



Andrew Stoner MP
Deputy Premier

Katrina Hodgkinson MP
Minister for Primary Industries

MEDIA RELEASE

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FUNDING BOOST FOR DROUGHT-AFFECTED FARMERS

Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner and Minister for Primary Industries Katrina Hodgkinson today announced an additional \$15.6 million in support for drought-affected areas and extended the support package to three new local government areas (LGAs) in the Central West and North Coast.

Mr Stoner said the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government has now allocated more than \$30 million to its temporary emergency support package since November 2013.

“The emergency drought support package has now been extended to Lithgow, Kyogle and Kempsey LGAs, taking the total number of eligible regions to 30,” Mr Stoner said.

“The inclusion of these additional LGAs is based upon the expert advice of the independent Regional Assistance Advisory Committee.

“The emergency assistance has been back-dated to 1 February 2014 for the three new areas and the temporary assistance measures will continue until 30 June 2014.”

The temporary emergency assistance package includes:

- up to \$20,000 per producer in the form of a Transport Assistance Reimbursement;
- up to \$50,000 per producer for Emergency Water Infrastructure Grants (up to \$30,000 from the NSW Government with a top up of up to \$20,000 from the Commonwealth); and
- waiving of Western Lands Lease payments, Local Land Services rates and Wild Dog Destruction Board rates for a six-month period to 30 June 2014, where applicable.

Ms Hodgkinson said the additional funding is ahead of the full implementation of the national drought program, which begins on 1 July 2014.

“The development of a new national drought program has been underway since 2008 and the NSW Government signed an agreement with the Commonwealth and other States and Territories more than 12 months ago to implement the new framework,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The Rural Assistance Authority is also working closely with the Commonwealth Government to finalise the agreement to administer Drought Concessional Loans to eligible farm businesses.”

Ms Hodgkinson said a number of areas have missed out on crucial Autumn rain, with some regions now going into winter with insufficient carryover feed for livestock.

“Parts of western and north western NSW received patchy falls in April and May, which has done little to replenish soil moisture levels after a hot and dry summer,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

Visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/emergency/drought or contact Local Land Services at www.lls.nsw.gov.au or 1300 795 299 for advice on seasonal conditions and preparing for drought.