually using an axe to get rid of the weeds that was on his country.



My advice to an indigenous person who wants to become a Ranger is that normally that particular person will have country that they belong to and so therefore a lot of the learning is done through their own connections.

The important thing these days is that understand that a ranger job is a job, it's not an activity. It's a job and with that job comes all sorts of training. You've got your basic training for the equipment but there's also the new training that's coming, the new technology that's going to be available and the possibilities are really quite endless I would think.

Ten years ago it was just about a GPS and getting waypoints. Now it's about how you manage that data into a computer, how you do reports to that and I should imagine in years to come that there will be a whole different level again.

You can get taken in all sorts of directions by becoming an indigenous ranger.





M My role as the Co-ordinator for the work, health and safety requirements of the job is regular talking with the rangers. We've all done the training; we all know what we're supposed to do. The Northern Land Council has a policy on most of the equipment and so my role is to make sure that that's adhered to. If your using a chainsaw, for instance, then you're wearing chaps, you've got gloves on and your ear muffs and that sort of thing. If your on a quad bike you've got helmets, you've got glasses. That's my role to make sure that those things happen

I To become a Ranger you have to do a whole range of training. We work our way up, we do quad bike training, how to ride the bikes safely. So we actually follow the rules to keep everybody safe in the working place... which is part of everybody's process in the NLC that's why we go through extensive training on PPE, extreme four wheel drive recovery, chemical handle and identify weeds.

But we've also done our smaller mechanics training, we actually got tool bags on our car, do running repairs to get it back home or even a spray unit on the quad bike, even for the boats.

We have got to look after our gear so it actually looks after us, takes us out to work safely and brings us back home.

B Whether we are on land or on the river we always take our satellite phones, cameras, GPS's. It's very important to always be communicating with each other.

The scariest time for me when I went driving a boat, it was my first time and sometimes the Daly River gets flooded and then we're in the river in the boats...

The hazards in the river when it's flooded is mainly logs.



M A lot of our work is repetitive sort of work. It's about spraying weeds, it's about taking waypoints, it's about painting a picture. And the reason you take waypoints with your GPS and you download them, is you identify areas but you are also painting a picture for people coming behind you.

B One of the biggest problems for our country is weeds coming in, by accident, because of people coming from different areas into our community bringing along the weeds as well. You see people go out hunting on other people's country where there's big mob of mimosa, and where they're from there's no mimosa, but they're taking it back to their cars.



M New parts of our role is river work. That's something that has just come in the last few years, so that's new skills that myself and the rangers are learning. Now we are on boats as part of our job, so we had to get coxswain's qualifications and myself and another ranger have been trained to be Fisheries Officers which will bring another level of responsibility. So we're learning new techniques, we're learning new things. We work closely with fisheries, we work closely with the water police, that's adding a new dimension to our work.

I To get the Coxswain's certificate you had to pass a first aid training, your marine radios training, plotting chart courses, learn how to read maps of your area. They showed us how to tip the life boat over when you do really need it out in open water. Which is, yeah, kind of interesting (laughs)

M So that was part of the Blue Mud Bay agreement between the Malak Malak group and the government. The group said they wanted a study done on riverbank erosion on the Malak Malak part of the Daly River. The amount of boats and the size of the boats on the river have been having a detrimental effect on the riverbank and so whether that's true?

I When we actually go out and do the research with other research departments when you actually bring back information that helps them carry on the study and they work out a good thing from it, it actually makes you proud as a Ranger, because you know you are actually doing a good job.



B Mostly women come to me for help, and they look up to me as a leader and I respond to them when they've problems.

One of the most important skills that I've done is doing a leadership thing with other women rangers. We learnt a lot of stuff about leadership in work places and on country and in communities. Women are often leaders in their families and can also be leaders in other areas.

I'd like to do some more learning about leadership so I could help other women, plus young girls.

I'm really happy doing my job and I just want to keep being a ranger.

I My proudest achievement is actually still working towards becoming a Fisheries Inspector. I've done the Cert III training. I'd love to become a Fisheries Officer in the Fisheries Department. Which means unfortunately leaving the Ranger group. But that's in the future.

M So an indigenous ranger during the course of his or her employment will do lots of training and the stuff that's required from the Northern Land Council, it's the quad bike use, chainsaws, chemicals, all of that can lead to a Certificate in Land Management and there's different levels to that, level two, level three. I also understand now that there is a specific Indigenous Land Management Cert III course that's available.





The pleasing thing for me is you get to do a lot of outdoor work, go to see places that you never thought you'd see, work with people that you'd never thought you'd work with, fisheries officers, water police, you know being on the river every now and again when we do our river patrols.

When we do weed spraying, aerial spraying, sometimes we get to work with choppers, go out doing weed spraying, aerial surveys. Not everybody gets to have a chopper ride everyday!



The best part of my job is that I see it as an ongoing commitment. Our role as rangers is land management. So land management was something that a Senior Ranger began as a young bloke. I see our role as an extension of what he did and we're ultimately aiming to try and return the country to how it was when he was a young fella. So what it looked like sixty, seventy years ago.

It's an aspirational goal, it's something we're working towards because we understand that it's not something that can be done in the next five years or ten years, but it's a big commitment it's a long commitment, but it's something that we really want to do.

