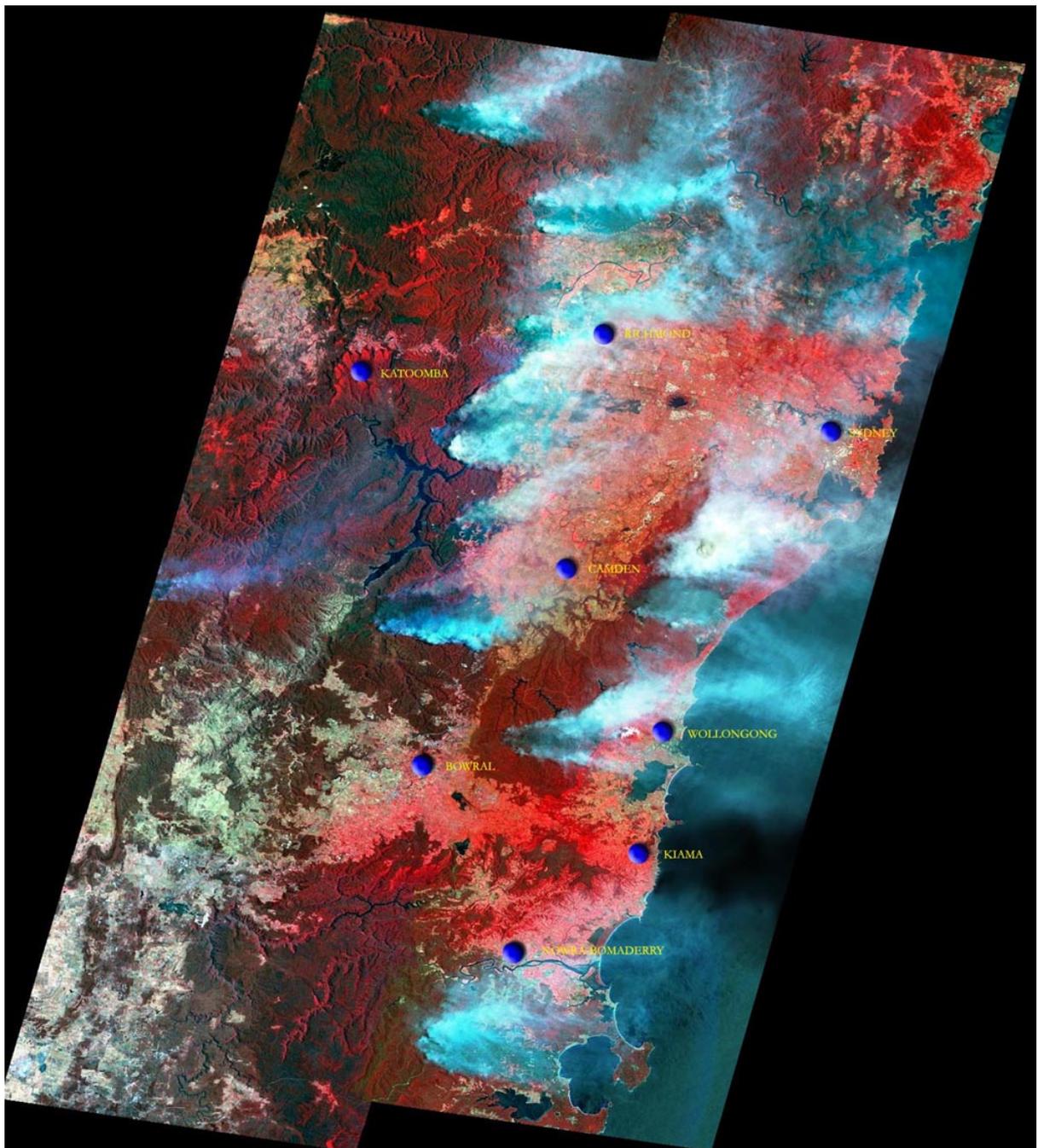


Satellite Imagery - NSW bushfires - December 2001 - January 2002

More than 100 bushfires raged across NSW from 25 December 2001 - January 8 2002, requiring over 20,000 regular and volunteer fire fighters and 85 aircraft. Vast stretches of forests were destroyed, including more than 60% of the Royal National Park. More than 11,000 people were evacuated from their homes and 560,000 hectares were burnt out.

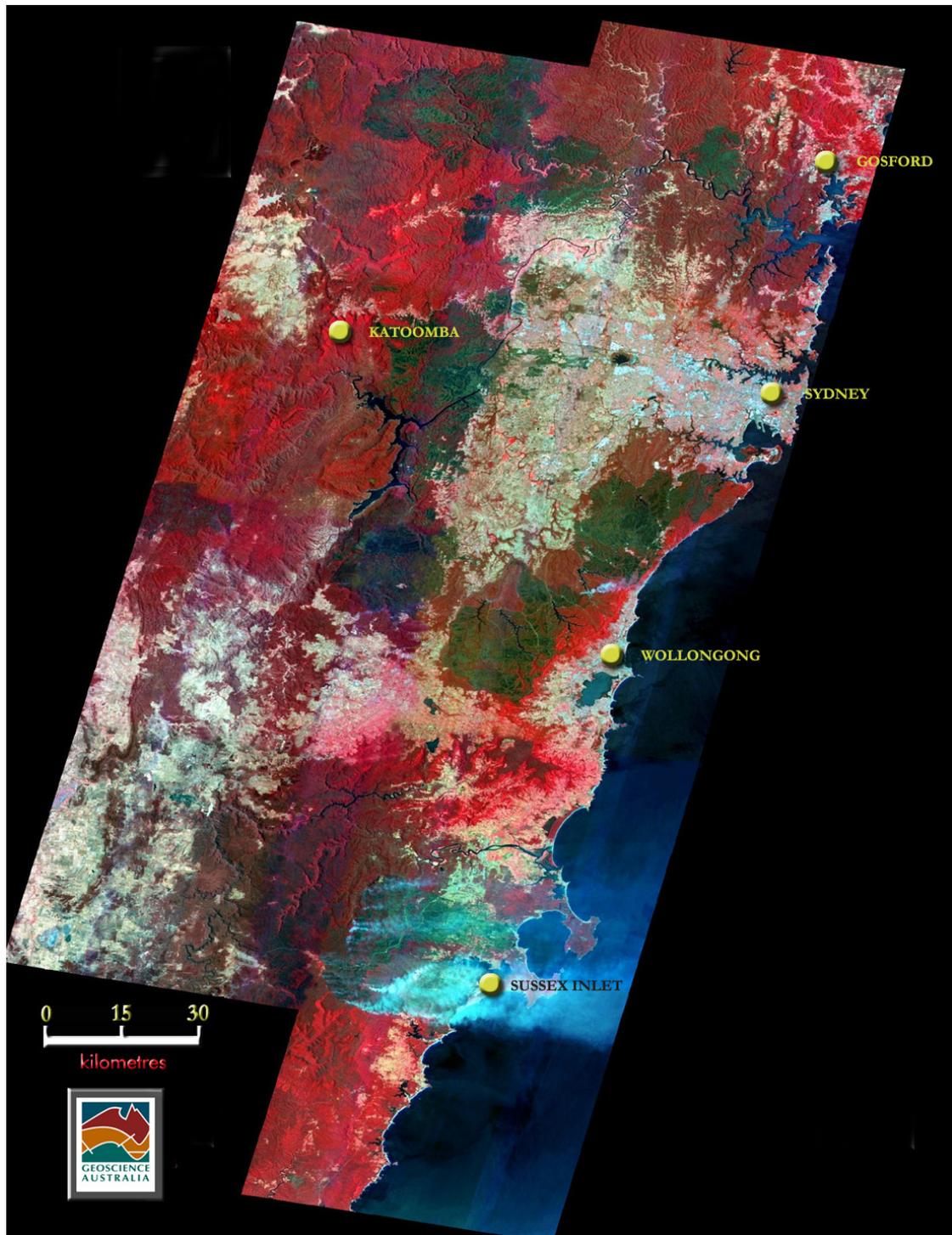
The image below was acquired from the [SPOT satellite](#) on 27 December 2001 by ACRES, Geoscience Australia. It is produced here as a mosaic of 8 SPOT scenes covering about 120km wide and 240km long, stretching from Wyong in the north to Jervis Bay in the south. Healthy vegetation shows as bright red, forest as dark red, ocean and lakes as dark blue, burnt areas as black and smoke as blue/white.



SPOT Image acquired 27 December 2001 by ACRES, Geoscience Australia. © CNES 2001.

The next image was acquired from the SPOT satellite by ACRES on 8 January 2002, and shows the burnt out areas around Sydney with fires still burning south of Jervis Bay.

In this image, healthy vegetation shows as bright red, forest as dark red, ocean and lakes as dark blue, burnt areas as black and smoke as white. It is presented here as a mosaic of 9 "quick-looks" or sub-sampled images that provide a broad overview from the Hawkesbury River down to the Shoalhaven region and out to the Blue Mountains. Each "quick-look" covers an area of 60km by 60km.



SPOT Image acquired 8 January 2002 by ACRES, Geoscience Australia. © CNES 2002.

Full resolution imagery of the fires is available from Geoscience Australia and [ACRES Distributors](#).

Geoscience Australia Assisting Emergency Services

From 28 December to 8 January, National Mapping supplied more than 3,250 maps to Emergency Services to assist the fire fighting effort in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. The bulk of the maps were Geoscience Australia's 1:100K scale topographic NATMAPs, as well as 1:250K NATMAPs, used as overviews for the targeted areas.

These maps were used in conjunction with larger scale maps supplied by Geoscience Australia map distributor, Land & Property Information in Bathurst, New South Wales. The maps were used by a wide range of organisations associated with fire fighting, including State Emergency Services, NSW Rural Fire Services, Police, control centres and pilots. Maps of all scales were required to coordinate the fire fighting effort due to the rapid spread of the fires which were fanned by 80km/hour winds.

Satellite imagery is a useful fire management tool that can be used in a number of ways. In the lead up to the fire season, authorities can use imagery to assess fuel loads and to update older topographic maps to plan access points and fire breaks. During prolonged fires such as those shown above, imagery may be used to track the progress of fire fronts in near real time to aid in emergency management. After the fires have been extinguished, imagery is also an excellent tool for evaluation and damage assessment.

