

Media Release

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Drought grips – assistance welcome

The NSW Farmers' Association says the Federal Government's decision to amend drought assistance boundaries and continue to provide for farmers in the Bourke Rural Lands Protection Board is very welcome, especially given the latest NSW drought figures.

NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie says this decision hopefully indicates similar common sense will be used in the ongoing review of the remaining areas of NSW where Exceptional Circumstances declarations are scheduled to expire in September.

"As the NSW drought figures for June show, 62.7% of the State is now drought declared, and just 13.6% of NSW is satisfactory," Mr Laurie said.

"While there has been some rain in areas, we need to ensure that there is adequate time for farmers to recover from the drought and rebuild their businesses before the rug's pulled out from underneath them.

"The Government has done the right thing by accepting advice from the National Rural Advisory Council regarding revised boundaries following extensive local drought area information provided by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and the NSW Farmers' Association.

The Association is also working with DPI to coordinate information and tours for the remaining 26 areas under review.

"The drought figures for June show a dramatic increase in the areas affected by drought. Farm families and small businesses throughout many rural communities are still hurting - so both levels of Government must be careful when revising the assistance available," Mr Laurie concluded.

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