



MEDIA RELEASE

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MIXED RESPONSE ON DROUGHT SUPPORT

Farmers are left undecided as to what is on offer in the State Government's drought support package.

That's the view of Bruce Williams, CEO of the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association responding to today's announcement by the State Government that it has lodged a drought relief application with the Australian Government for Flinders Island and the Coastal plains of Dorset and George Town Municipalities.

"There is renewed hope for farmers in the North East of Tasmania that subject to Federal Government signoff, Exceptional Circumstances assistance could soon come their way."

"Battling farmers around Tooms Lake, Gretna and Ouse will no doubt welcome that they are now included in an expanded Midlands and Central Highlands drought declared region."

"However, there is no indication whether the State Government will meet its commitment to have lodged the Midlands drought relief application in Canberra by the end of this week."

"The situation for many farmers in the midlands is dire. We need to see relief funds flowing as soon as possible"

Mr Williams hopes that today's announcement means that the TFGA will soon receive a formal response from Primary Industries Minister David Llewellyn to letters they wrote in December last year and again in early May.

"We want to clarify the status and actual resources being directed to State drought support programs in addition to the proposed Federal assistance."

"We are pleased that the Minister has recognised the need for increased mental health support as too the potential for cloud seeding over agricultural areas."

"However it appears that things like assistance for transporting fodder, water and stock and relief grazing on crown lands didn't get a guernsey."

“An expanded terms of reference for the State Drought Taskforce is required to look at all such drought recovery measures and longer-term drought preparedness too.”

Mr Williams emphasised that despite recent rainfalls farmers in many districts are still really hurting.

“Farmers generally will be managing the impacts of this drought for at least the next two years,” he said.

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