



Media Release

Issued: 17 July 2015

## **Agriculture and Environment Committee**

Chair: Jennifer Howard MP

Deputy Chair: Stephen Bennett MP

### **Parliamentary committee to review Qld drought assistance**

A parliamentary committee will review the effectiveness of \$74.3 million in Queensland Government drought assistance designed to support communities and landholders in drought-declared areas.

The reviews by the Queensland Parliament's Agriculture and Environment Committee will check that key drought assistance measures are well designed, provide the best possible assistance and give good value for money for the Queensland taxpayer.

Committee Chair, Jennifer Howard MP, believes the committee's work on drought assistance is important and timely.

"Drought assistance has never been so important in Queensland. We are in the grips of the worst drought on record. Sadly, more than 80 per cent of the state is drought-declared. Many people on the land have now endured three failed wet-seasons in a row and are reliant on government assistance."

"For each of our reviews, we will take written submissions, hold public hearings and report our findings with recommendations to the Queensland Parliament. Ministers responsible for drought assistance measures will be required to respond to the committee's findings in detail."

#### **Review of the Drought Assistance Scheme and the Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate**

The committee's first review will examine the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme and the Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate administered by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Producers in a drought declared area or that have an Individually Droughted Property declaration are able to apply for the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme. The scheme provides freight subsidies for fodder and water while an area is drought declared, and freight subsidies for restocking and returning from agistment after the drought declaration is revoked. The scheme also provides a rebate on the purchase and installation of water infrastructure for animal welfare needs. The Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate is designed to address immediate animal welfare needs and help improve properties to be more resilient to future drought.

The closing date for submissions to the committee's review of the Drought Assistance Scheme is **28 August 2015**. The committee aims to report the findings from the review by February 2016.

**For media comment:** please contact the committee Chair, Jennifer Howard MP on 0438 916 111

**For background information:** please contact the committee secretariat on (07) 3553 6662, via email at: [aec@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:aec@parliament.qld.gov.au) or visit the committee's webpage at: [www.parliament.qld.gov.au/aec](http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/aec).