



# Natural disaster recovery assistance for primary producers

September 2016

The impact of fire, flood and other natural disasters can affect primary producers beyond their own resilience levels requiring assistance to recover personally and financially.

NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) and Local Land Services (LLS) coordinate and provide recovery assistance and advice to landholders, primary producers, commercial fishers, and other industries impacted by a natural disaster event.

## Reporting flood damage

Farmers are encouraged to report flood damage including agricultural losses, crops and stranded, injured or deceased livestock. This will assist NSW authorities determine the extent of damage and assess potential support measures.

Farmers can report storm damage to the Local Land Service on **1300 795 299**

## Where do I go for assistance and further information?

Primary producers who require assistance or advice on livestock welfare, pastures or land management, or wish to report damage should contact their **Local Land Services** office on **1300 795 299**.

Visit the NSW DPI website [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/emergency](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/emergency) for recovery information on a range of topics including feeding and health related issues in livestock, managing pastures and aquaculture issues.

Rural Resilience Officers and Rural Support Workers also provide information on support available for farming families recovering from natural disasters and can connect them to relevant service providers. Please contact:

- Liane Corocher (Tocal) - 0427 188 643 [liane.corocher@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:liane.corocher@dpi.nsw.gov.au)
- Danny Byrnes (Hay) - 0400 374 258 [danny.byrnes@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:danny.byrnes@dpi.nsw.gov.au)
- Robyn Waters (Walgett) – 0438 082 731 [robyn.walters@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:robyn.walters@dpi.nsw.gov.au)
- Raechel Squires (Tocal) – 0437 671 459 [raechel.squires@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:raechel.squires@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

## Natural Disaster financial assistance

As a result of damage sustained during a natural disaster, local government areas can be declared natural disaster zones, opening access to financial assistance. Information on a range of assistance measures, including Personal Hardship and Distress assistance, low interest loans and transport subsidies are available at [www.emergency.nsw.gov.au](http://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au).

## The Rural Assistance Authority (RAA)

The Rural Assistance Authority (RAA) Natural Disaster Relief Scheme assists primary producers (including commercial fishers and oyster growers), small business operators, non-profit organisations and sporting and recreational clubs affected by flood/fire/storm damage or other declared natural disasters. For the most recent information or to download forms contact the RAA on 1800 678 593 or [www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/natural-disaster-relief](http://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/natural-disaster-relief).

Assistance available includes:

- **Disaster relief loans** of up to \$130,000 are available, subject to certain eligibility criteria, at a concessional interest rate for those in urgent need. These loans may be used for essential working capital, replacement and repair of damage caused to the property and associated improvements not covered by insurance. The repayment term is preceded by a two year interest and repayment free period. Claims must be lodged within six months of the declared date of the disaster.
- Transport subsidies of up to 50% of the cost of transporting fodder and/or water to an affected property and stock to/from agistment are available. These rebates apply to primary producers in areas affected by the storm/floods, subject to eligibility criteria. Maximum subsidy available is \$15,000 per annum. Claims must be submitted no more than six months after first movement. Submit all claim forms to the Rural Assistance Authority with invoices, receipts and other documentation.

## Personal Hardship and Distress Assistance

The Office of Emergency Management can provide disaster relief grants to eligible individuals and families whose homes and essential household items have been destroyed or damaged by a natural disaster. People with limited financial resources and no insurance may be eligible for assistance for essential household items and structural repairs to the home.

For information about the disaster relief grants and the eligibility criteria call the Disaster Welfare Assistance Line on 1800 018 444.

## Rural Financial Counselling Services (RFCS)

The Rural Financial Counselling Service NSW provides free and impartial financial counselling to eligible primary producers, fishers and small rural businesses who are suffering financial hardship. This includes support to manage the challenges of change and adjustment.

### Central region contacts:

- **Bourke** – John Beer – 0427 467 231, Peni Usumaki – 0408 973 723
- **Dubbo** - John Jones - 0427 439 481, Andrew Turnbull - 0419 402 295
- **Forbes** - Robert Muffet - 0458 523 837, Patrick Crowe - 0488 304 590
- **Nyngan** – Victoria Boag – 0407 491 014

### Southern region contacts:

- **Buronga** – Glen Norris – 0447 283 688
- **Coleambally** – Graham Christie – 0438 444 540
- **Ganmain** – Kevin McCrum – 0448 642 444
- **Griffith/Leeton** – Haidee Laycock – 0447 479 694
- **Hay** – Darren Macartney – 0410 622 599
- **Hillston** – Linda McLean – 0416 235 759

**For other RFC offices** visit the NSW Rural Assistance Authority website: [www.raa.nsw.gov.au](http://www.raa.nsw.gov.au) or phone: 1800 940 404

## Farm Household Support

The Australian Government Department of Human Services provides help for farmers and their families experiencing financial hardship. To be eligible:

- you must be a farmer or the partner of a farmer. If you are the farmer you must contribute a significant part of your labour and capital to the farm enterprise based on specific criteria
- meet an income and assets test
- be willing to undertake a [Farm Financial Assessment](#)
- be willing to enter into a Financial Improvement Agreement to help you improve your financial circumstances.

Contact: Farmer Assistance Line phone 132 316 or your local Rural Financial Counsellor.

## Family and Community Services

Family and Community Services offer the following services:

- Housing NSW 1800 152 152 for private rental bond assistance, temporary accommodation and housing assistance.
- Rentstart Bond assistance 1300 468 746
- Community Services 132 111
- Ageing Disability and Homecare 1300 134 450

## Office of the NSW Small Business Commissioner

Small Biz Connect is a quality, personalised and highly subsidised business advisory program for small businesses in NSW, including agribusinesses. Call 1300 134 359 to make an appointment with your local business advisor. [www.smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au](http://www.smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au)

## Mental Health and Wellbeing

**Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP)** provides a range of information services to individuals, communities and service providers to link rural and remote people to the help they need. This includes information on where to [access services](#), [common mental illnesses](#) and [how to keep mentally healthy](#), as well as the Glove Box Guide to Mental Health.

### Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP)

#### Central West

- Camilla Kenny (Dubbo) - [camilla.kenny@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:camilla.kenny@health.nsw.gov.au) (02) 6881 4034
- Di Gill (Canowindra) - [dianne.gill@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:dianne.gill@health.nsw.gov.au) (02) 6340 3300

#### Far West

- Marie Kelly – [marie.kelly1@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:marie.kelly1@health.nsw.gov.au) 0429 674 307

#### Murrumbidgee

- Helen Sheather – [helen.sheather@gsahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:helen.sheather@gsahs.health.nsw.gov.au) (02) 6455 3215
- Meryl Limbick – [merilyn.limbick@gsahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:merilyn.limbick@gsahs.health.nsw.gov.au) (02) 6951 0233

### General contacts:

- Kids Helpline – 1800 551 800 (telephone counselling service 24 hours, seven days a week)
- Community Mental Health Line – 1800 011 511
- Mensline Australia – 1300 78 99 78, 24 hours a day, 7 day telephone counselling for men
- Beyondblue – 1300 224 636
- Lifeline – 13 11 14
- Australian Red Cross – 1800 660 066 provides personal support during a disaster and an outreach service to affected households.
- Black Dog Institute – 9382 4530

## The Salvation Army

Provides advice, personal support and referral to social services.

Contact: 13 72 58.

## St Vincent de Paul Rural Task Force

Provides personal support, farm visits, advocacy, clothing and some financial assistance.

Contact: (02) 9560 2666.

## Births, Deaths and Marriages

Free replacement of birth certificates, marriage certificates and change of name certificates through the Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages.

Contact: Michelle Gould - (02) 9035 6411 or [www.bdm.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bdm.nsw.gov.au).

## Motor Vehicle Stamp Duty Relief

Motorists whose cars have been written off as a result of a natural disaster may be eligible for a stamp duty refund on their replacement vehicle. Refunds are made where the written off vehicle was comprehensively insured and the insurance does not cover duty for a replacement vehicle.

Contact: Office of State Revenue - 1300 139 814, [www.osr.nsw.gov.au](http://www.osr.nsw.gov.au)

## Insurance

If you have a query relating to insurance you can call the Insurance Council on 1300 444 557. This service is available to all.

## Legal Assistance

Legal Aid NSW helps people with their legal problems. Legal Aid NSW lawyers can provide free legal advice and minor assistance to people affected by disasters on a range of issues including insurance, tenancy, credit and debt problems and what free legal assistance may be available in your area.

Contact: LawAccess NSW - 1300 888 529, [www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au)

## If you don't know who to call:

Contact NSW Rural Resilience Program staff for advice on the most relevant support services for your needs. <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rural-support/rural-resilience-program>.

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