

Case Study 3: Estimating industry losses for the 2007 California wildfires for RMS

The southern California wildfires of 2007 resulted in region wide destruction to over 3,000 buildings and burnt more than 520,000 acres of land. Visual business intelligence consisting of several thousand high-definition aerial reconnaissance images were captured as events were contained, during a period spanning 25th October and 8th November for RMS.

These were used to estimate industry losses. From visually inspecting the data, neighbourhood and per building damage interpretations were integrated with tax assessor data to estimate % damage within impacted areas. These aerial reconnaissance data were used to develop an industry loss estimate of \$1.8 billion (RMS, 2008). The results from this assessment were rapidly issued. Although they were markedly higher than other estimates being issued at the time, they compared closely with official figures issued several months later in 2008 by CalFIRE (CALFIRE, 2008).