

More than 60 per cent of Queensland drought declared

Written by John McVeigh



Brisbane 18 September 2013. Continuing hot, dry weather has put more than 60 per cent of Queensland into drought.

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister John McVeigh said Charters Towers, Central Highlands, Woorabinda, Isaac, Barcaldine and the remainder of Blackall-Tambo shires had been added to the growing list of drought-declared areas.

“This takes the number of drought-declared shires to 25, including seven part-declared,” Mr McVeigh said.

“There are also 25 individually droughted property (IDP) declarations in place in three other shires.

“In Charters Towers, rainfall has been very low and many dams are dry or will go dry. Producers are seeking emergency water supplies, drilling new bores and piping water from other sources.”

Mr McVeigh said a portion of Central Highlands, Woorabinda and Isaac shires were also now drought-declared.

“Pastures in these areas had held some nutritional value until a few weeks ago when heavy frosts caused deterioration of quality,” he said.

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“Livestock condition is also falling across the area, especially as breeders are now calving and widespread drought feeding is underway.

“For the Blackall-Tambo and Barcaldine shires, there has been very low rainfall since March. Pasture growth has been limited and hit by frost.”

Primary producers who aren't in the declared areas but believe their properties are facing drought conditions should contact the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to apply for an IDP declaration.

“Some landholders in the new drought-declared areas will have already received their full land rent notices in the mail,” he said.

“These producers will receive an adjustment notice from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines taking into account a rebate on any land rent increases from 2012/13 to 2013/14.”

Mr McVeigh said producers in drought declared areas could apply for the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme (DRAS).

“DRAS provides up to 50 per cent freight subsidies on fodder and water while an area is drought declared and freight subsidies for restocking and returning from agistment after the drought declaration is revoked,” he said.

“DRAS now also provides a rebate of 50 per cent for water infrastructure purchased to meet emergency animal welfare needs, as part of the new drought assistance package recently announced.

“The Queensland Government will provide up to \$20,000 (excluding GST) to drought-declared

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producers under DRAS each financial year.”

The maps of drought-declared areas and boundary descriptions can be found at: www.longpadock.qld.gov.au

Producers applying for DRAS including the Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate should contact the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on 13 25 23 or access to DRAS claim forms and IDP applications can be found at www.daff.qld.gov.au

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Council areas drought-declared:

- Balonne (part-declared)
- Barcaldine (part-declared)
- Barcoo
- Blackall-Tambo
- Boulia
- Burke
- Carpentaria
- Central Highlands (part-declared)
- Charters Towers (part-declared)
- Croydon
- Cloncurry
- Diamantina
- Doomadgee
- Etheridge
- Flinders
- Isaac (part-declared)
- Maranoa (part-declared)
- McKinlay

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- Mt Isa
- Murweh
- Paroo
- Quilpie
- Richmond
- Winton
- Woorabinda (part-declared).