



MEDIA RELEASE

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FARMERS CONTINUE TO SEEK DROUGHT RESPONSE

The recent rains have not washed away the need for a comprehensive State drought package that assists farmers to survive and then rebuild their businesses.

That's the view of Roger Swain, President of the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association.

"Farmers in many districts are still really hurting."

"We need to see a sustained improvement in conditions, including substantial rainfall, before anyone can say they've turned the corner."

"We welcome the fact that the State Government has declared drought in two regions of the State and we understand applications for Federal Government Exceptional Circumstances are due in Canberra next week."

"On the other hand exceptional circumstances relief payments can only ever be part of what is needed."

"They will not apply to everyone, they are limited to only some districts and farmers will still be managing the impacts of drought well into the future."

"More can be done at the State-level and in a way that can support all drought affected farmers more generally," Mr Swain said.

The TFGA wants to see an overall *State Drought Response Strategy*, which includes for example

- Drought information packages and forums;
- Increased mental health and support services;
- Expanded cloud seeding operations into farming areas;
- Extension services from DPIW on issues like livestock management and perennial pasture re-establishment;
- Assistance for transporting fodder, water and stock;
- Relief grazing on crown lands;

The TFGA wrote to Primary Industries Minister David Llewellyn on this issue in December last year and again in early May.

“We are still awaiting a formal reply and it is fair to say that the patience of our farming members is running out.”

“We urge the Minister to put in place practical measures of this kind that support Tasmanian farmers to survive this extremely difficult period, rebuild their businesses and then better prepare for drought in the future,” Mr Swain said.

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