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Conversion extension a win for farmers

The NSW Farmers' Association has won an extension of the current concessional arrangements for Crown road conversions with a continuance of the concessional rents for one further year.

NSW Farmers' Association Business Economics and Trade Committee Chair Sam Archer welcomed the Minister for Lands Hon. Tony Kelly's announcement, saying it will support those farmers who were unable to take up the original incentives due to financial pressures from the extended drought.

"Many areas of the State have not seen a sustained financial benefit from the improved weather conditions, with farm revenues yet to pick up across many sectors of the industry," Mr Archer said.

"Consequently some farmers would have faced additional short term cash flow difficulties if they were forced to either convert these roads to freehold or pay much higher revised rental rates based on the market value of adjoining land," he said.

The Association estimates that at present approximately 24,000 Crown road enclosure permits remain for which applications have not been lodged for conversion to freehold.

"The continuation of the concessional arrangements provides the opportunity for those who have not already lodged their application to consider their options without the added pressure of dealing with the drought.

"Frustrations have however been raised by those Members who have taken the opportunity to convert Crown roads to freehold," he said.

"Many landholders are experiencing lengthy delays, having submitted applications a number of years ago.

"The Association has taken up the matter with the Minister requesting that the department investigate ways to speed up the process," Mr Archer concluded.

While the Association welcomes the extension, the issue of conversions of perpetual leasehold land to freehold is still being negotiated with the Minister for Lands.

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