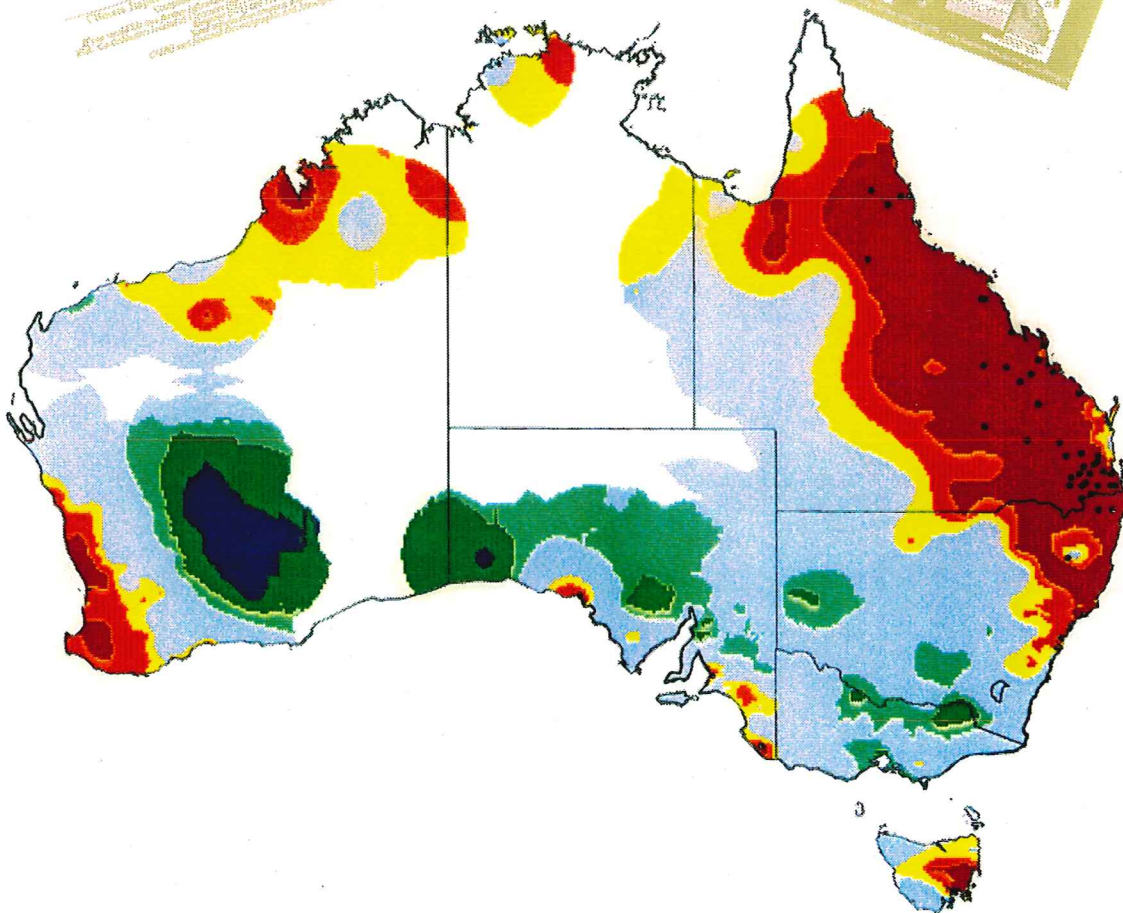




*a Queensland Government submission to the Right Honourable John Howard MP,
Prime Minister of Australia*



16 August 1996

NOT FOR
LOAN

Foreword

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Today's inspection of Queensland drought areas by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Right Honourable John Howard MP, reflects a strong personal interest in rural affairs and, in particular, the plight of rural families who have been battered by one of the worst droughts in the nation's history.

The fact that the Prime Minister has taken the time to gain first-hand knowledge of a drought that continues to ravage farm productivity and rural communities in many areas is greatly appreciated by the Queensland Government, rural industry organisations and producers.

Queensland has a long proud history of efficient agricultural production - production that contributes 22% of Australia's gross value of agricultural commodities and 24% of Australia's rural exports.

However, the last six years have been the toughest on record for many producers.

Since 1991, Queensland rural farm gate drought losses have totalled \$3 billion while overall drought losses to the Queensland economy have exceeded \$6 billion.

Results of the "Survey of Rural Debt in Queensland" released in the February 1996 Rural Adjustment Authority Report show that total Queensland rural debt increased by nearly \$200 million during 1995 with the average individual debt load increasing to more than \$249,000.

The Queensland and Commonwealth Governments have long recognised the critical importance of rural industries to the State and national economies and the importance of maintaining a strong and viable rural sector.

Together, the State and Commonwealth Governments have spent more than \$307 million on drought assistance in Queensland since July 1991.

Without this assistance there is little doubt that thousands of farm families would have been forced off their properties.

Now, as many farmers are emerging from drought, it is important that we put in place measures to ensure they do not fail during the critical period between rain falling and the return of cash flows. At the same time, we must continue to look after the many producers who are still in the grip of drought.

We can't abandon them now!

*The Honourable
Joan Sheldon MLA
Acting Premier,
Treasurer and Minister for the Arts*

*The Honourable
Trevor Perrett MLA
Minister for Primary Industries*



Proposed action

The Queensland Government proposes that existing State and Commonwealth drought assistance measures be retained for those areas which continue to be gripped by drought.

In addition, the following responses are proposed to assist those producers who are emerging from this exceptional drought:

Business

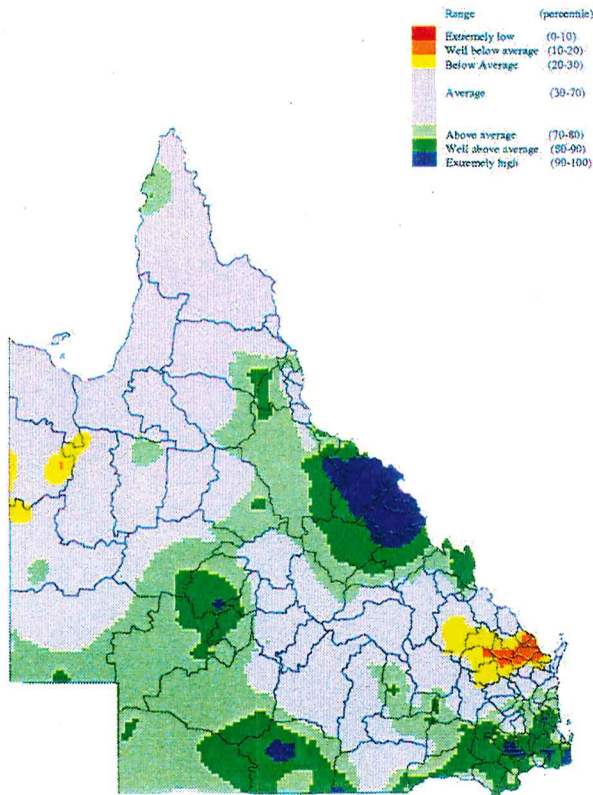
- ▶ *The Commonwealth amend Rural Adjustment Scheme (RAS) Drought Exceptional Circumstances (DEC) guidelines to enable all eligible producers to receive up to two years of subsidy after DEC revocation.*
- ▶ *That Queensland be able to utilise the existing RAS Productivity Enhancement Scheme to assist producers to recover from this drought. This will require supplementary funding for the scheme.*
- ▶ *The Commonwealth and State jointly establish a new scheme involving the payment of an interest subsidy of three percent for up to five years to encourage banks to restructure existing short term debts to longer term finance facilities.*

Social

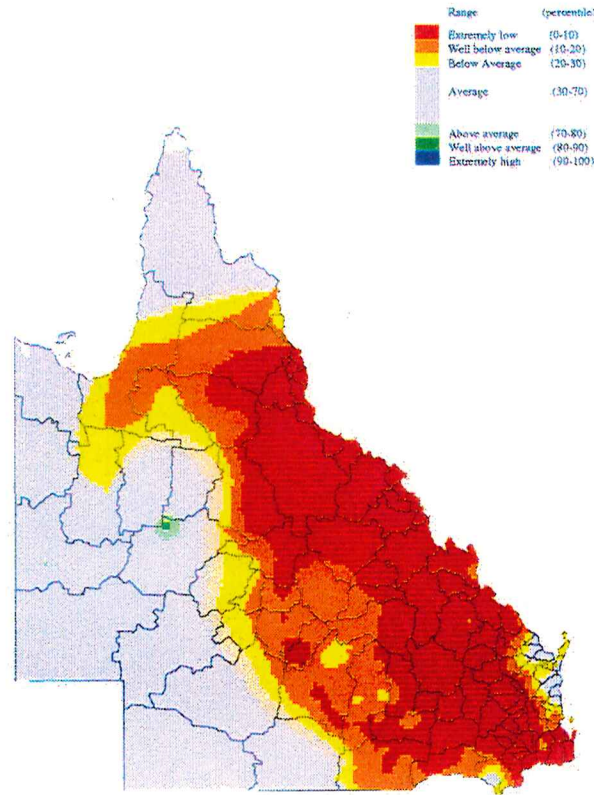
- ▶ *The Commonwealth extend the availability of the Drought Relief Payment (DRP) for two years after DEC revocation.*
- ▶ *The Commonwealth extend the availability of the more flexible eligibility requirements for AUSTUDY for two years after DEC revocation.*

Drought - the Queensland picture

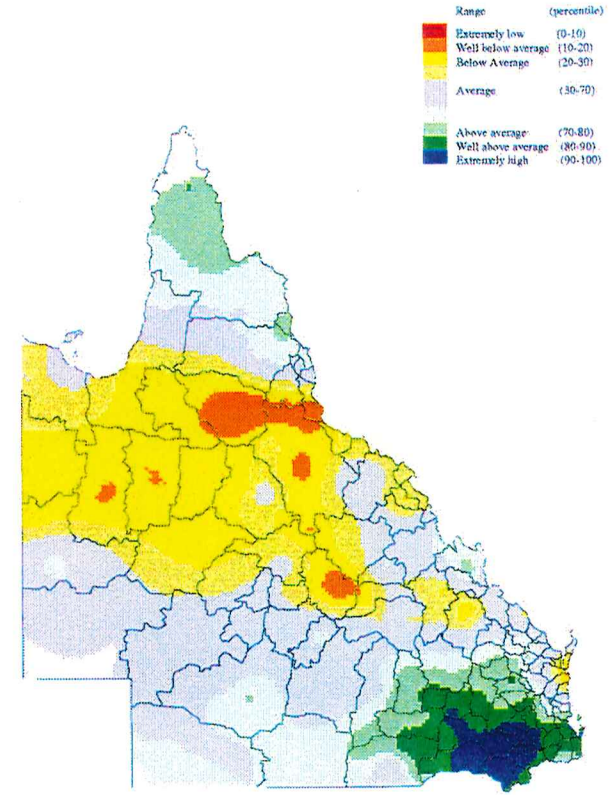
Normal years
1987-1991



Disaster years
1991-1995



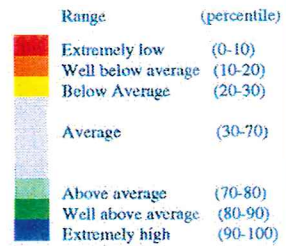
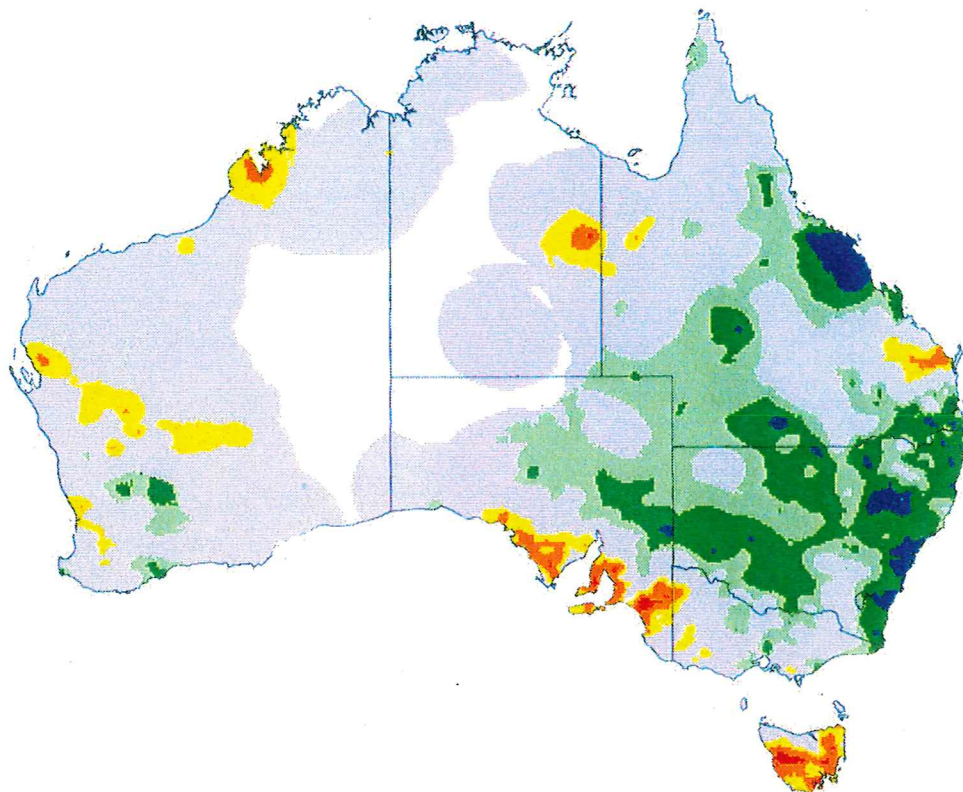
Towards recovery?
1995-1996



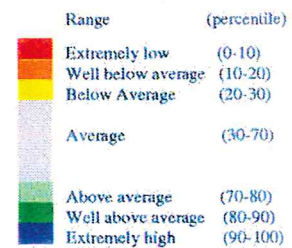
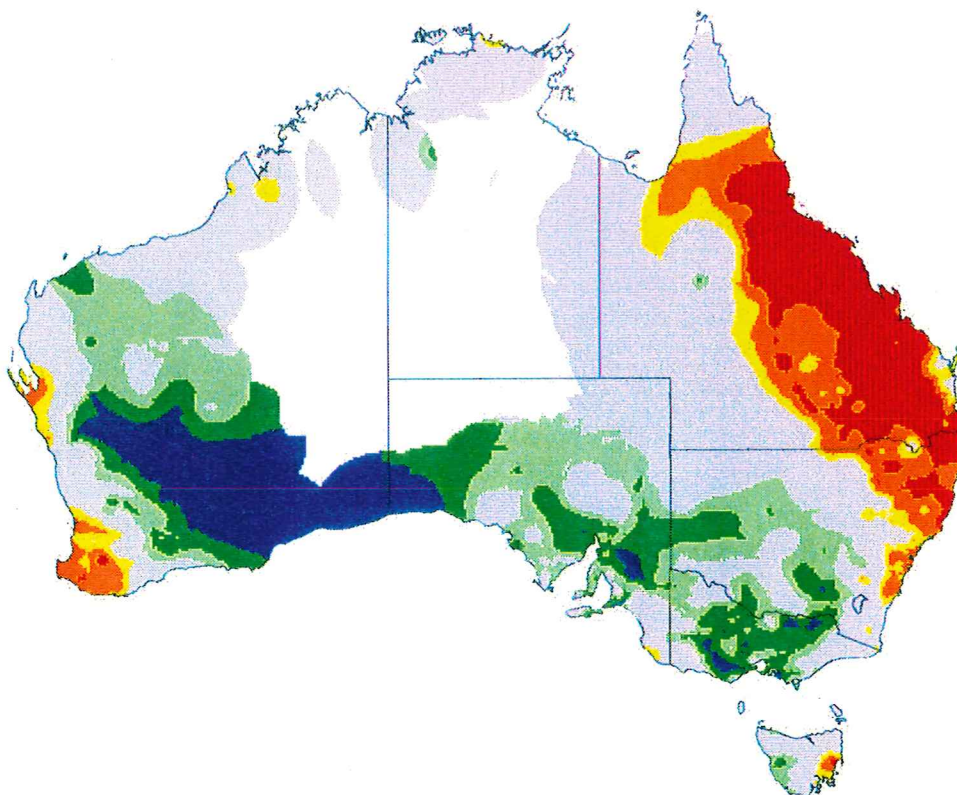
Rainfall Relative to Historical Records

Drought - the Australian picture

1987-1991



1991-1995



Rainfall Relative to Historical Records

Queensland's Drought history 1991 to 1996

The following history of drought in Queensland since 1991 is graphically illustrated in the series of maps on page 8.

1991

The drought began in the winter of 1991 and by the end of November of that year sixty-six shires, three part shires and a further 670 individual properties in twenty-six other shires were officially drought declared under Queensland's drought declaration processes.

This represented over seventy percent of Queensland Department of Primary Industries (DPI) registered holdings.

1992

Following wide spread rain in the south-east of the State during January and February of 1992, a large number of holdings were revoked from droughted status leaving about thirty percent of producers drought stricken.

By November 1992, the drought expanded into northern and western areas and conditions deteriorated in the areas revoked from drought earlier in the year. At that time thirty-five percent of the State was officially declared.

1993

As the year progressed fifty percent of the State became affected as indicated by the extensive distribution of the officially declared areas on the December 1993 map.

1994

Following summer 1994 rains in the south and west of the State the declared areas were reduced to thirty percent of the State by area by March 1994. By December of that year, conditions worsened with expansions of the declared areas increasing to forty-five percent of the State.

1995

As a result of widespread falls of rain, a number of extensive area shires in the north and south-west were revoked in the winter of 1995, reducing the droughted areas to thirty-five percent of the State.

1996

Good widespread falls in the north and south-eastern areas resulted in the lifting of a number of shire and property declarations in the autumn of 1996.

However, there are a number of areas in central and western Queensland severely affected by ongoing drought conditions.

Currently there are eighteen shires, seven part shires and an additional 674 individual properties in thirty-seven other shires drought declared, representing twenty-four percent of the State by area. The most recent declaration was the Shire of Jericho on 22 July 1996.

A number of areas within the State have been drought declared continuously for from two to five years through individual property or shire declaration.

The following table indicates periods under official drought declaration continuous to current date.

to the south-eastern part of the State, which is reflected by the revocation of DEC status from 11 June 1996.

While northern and south-eastern areas of the State had DEC status lifted, the majority of the State, by area, remains in exceptional drought circumstances (See page 9).

<i>Shire</i>	<i>Reference Town</i>	<i>Drought Declared</i>
Belyando	Clermont	1/9/92
Bowen	Bowen	25/10/91
Calliope	Gladstone	28/11/94
Dalrymple	Charters Towers	1/5/93
Duaringa	Duaringa	17/3/93
Eidsvold	Eidsvold	10/10/94
Emerald	Emerald	8/4/93
Fitzroy	Rockhampton	9/6/93
Winton	Winton	18/3/96*
Flinders	Hughenden	22/4/96*
Richmond	Richmond	22/4/96*
McKinlay	Julia Creek	22/4/96*

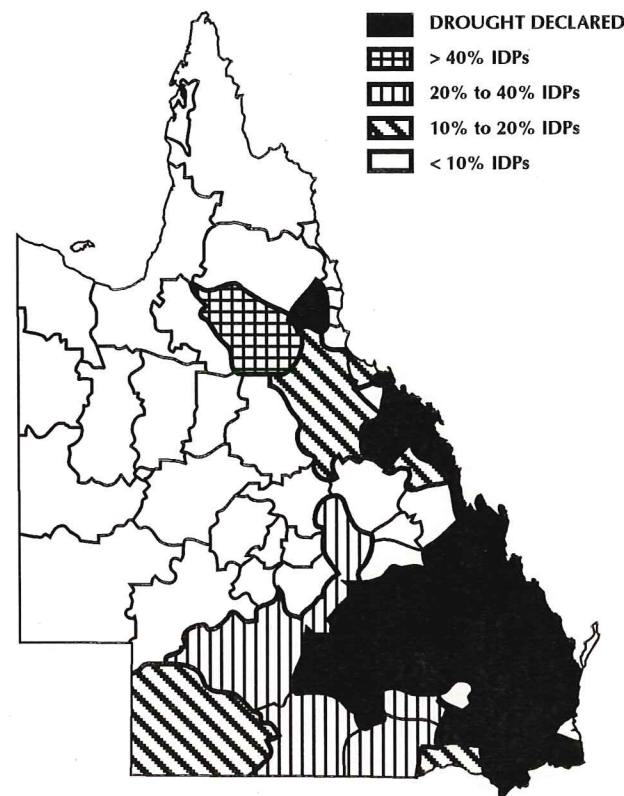
***Note:** Whilst these Shires have only recently been officially declared, the drought situation within them has been long term. Under Queensland's declaration processes, drought declarations are administered on an individual property basis for as long as can be effectively managed at field level. Thirty to forty-five percent of properties in those Shires were individually declared for up to twelve months prior to the Shire declarations. The concentration of drought declared properties was in fact much higher than that indicated as they were located to the south of the Great Northern Railway Line.

The gravity of the extreme, long term drought conditions experienced in Queensland was officially acknowledged in October 1994 through the declaration of the entire State under the Commonwealth Drought Exceptional Circumstances (DEC) provisions. Significant rains during the summer and autumn of 1995/96 provided substantial relief

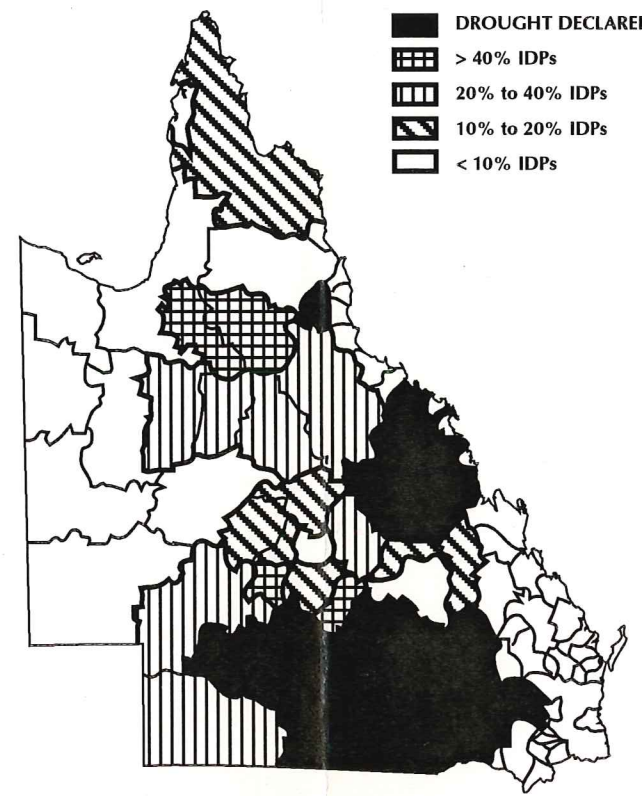
A map depicting the current situation is also included (see page 10). This represents a marked improvement given that the revocations from drought status in the southern and more intensively farmed areas of the State have enabled a large number of producers to commence the post drought recovery process.

Queensland's Drought history 1991 - 1996

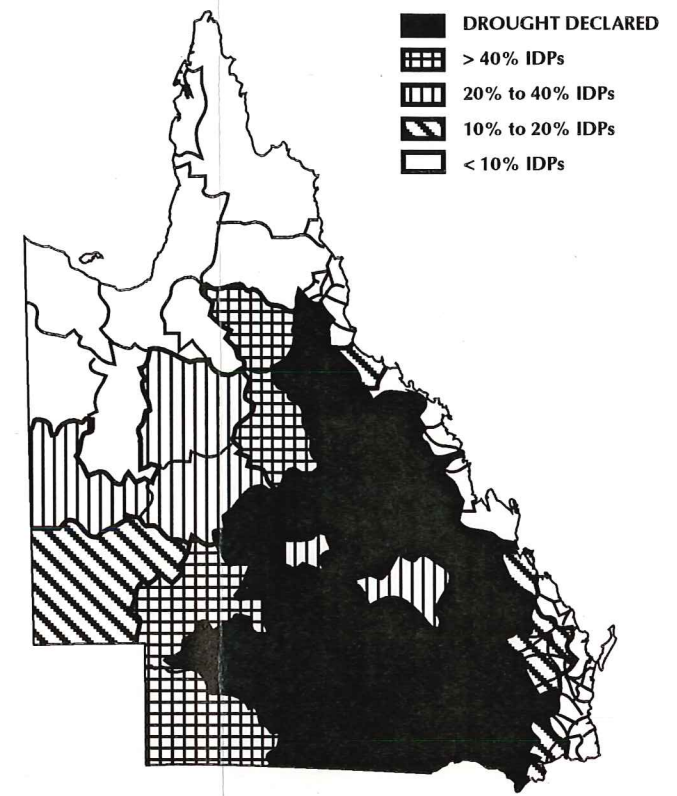
1991



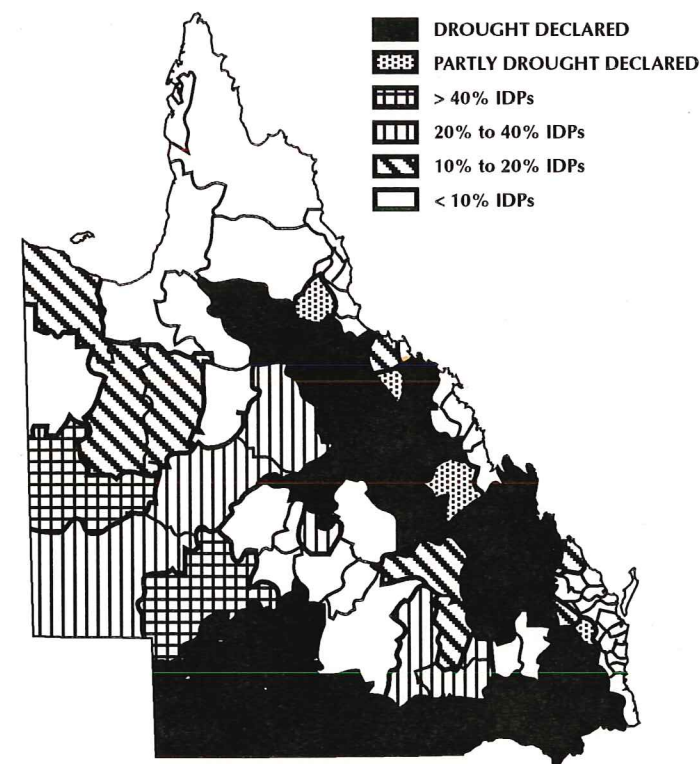
1992



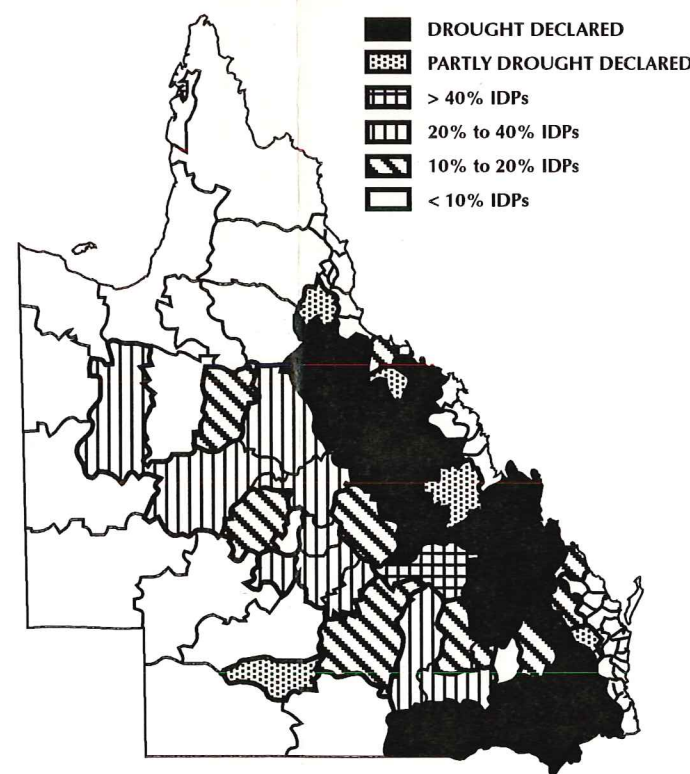
1993



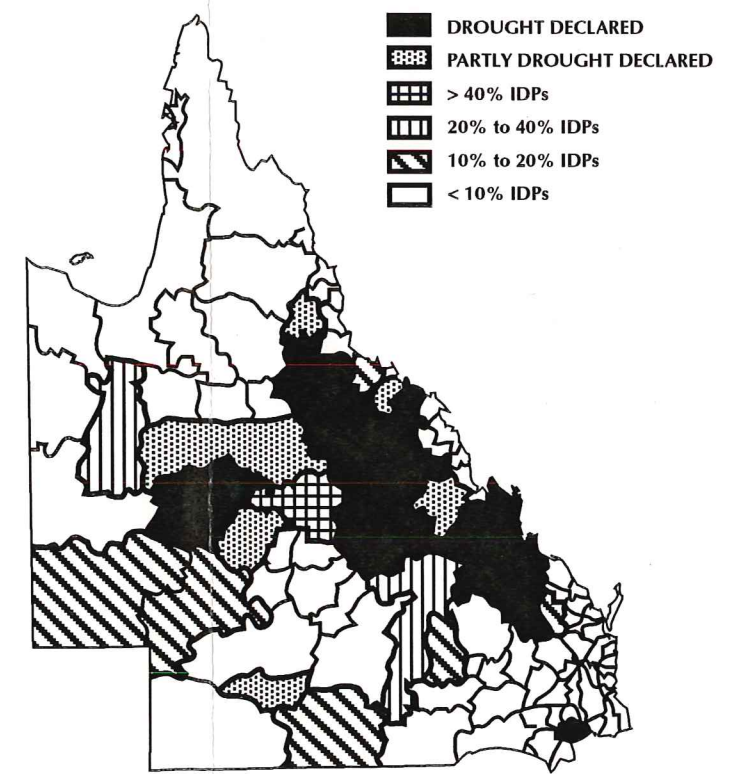
1994



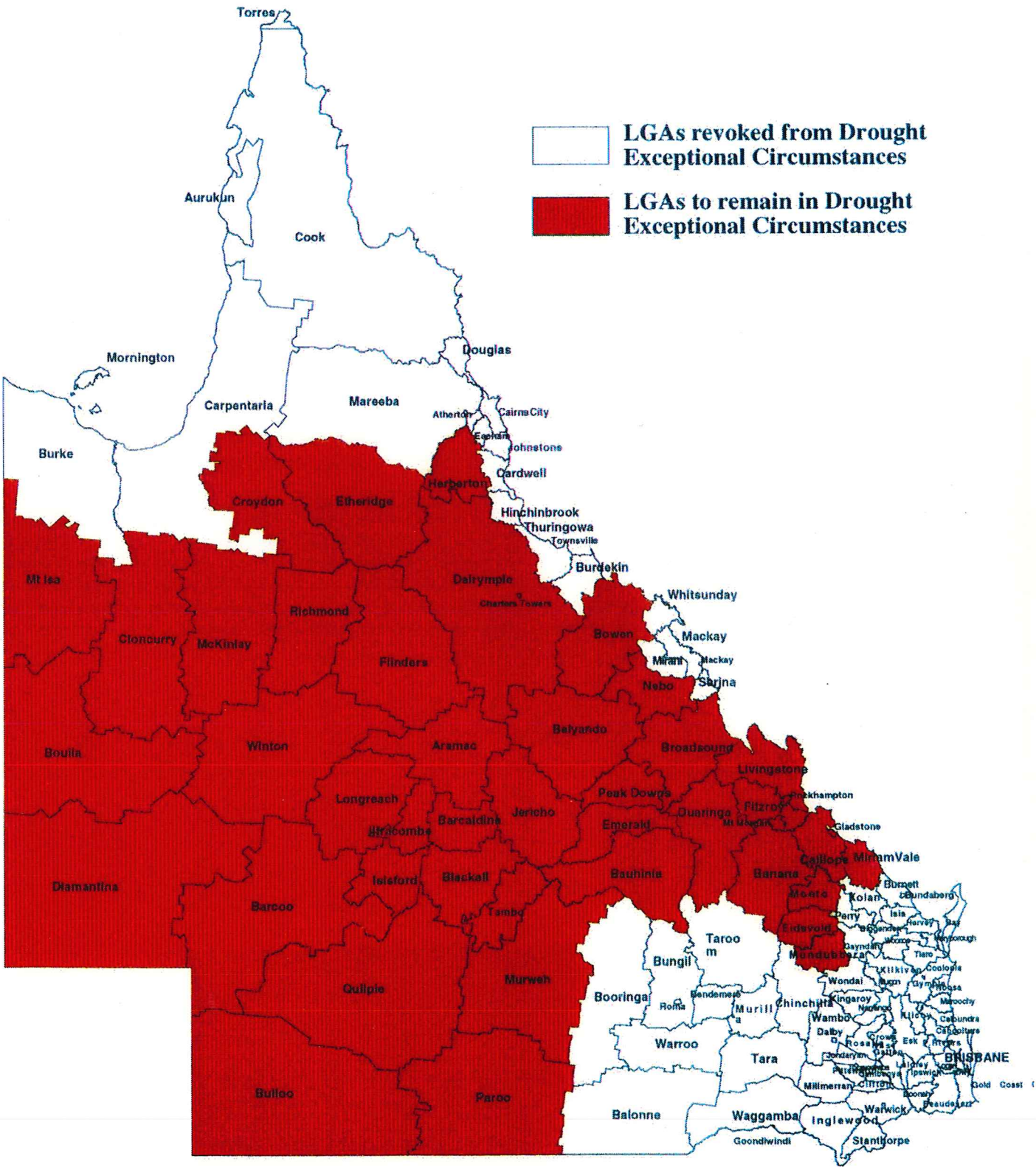
1995



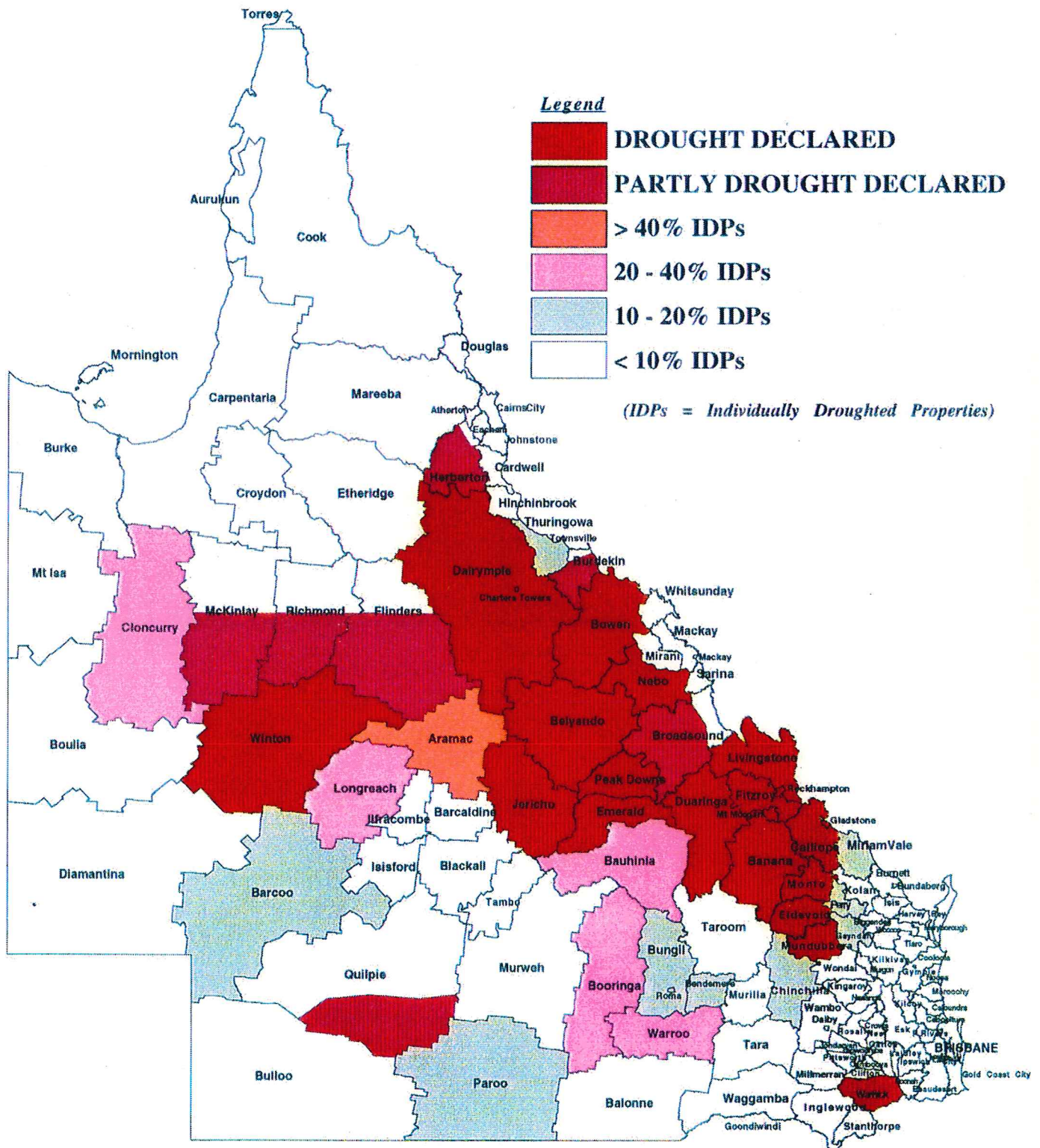
1996



Drought exceptional circumstances areas Queensland (11 June 1996)



Queensland Drought Situation as at 22nd July 1996



Attachments

1 - Drought Bulletin

2 - Drought Situation July 1996

3 - Water Supply Situation

4 - The Long Paddock

5 - SOI Hotline

6 - Primary Industries - A key contributor

7 - DPI location map

Drought Bulletin

Issued by the Department of Primary Industries, Queensland.

June 28, 1996 No. 9

Drought Information Centre - Fodder Register Hotline: 1800 808 555.

Information update

DROUGHT Bulletin No. 9 is being direct mailed to all primary producers in drought declared shires, drought affected shires and in shires where drought status has been recently revoked by the State Government for freight subsidy purposes or by the Commonwealth Government for Drought Exceptional Circumstances purposes.

This will keep producers up to date with State and Commonwealth assistance measures.

It also updates information on a wide range of topics including government and community support group contacts.

Drought Bulletin No. 9 is also available from Department of Primary Industries stock inspectors, drought coordinators and farm financial counsellors and Department of Natural Resources offices throughout Queensland. Copies may also be obtained by telephoning DPI Public Affairs on (07) 3239 3010 - fax (07) 3239 0860 or the DPI Drought Information Centre freecall Hotline 1800 808 555

Drought areas

QUEENSLAND's drought list at June 24, 1996, stood at 23 drought declared shires, seven part-shires and 1179 Individually Droughted Properties in 46 other shires. This represents approximately 25 percent of the State's area.

It should be noted that producers who are still drought affected, despite the shire's drought status being revoked, can apply for Individual Droughted Property (IDP) status.

Rainfall in southern Queensland in recent months has led to 17 shires having their drought status revoked in May and June. Balonne and Tara were revoked on May 6, Beaudesert, Boonah and Cambooya on May 27 and a further 12 shires and one part shire on June 17. They were Esk, Gatton, Inglewood, Ipswich, Jondaryan, Kingaroy, Laidley, Murgon, Nanango, Rosalie, Waggamba and Wondai. Crows Nest was revoked on June 24.

Conversely, in north west Queensland the Winton shire was drought declared on March 18 followed by part declarations of the area south of the Great Northern Railway line in the Flinders, McKinlay and Richmond shires on April 22.

For details on Drought Declared Shires see pg 17.

Revocation of Qld's drought status

REVOCATION of drought status can apply both to individual holdings or area declarations.

Shires or individual properties are given drought declaration status by the Queensland Government for freight subsidy purposes.

Before initial revocations are approved, the Local Drought Committee for the area (coordinated by the local DPI Stock Inspector) thoroughly assesses the situation to be confident that the drought is genuinely over. Those Committees comprise both industry and government representation.

Points taken into account in assessing the situation, which form the basis of recommendations for revocation, include:

- the amount of rain that has fallen in the area and whether such rain was general or not;
- the area should receive enough rain to promote sufficient pasture growth to permit stocking at "normal" or "near normal" carrying capacities for the given time of the year and to maintain the stocking rate until further rain could be reasonably be expected;
- the response of crops and pastures and their availability;
- availability of surface water;
- condition of livestock;
- prevailing weather conditions such as winds, temperature etc;
- whether supplementary feeding has ceased throughout the district;
- time of year the rainfall is received (grass production); and
- any other factors which affect the particular area.

Alternatively, producers who are still drought affected, despite the shire's drought status being revoked, can apply for Individual Droughted Property (IDP) status.

Federal revocation of Drought Exceptional Circumstances

THE Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industries and Energy has revoked Commonwealth drought exceptional circumstances support in certain local government areas of northern and south eastern Queensland effective from June 11, 1996.

The decisions were taken following a review of drought in eastern Australia by the Rural Adjustment Scheme Advisory Council (RASAC).

The local government areas revoked are: Atherton, Aurukun, Albert, Balonne, Beaudesert, Bendemere, Biggenden, Boonah, Booringa, Brisbane City, Bundaberg, Bungil, Burdekin, Burke, Burnett (Gooburrum, Woongarra), Caboolture, Cairns, Caloundra, Cambooya, Cardwell, Carpentaria, Chinchilla, Clifton, Cook, Cooloola (Gympie, Widgee), Crows Nest, Douglas, Eacham, Esk, Gatton, Gayndah, Gold Coast, Hervey Bay, Hinchinbrook, Inglewood, Ipswich City (Moreton), Isis, Johnstone, Jondaryan, Kilcoy, Kilkivan, Kingaroy, Kolan, Laidley, Logan, Mackay, Mareeba, Maroochy, Maryborough, Millmerran,

In this Bulletin



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Mirani, Mornington, Mulgrave, Murgon, Murilla, Nanango, Noosa, Perry, Pine Rivers, Pioneer, Pittsworth, Redcliffe City, Redland, Rosalie, Sarina, Stanthorpe, Tara, Taroom, Thuringowa, Toowoomba City, Torres, Townsville, Tiara, Waggamba, Wambo, Waroo, Warwick (Allora, Glengallen, Rosenthal), Whitsunday, Wondai and Woocoo.

The Minister stressed that farmers in the areas revoked continue to be eligible for Commonwealth Drought Relief Payments and Austudy special assessment provisions for a further six months. They may also continue to apply for RAS drought exceptional circumstances interest rate subsidies during the next six months. Individual Droughted Property (IDP) status does not apply for Commonwealth support measures.

Local government areas continuing their schedule of drought exceptional circumstances are: Aramac, Banana, Barcaldine, Barcoo, Bauhinia, Belyando, Blackall, Boulia, Bowen, Broomsound, Bulloo, Calliope, Cloncurry, Croyden, Dalrymple, Diamantina, Daringa, Eidsvold, Emerald, Etheridge, Fitzroy, Flinders, Herberton, Jericho, Ilfracombe, Ibisford, Livingstone, Longreach, McKinlay, Miriam Vale, Monto, Mundubbera, Mount Isa, Mount Morgan, Murweh, Nebo, Paroo, Peak Downs, Quilpie, Richmond, Rockhampton City, Tambo and Winton.
See map pg 16.

Assistance measures

Queensland Government

STATE Cabinet has approved new arrangements to help livestock producers cope with a fast deteriorating drought situation.

They are:

- a system of forward freight subsidies to move stock from drought affected properties to agistment;
- an extended eligibility period for restocking after revocation of the drought declaration; and
- an increase in the distance stock can be taken to and from agistment.

This approval will help protect the viability of the herd nucleus and reduce the environmental degradation to properties by encouraging producers to shift their stock to agistment.

See Freight subsidies pg 6

Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority

THE Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority (QRAA) administers the Rural Adjustment Scheme and other State and Commonwealth funded assistance programs for primary producers and small businesses. The assistance programs include:

- Rural Adjustment Scheme
 - Drought Exceptional Circumstances Interest Subsidy
 - Productivity Enhancement Interest Subsidy
 - Professional advice grants
 - Training grants
 - Re-establishment grants
- Small Business Drought Assistance (Interest Subsidy)
- Concessional Loans
 - Drought Crop Loan
 - Drought Restocking Loan
 - Primary Industry Productivity Enhancement Scheme

- Young Farmers Establishment Scheme
- Natural Disaster Relief Assistance for Primary Producers
- Natural Disaster Relief Assistance for Small Businesses

From the period July 1, 1994 to June 30, 1995, interest subsidies totalling \$62.1 million were provided to 3223 primary producers in Queensland. A further \$49.5 million has been provided for the 11 months extending to May 31, 1996. More than 75 percent of this has been provided under the Exceptional Circumstances Drought provisions of the Rural Adjustment Scheme.

CONTACT: QRAA 1800 623 946 (free call) or (07) 3370 0120 for all assistance programs.

Rural Adjustment Scheme (RAS)

SUPPORT available through the RAS is:

- interest subsidies to enhance farm productivity/profitability on new and existing commercial debts;
- interest subsidies for drought exceptional circumstances on new and existing commercial debts;
- grants to assist with farm business planning/training advice; and
- assistance for primary producers to adjust out of farming.

Exceptional Circumstances Drought

RAS support is available for Queensland rural producers who have suffered financial difficulty due to exceptional drought conditions over at least 24 of the preceding 36 months and/or to assist with recovery from exceptional drought conditions for a period of up to 12 months.

Applications must be lodged within 6 months after the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industries and Energy determines that the exceptional circumstances have ceased.

Support is by way of an interest rate subsidy and may be up to a maximum 100 percent of the interest payable on either existing or new loans.

Applications must be lodged within six months after the Federal Minister for Primary Industries and Energy determines that Exceptional Circumstances has ceased.

Producers must have prospects of long term profitability and sustainability but for the drought conditions.

They must have disposed of all non-essential rural and non rural assets and applied any proceeds to the business.

(NB The retention of off-farm assets where the total net value does not exceed \$167,500 will be allowed).

Investments in bona-fide insurance and superannuation funds are exempt from off-farm assets allowance.

CONTACT: QRAA

Re-establishment Support

IF the drought or other circumstances have made it no longer viable for primary producers to continue working their property, RAS re-establishment support may help them leave the rural industry in an orderly manner.

QRAA provides support of up to \$45,000 (with exceptional circumstances drought this may increase to \$75,000). This assistance is means tested and subject to terms and conditions. It is usually made initially as an advance, and it can be converted to a grant at any time at the discretion of the QRAA.

CONTACT: QRAA

Training Grants

THE RAS training grant is to provide eligible primary producers with independent financial or management training which will lead to improved long-term productivity and profitability of the farm.

The Grant is for an amount up to \$1000 per applicant per annum.

CONTACT: QRAA

Professional Advice Grant

RAS also provides grants to assist with meeting part of the initial consultation cost of a qualified Professional Rural Consultant to provide advice on farm business management strategies and develop a Farm Business Plan.

Up to 75 percent of the agreed consultant's cost will be provided.

CONTACT: QRAA

Productivity Enhancement

RAS subsidies of up to 50 percent of the current commercial rate are available to rural producers working to enhance their property's productivity.

This practical financial support can be used to offset interest on loans for:

- debt/capital restructuring;
- changing farm programs;
- introducing new technology, and
- adopting sustainable farming methods.

Terms and conditions apply, but if a primary producer feels long-term viability depends on further capital investment, interest subsidies through QRAA may prove valuable.

CONTACT: QRAA

Old Small Business Drought Assistance

THIS subsidy is designed to assist locally owned small businesses whose enterprise has been affected by the drought in:

- shires drought declared at the time of application: or
- in centres that border or are surrounded by drought declared shires at the time of application.
- assistance will be provided by way of interest subsidy on new or existing commercial loans, for a period of two years from the date of approval.

A Maximum of \$5 000 p.a. for two years (i.e. a total maximum of \$10,000) is available under the scheme - however, large businesses which are essential to the region may be eligible for up to \$10,000 p.a. (i.e. a total maximum of \$20,000) to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The interest subsidy provided is up to a maximum of 50 percent of interest payable on new or existing loans, provided that the lender's rate is competitive for the type of loan being subsidised.

CONTACT: QRAA

Concessional Loans

Drought Crop Loan

TO assist primary producers involved in the broadacre, grain and fodder industries to purchase seed, chemicals, fertiliser and fuel to enable the planting of a successful post drought crop.

Applicants must:

- have their property located in a drought declared shire or be individually drought declared;
- have sound short to medium term prospects of commercial viability;
- be unable to obtain any part of the loan from commercial sources at normal terms and conditions including commercial loans attracting interest subsidy provided by the Rural Adjustment Scheme, and
- execute the Statutory Declaration in the application form confirming:
 - areas planted in the last three years to broadacre, grain and fodder crops;
 - area of land to be planted to each crop;
 - that they do not have net assets in excess of \$1M at current valuations.

Special conditions - current recipients of RAS interest subsidies:

- applicants in receipt of RAS interest subsidies will not be required to undergo a further viability test;
- crop loan applicants must provide a letter from their commercial lender supporting the application to QRAA for the loan and agreeing that the commercial lender is unable to satisfy this request;
- QRAA will require confirmation that the conditions are reasonably conducive to the planting of such a crop;
- Loans will be a maximum rate of \$160 per hectare planted to cover costs of seed chemicals, fertiliser and fuel;
- Loans will be limited to the average area over the last three crops planted to broadacre, grain and fodder crops; and
- Maximum loan is \$40,000 per primary production unit. Interest rate applicable to this program is 6 percent. Loans are to be repaid from crop proceeds within eighteen months from official drawdown of the loan.

CONTACT: QRAA

Drought Restocking Loan

TO assist primary producers who have been affected by drought to gain access to concessional loans to cover restocking requirements.

Applicants must:

- have properties located in a drought declared shire or be individually drought declared;
- have sound short to medium term prospects of commercial viability;
- be unable to obtain any part of the loan from commercial sources at normal terms and conditions including commercial loans attracting interest subsidy provided by the Rural Adjustment Scheme, and
- execute the Statutory Declaration in the application form confirming:
 - that they do not have net assets in excess of \$1M at current valuation.
 - normal carrying capacity, and
 - current stock numbers.

Loans up to a maximum of \$100,000 are available for a term of up to 5 years at an initial interest rate of 6 percent.

CONTACT: QRAA

Primary Industry Productivity Enhancement Scheme (P.I.P.E.S.)

P.I.P.E.S. provides low interest loans to assist with Property Build Up, Rationalisation of Partnership (including family), Expansion or Diversification of the enterprise and Development of Water Supplies. This Scheme is intended to supplement the financial products offered by commercial lenders.

Loans of up to \$250,000 are available (limited to \$100,000 for (1) Water Supply, (2) On-Farm Capital Works, (3) Upgrade of Plant and Machinery); with terms from 7 - 15 years and an initial interest rate of 6 percent.

Landcare loans of up to \$50,000 per annum with a cumulative total of \$250,000 are also available for approved purposes with terms of up to 15 years and an interest rate of 6 percent for the first 5 years reviewed annually thereafter.

CONTACT: QRAA

Young Farmers Establishment Scheme

LOANS of up to \$250,000 over a term of up to 20 years are available to approved applicants. A loan may be used to purchase a family property. Interest rates, currently 6 percent may be fixed for up to 5 years. Special terms and conditions apply to all loans.

CONTACT: QRAA

Exceptional Circumstances certificates

DROUGHT Exceptional Circumstances certificates are issued by the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority (QRAA) as a pre-requisite for the Drought Relief Payment made through the Department of Social Security on behalf of the Department of Primary Industries and Energy.

Certificates which were issued after January 1, 1995 are current for six months from the date of application and will be automatically reissued by QRAA.

Certificates will continue to be issued until exceptional circumstances drought provisions are revoked by the Federal Minister for Primary Industries and Energy.

Upon revocation of exceptional circumstances, DRP Certificates may be issued to expire at a date six months past the date of revocation.

Those producers who hold current DRP Certificates at the time of revocation will be automatically issued with a new certificate on expiry of their current one to take them to the six month time frame beyond the revocation date.

This means that producers can receive Drought Relief Payments for six months even though the exceptional circumstances drought conditions are over.

Contact: QRAA

Drought Relief Payment

THE Drought Relief Payment (DRP) is a payment to help farmers living in exceptional circumstances drought affected areas who are having difficulties in meeting family and personal living expenses.

DRP is a payment made by the Department of Social Security (DSS) on behalf of the Department of Primary Industries and Energy (DPIE).

Who can get it?

You can get DRP if you are:

- a farmer;
- over 18 years old;
- an Australian resident living in Australia; and

- identified as living in an exceptional circumstances drought affected area by the State Rural Adjustment Scheme (RAS) Authority. (In Queensland this is QRAA)

Please note:

- farmers who are getting Job Search Allowance or Newstart Allowance or a Social Security pension or a Department of Veterans' Affairs Service pension cannot also get DRP;
- however, farmers who are getting another DSS or DVA payment, but who would get more under DRP, should claim DRP;
- farmers do not need to offer their farms for sale to get DRP;
- farmers claiming DRP do not need to register at the Commonwealth Employment Service or satisfy a work activity test; and
- farmers currently on Farm Household Support (FHS) can apply for DRP.

How much can farmers get?

DRP is paid at the equivalent of Job Search and Newstart Allowance, together with Family Payment (where applicable). DSS can tell farmers about the current rate of payment.

When is DRP paid?

Payment is made every fortnight into the recipient's bank, credit union or building society account.

Recipients will continue to be paid while the exceptional circumstances drought declaration is in force and for a recovery period of six months afterwards.

How do applicants claim?

1. Obtain certification from the State Rural Adjustment Scheme Authority. (QRAA)
2. Make a claim on the DRP claim form. Applicants can get claim forms from Social Security offices and State Rural Adjustment Authorities or by phoning Social Security TeleService or Countrylink.
3. Provide proof of identity. Ask Social Security what documents are needed to prove identity.
4. Give the claim form to Social Security. If the applicant lives far from the nearest Social Security office, ask for help from a Drought Contact Officer.

What about the income and assets test?

Assets that are considered essential to the long term profitability of the farm are exempt from the DRP assets test. These assets include the farm, farm plant and machinery, livestock and money intended for fuel, fertiliser and seed for planting a crop.

Off-farm assets are subject to the assets test.

The same income test rules as for Job Search Allowance applies. Talk to Social Security about these.

What else do farmers need to know?

Farmers must apply for a continuation of DRP every six months. A review form will be sent to the recipient automatically. It should be filled in and sent back with a continuing certificate from the RAS Authority. (See story titled Exceptional Circumstances Certificates Pg 4)

Recipients are also entitled to a Health Care Card which will be issued automatically.

How to find out more?

Call Social Security TeleService on 132 468.

For information in languages other than English, call 131 202.

These calls can be made from anywhere in Australia for the cost of local call - an STD area code is not required for these numbers.

Information about other drought assistance measures is available from the Department of Primary Industries and Energy Countrylink Service (see pg 14).

Business payment advice for rural areas (BARA)

THE BARA program is a joint Commonwealth-State initiative which is administered in Queensland by the Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry (DTSBI) and delivered through a range of regional development organisations.

Established in 1992, the program now employs 22 BARA advisors located mainly in rural and remote areas of the State. Eight of these BARA positions were created in 1995 specifically in response to the drought and will not be funded by the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy past June 30, 1996.

The Queensland Government, through DTSBI, is now looking at possible funding options to allow at least some of these positions to continue to operate.

The role of BARA advisors is to facilitate non-farm business enterprise (including on-farm business diversification) and employment-generating projects by providing information, resources (data, expertise, manuals etc), contacts and advice to those already in business. The specific duties of a BARA advisor include:

- facilitate the development of business management, marketing and general operational expertise of entrepreneurs;
- support clients in obtaining appropriate training to ensure their enterprises achieve their potential;
- assist the regional development process through the establishment of enterprises; and
- assess the skills and resources needed by clients to achieve an economically viable enterprise.

BARA advisors provide a similar service to non-farm small business in rural and remote areas of Queensland as farm financial counsellors provide to farmers and graziers. They do not seek to replace professional service providers (eg accountants, financial advisors) already operating in these areas but rather complement these services.

BARA sites are:

Atherton	Ph (070) 913 608
Biloela	Ph (079) 931 855
Bowen	Ph (077) 864 222
Cape York Peninsula	Ph (070) 313 432
Charleville	Ph (076) 542 309
Charters Towers	Ph (077) 871 280
Chinchilla	Ph (076) 627 056
Clermont	Ph (079) 833 332
Cloncurry	Ph (077) 422 381
Emerald	Ph (079) 824 889
Gin Gin	Ph (071) 572 986
Goondiwindi	Ph (076) 713 264
Gulf Savannah	Ph (070) 311 631
Longreach	Ph (076) 583 301
Lowood	Ph (074) 262 033
Mundubbera	Ph (071) 654 773
Murgon	Ph (071) 681 984
Oakey	Ph (076) 912 377
Roma	Ph (076) 221 266
St George	Ph (076) 255 377
Tully	Ph (070) 682 288
Warwick	Ph (076) 617 658

Drought leaflets

A SERIES of four leaflets aimed at helping rural families cope with drought have been released by Queensland Health.

The release is a joint initiative between Queensland Health, the Department of Primary Industries and the Queensland Farmers Federation.

The leaflets, 'Improving Family Communication', 'Take Charge in Changing Times', 'Farming and Fatigue' and 'Dealing with Blame' will be distributed through various rural organisations.

These include the Queensland Farmers' Federation, Cattlemen's Union, Rural Doctors Association of Queensland, DPI Farm Financial Counsellors, Queensland Rural Women's Network and Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Topics include improving communications, dealing with emotional strain, supporting others and coping with change.

QGAP/QDIAL

QUEENSLAND Government Agents play an important role in delivering State Government services and information to rural and remote communities throughout Queensland.

The Queensland Government Agent Program (QGAP) currently operates 28 "one-stop shops" - from Weipa in the far north to Texas in the south - where people can undertake a wide range of business with Government.

Administered by CountryNet, the service delivery arm of the Office of Rural Communities within the Department of Local Government and Planning, they effectively represent all Government Departments.

Agents are able to help people with virtually any problem or query to do with Government services.

The Queensland Government Departments Information Access Link (QDIAL) also helps rural and remote communities to access Government information services with special travelling display units and a toll-free telephone inquiry service.

The display units visit more than 50 shows throughout Queensland annually. Trained QDIAL field officers are on hand to answer queries about Government services or assist with referrals. They have a range of free printed information.

The QDIAL toll-free telephone service can be reached on 1800 893 788 from 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday, except on public holidays. Staff can help with information and referral to a complete range of State Government services and programs.

QGAP offices are located at:

Beaudesert	Wayne McGovern	(07) 5541 3755
Biloela	James Howie	(079) 923 245
Blackall	Peter White	(076) 574 233
Clermont	Ross Gee	(079) 831 233
Collinsville	Peter Fallon	(077) 855 567
Cooktown	Peter Lebsanft	(070) 695 333
Croydon	Len Emery	(077) 456 185
Cunnamulla	Shane Kelly	(076) 552 341
Georgetown	Brian Campbell	(070) 621 204
Herberton	Mark Davies	(070) 962 702
Hughenden	Richard Messer	(077) 411 657
Inglewood	Anna Bartholomew	(076) 521 310
Julia Creek	John Kimmorley	(077) 476 162
Miles	Jim Logan	(076) 271 177
Mitchell	Kay Newling	(076) 231 106
Monto	Ken Hendren	(071) 661 350

Moranbah	Mark Caldwell	(079) 417 633
Moura	Jim Abernethy	(079) 972 244
Murgon	Danny Munster	(071) 681 801
Normanton	John Tolputt	(077) 451 177
Ravenshoe	Mark Davies	(070) 976 660
Richmond	Julie-Anne Moore	(077) 413 227
Sarina	Kevin Kimmorley	(079) 561 820
St George	Bruce McLeod	(076) 253 266
Texas	Max Moffitt	(076) 531 251
Weipa	Ross Mack	(070) 699 999
Winton	Doug Williams	(076) 571 536
Yeppoon	Hadyn Stjernqvist	(079) 395 385

DPI services

Freight subsidies

THE Queensland Government's Drought Relief Assistance Payment Scheme, administered by the Department of Primary Industries, subsidy assistance to primary producers for the transport costs of fodder, stock drinking water, livestock to agistment, livestock returning from agistment and restocking for producers in drought declared areas or with individual droughted property declarations.

An annual subsidy ceiling of \$20,000 per property per financial year applies. In extreme circumstances the Local Drought Committee (LDC) may make a recommendation to extend the limit to an absolute maximum of \$30,000 provided an LDC approved drought management plan is in place.

Inquiries regarding Individually Droughted Property (IDP) declarations and fodder, livestock and water freight subsidies should be directed to stock inspectors at local DPI offices.

Drought Claims

THE DPI's Drought and Natural Disaster Section has now processed 5996 drought freight subsidy claims during the first nine months of 1995-96 totalling \$4.214 million.

In 1994-95 there were 11,092 claims approved costing \$10.138 million, compared to \$16.744 million on 17,890 claims for 1993-94 and \$5.769 million on 6964 claims in 1992-93.

Total transport subsidy payments since 1991 now total \$41.904 million for 50,078 claims.

Fodder transport

UP to 50 percent freight subsidy is available on the transport of fodder used to drought feed cattle, sheep, goats, deer and working and breeding horses used in commercial operations, providing the stock are not normally totally hand fed.

For dairy farmers and commercial horse breeders, the subsidy is only available on the extra fodder fed due to drought conditions.

In the case of dairy cattle, up to 50 percent fodder freight subsidy is available on 40 percent of fodder purchased.

In the care of commercial horse breeders, a statutory declaration (available at DPI stock offices) must be provided declaring the amount of fodder purchased above normal requirements.

Intensive livestock feeding operations including feedlots, piggeries and poultry establishments are ineligible to claim fodder freight subsidies.

Freight subsidy is available for the transport of grain, hay, molasses and other approved supplements used to feed

droughted stock. The quantity of fodder purchased and stocks of fodder on hand must not exceed the quantity necessary to feed stock for the next three months following delivery.

In the case of stock feeds or processed supplements manufactured in Queensland, freight subsidies from the point of origin apply on up to two of the major grain components of the feed.

The subsidy paid for hired carrier is the lesser of 50 percent of the cost of the loaded journey or at the rate of 8.75 cents/tonne/kilometre for concentrated fodders (e.g. grain, molasses and blocks) and 10.5 c/t/km for volume loaded fodders (e.g. hay, cotton seed etc).

Private vehicle cartage attracts a rate of 6.75 c/t/km for concentrated fodders and 8c/t/km for volume loaded fodders.

Rail cartage is calculated at 50 percent of the freight charge.

All claims must be submitted to the local DPI Stock Inspector within six months of the movement of the fodder to the home property.

Freight subsidies do not apply to the cartage of fodder between properties under the same ownership or to on-property cartage.

No freight subsidies for feedlot cattle

INTENSIVE livestock industries, including commercial and opportunity feedlots, are ineligible for freight subsidies for agistment and on the transportation of fodder under the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme.

While freight subsidies are available for the transport of fodder for survival feeding of droughted stock, they are not available under any circumstances to livestock in a feedlot when fed for production - i.e. more than a survival ration.

The only concession currently available for drought induced opportunity feedlots is an exemption from feedlot registration fees.

To receive this exemption the proposed feedlot must meet the following criteria:

- be established for the purpose of drought management on a property immediately prior to or under a current Individual Droughted Property (IDP) or shire drought declaration.
- only those cattle on the property are to be fed - i.e. no animals are to be introduced into the feedlot other than those resident on the holding for the required period.
- the responsible local authority must be notified of the intention to lot-feed as a drought management strategy.
- a "Notification of Intention to feedlot Own Cattle as a Drought Management Practice" form stating the details and the feeding intentions must be submitted to the Chief Inspector of Stock, and
- after revocation of the IDP or shire drought declaration, the feedlot must be registered under the Stock Act 1915 if cattle feedlotting is to continue or feedlot numbers must be limited to less than 50 head at any one time.

Stock water cartage

PROPERTIES running out of livestock drinking water are eligible for a subsidy on the cartage of water by road transport from the nearest practical source to stock water points on the property, stock route or reserve.

The subsidy rate is the lesser of 50 percent of the cost of the loaded journey or at the rate of 8.75 c/t/km for a hired carrier and 6.75 c/t/km for private vehicle cartage.

This subsidy is available on the condition that the primary producer undertakes to provide an adequate water supply within a reasonable period.

Water cartage subsidy applications must be submitted to the local DPI Stock Inspector within two months of the month when water was carted.

Livestock Freight Subsidy

Forward Freight Subsidy to agistment

ALL agistment movements must be registered with the local DPI Stock Inspector within 60 days of movement.

The scheme:

- is available for 6 months only from May 1, 1996;
- will pay 50 percent of forward freight cost for all stock sent to agistment and kept on agistment for a minimum period of 4 months;
- will pay 50 percent of return freight costs for breeders and 25 percent for non-breeders returning to a non drought declared property from agistment that participated in the forward subsidy.

Producers who agist their cattle for less than 4 months will continue to receive subsidy for the return journey only. This will continue to be paid at the rate of 100 percent for breeders and 75 percent for non-breeders returning to a non drought declared property.

A maximum accumulative payable distance of 1250 km now applies.

Producers wishing to claim for forward freight subsidy must submit their claims to the DPI Stock Inspector within 2 months after their 4 months compulsory agistment period.

Returning from agistment

FREIGHT subsidies apply on the return to the home property of any stock sent to agistment, including any progeny born on agistment, while a property was drought declared and during the two month period prior to declaration.

Agistment movements off the home property and reagistment movements must be registered with the local DPI Stock Inspector within 60 days.

For stock forwarded to agistment prior to May 1, 1993, following the revocation of a property's drought status, a 75 percent freight subsidy is available for registered agisted stock returning to the home property.

While this subsidy applies to non-breeders and breeders returning following revocation of drought status, special arrangements apply to the return of breeders and their progeny born on agistment to still drought declared properties.

The subsidy paid for hired carrier or rail transport is approximately 75 percent of the actual freight cost. Private vehicle cartage is 90c/km for cattle and 50c/km for sheep per 13 metre deck. Other deck lengths are calculated on a pro-rata basis.

The subsidy applies to the return of stock to the home property by the most direct route.

Special arrangements apply to droving stock returning from agistment.

With the introduction of stock (other than breeders) to a still drought declared property incurring an automatic minimum 16 weeks suspension of drought freight subsidy assistance, graziers should consider the amount of available feed and

water before making any decision to revoke their property's drought status.

Arrangements introduced for the duration of the current drought provide a drought subsidy rate of 100 percent.

The 100 percent freight subsidy on the return to the home property of core breeding stock applies only to the transport of core breeding stock sent to agistment from May 1, 1993, except where forward freight subsidy was claimed.

Where forward freight subsidy has been claimed on particular stock as detailed in the Forward Freight Subsidies section, payment will be made at the rate of 50 percent for core breeding stock and 25 percent for non-breeding stock.

Return from agistment subsidy is available for the return of agisted stock within the 12 month period following revocation of a property's drought status. This may be extended to 24 months in special circumstances. Claims must be submitted to the local DPI Stock Inspector within six months of movement.

A total maximum payable distance limit of 1250 km now applies

Restocking movements

AFTER revocation of a property's drought status, restocking freight subsidies can be claimed on up to 75 percent of the total number of stock sold, plus those lost through death, while the property was drought declared and during the two month period prior to declaration.

The subsidy paid for hired carriers or rail transport is approximately 75 percent of the freight costs. The rate for private vehicle is 90 c/km for cattle and 50 c/km for sheep per 13 m deck. Other deck lengths are calculated on a pro-rata basis.

To be eligible for subsidy, it is necessary for properties to be individually revoked from drought status if they are located within a declared area.

The subsidy is available during the 24 month period following the revocation of drought status. Claims must be submitted to the local DPI Stock Inspector within six months of movement.

Interstate feed freight risk

QUEENSLAND livestock producers risk missing Drought Relief Assistance Payment Scheme freight subsidies by purchasing interstate fodder direct from carriers who are not approved produce merchants or agents.

Drought declared producers may be eligible to claim freight subsidies for fodder transported from the feed source to the merchant's depot along with a freight subsidy from the depot to the home property.

But producers should be aware of carriers who are not approved fodder merchants.

These operators can buy interstate fodder, artificially inflate the freight component on this feed which they bought cheaply, then sell it to droughted livestock owners.

The freight component of this type of transaction is not usually outlined on the carrier's receipts and invoices.

To be eligible to claim the freight subsidy from the point of origin of the fodder, producers buying directly from carriers must be assured that this person is an approved fodder merchant.

By ensuring the required information appears on the original invoices and receipts, subsidy claims will not be jeopardised.

This information should include: date of movement; freight cost; fodder type (lucerne/barley); round/square bales/

fodder weight in tonnes; source of fodder; loaded distance travelled; and, if the invoice is also to be used as a receipt, the signature of the person showing that payment has been made should be legible or his or her name printed under the signature.

This information is necessary to calculate freight subsidy and meet auditing and accountability requirements. Freight subsidy claims can be processed promptly where the details are clearly presented.

Agistment warning

CATTLE or sheep producers whose properties are within drought declared shires or hold Individually Droughted Property (IDP) status risk losing all forms of assistance under the Drought Relief Assistance Payment Scheme if they buy or accept stock on agistment.

Producers who are tempted to buy cheap stock on depressed markets to agist on droughted properties risk an immediate minimum 16 week suspension of freight subsidy assistance.

Property owners should immediately contact their local DPI Stock Inspector if they are forced to return cattle or sheep to a drought declared property when agistment has to be terminated because feed runs out.

Property owners should be aware they must retain stock returned from agistment for a minimum of two months before being eligible to apply for the freight subsidy.

1000 km limit generally applies to drought fodder subsidy

DROUGHT declared Queensland livestock producers risk missing out on further freight subsidy assistance where fodder is transported over distances more than 1000 km.

Provision still exists for Local Drought Committees to consider distances in excess of the 1000 km limit where properties are located in particularly remote areas or where no suitable fodder supplies are available.

Under the scheme administered by DPI, drought declared producers are eligible to claim a subsidy of up to 50 percent of fodder freight costs.

The 1000 km cartage subsidy limit introduced from January 1, 1994, does not apply to:

- grain introduced to Queensland by Grainco or the Australian Wheat Board following Government approval; and
- cartage of molasses.

DPI Risk management and drought coordinators

SIX specialist DPI Coordinators for Risk Management and Drought are available to assist producers with inquiries on drought assistance, drought management strategies and the seasonal climatic outlook. They are:

Ross Ballin, Roma:	ph (076) 229 999
Neil Cliffe, Emerald:	ph (079) 828 801
Damien O'Sullivan, Kingaroy:	ph (071) 600 700
Col Paull, Indooroopilly:	ph (07) 3896 9587
Paul Walmsley, Cloncurry:	ph (077) 421 311
Ron Wheeler, Charters Towers:	ph (077) 872 155

Farm Financial Counsellors

THERE are now farm financial counsellors at 28 centres located throughout the State to provide producers with greater access to financial assistance and help.

Farm Financial Counsellors can analyse the producer's financial position and help develop and evaluate options for borrowing, purchasing and other management decisions. They are also referral points for the Legal Aid's Farm Finance Lawyers.

DPI Farm Financial Counsellors

Brisbane:	Gerry Dixon	Ph (07) 3224 2337
Barcardine:	Sarah Walmsley	Ph (076) 511 717
Biloela:	Bob Philips	Ph (079) 929 133
Bowen:	Tom Mullins	Ph (077) 852 255
Bundaberg:	Jim Mackson/Bill Barton	Ph (071) 537 888
Charleville:	Rolfe Ellem	Ph (076) 543 455
Charters Towers:	Robyn Walters	Ph (077) 872 155
Dalby:	Kim Bowman	Ph (076) 622 322
Emerald:	Sophie Riggall	Ph (079) 828 800
Gatton:	Brian Richardson	Ph (074) 621 377
Goondiwindi:	Roger Herden	Ph (076) 711 388
Ingham:	Chris Turvey	Ph (077) 761 230
Kingaroy:		Ph (071) 621 355
Mackay:	Ian Gibbons	Ph (079) 518 724
Mareeba:	Roderick O'Connor	Ph (070) 928 555
Miles:	Dale Harrip	Ph (076) 271 599
Mt Isa:	Marion Murphy	Ph (077) 421 311
Rockhampton:	John Reeve	Ph (079) 360 210
Toowoomba:	Rob Waters	Ph (076) 314 259

Commonwealth Rural Counselling Service

Charleville:	Paul O'Brien	Ph (076) 543 455
Clermont:	Jane Carroll	Ph (079) 833 297
Cunnamulla:	Tim Vail	Ph (076) 543 455
Laidley:	Rod Menzies	Ph (074) 651 166
Longreach:	John Swain	Ph (076) 583 301
Roma:	David McCullough	Ph (076) 224 858
St George:	Ian Simpson	Ph (076) 255 490
Taroom:	Shaun Hendy	Ph (076) 273 183

DPI Property Management Planning Service

A PROPERTY management Planning Service has been established by the DPI as part of the State Government's commitment to assist landholders to develop better skills to manage for drought.

It is recognised that property management planning is not going to solve the major problems facing drought affected landholders in the short term. However, managing the impact of drought is something that requires long term planning and the Government is committed to the policy of assisting landholders to be in a stronger position to deal with future droughts.

Planning, as an exercise, can also provide some hope in the short term for people in a desperate situation.

Bowen:	Debbie Atkins	(077) 852 255
Bundaberg:	Leath Stewart	(071) 538 111
Charleville:	John Barker	(076) 544 200
Charters Towers:	Joe Rolfe	(077) 872 155
Cloncurry:	Paul Walmsley	(077) 421 311
Dalby:	Lew Markey	(076) 622 322
Emerald:		(079) 828 800
Ipswich:	Terry Reid	(07) 3280 1928
Longreach:		(076) 584 400
Mackay:	Alan Smith	(079) 518 724
Mareeba:	Jim Turnour	(070) 921 555
Rockhampton:	Jane Wightman	(979) 360 211
Roma:	Jim Herbert	(076) 211 511
Warwick:	Ray Murphy	(076) 611 733

Drought Info. Hotlines

THE DPI's Drought Information Centre's freecall Hotline **1800 808 555** is a first point of contact for many producers needing information on drought assistance measures.

Callers can also use the Hotline to access the DPI's Fodder Register, which lists suppliers of fodder and grain. Alternatively, the Fodder register can be accessed through local DPI offices and through the CALM Market Intelligence computer network.

Queensland suppliers wishing to list fodder and grain on the Register should ring the Hotline - while interstate suppliers can register by telephoning **(07) 3362 9443** or by faxing **(07) 3362 9579**.

Producers can also get an insight into probable future weather patterns by telephoning the DPI's SOI (Southern Oscillation Index) Hotline on **(07) 3896 9602**, or by faxing **019 725 300** (55 cents a minute Australia wide) for an index page giving options for information retrieval through the manual receive or poll fax mode of their fax machines. Some areas do not have access to **0197** numbers at present, but these people can ring **(03) 9272 7220** (STD rates to Melbourne apply).

Forest grazing rentals deferred

DPI Forestry is continuing its policy that rental payments on Stock Grazing permits (SGPs) can be deferred for 12 months in drought declared shires.

Permit holders may also be given approval to pay rentals in arrears on a quarterly basis.

These concessions also apply to SGP permit holders with Individually Droughted properties (IDPs).

However, an interest charge will be made on deferrals or payments made in arrears. This will be the same rate as applied by the Department of Natural Resources under its Leasehold Rental Deferral Scheme.

This assistance is subject to the following conditions:

- the holder of the SGP must be in a drought declared shire or must have IDP status.
- the SGP holder must apply in writing to the District Forester for the rental or payment deferral.
- Concessions are only available until the revocation of the declared drought status.

Further information is available from local DPI Forestry offices.

Transport Concessions

QUEENSLAND Transport provides assistance in the following areas:

- waiving of farm vehicle inspection fees when inspected by Queensland Transport;
- payment of motor vehicle registration charges by instalments;
- grazing of stock on declared road reserves;
- temporary cancellation of vehicle registration;
- drought road train permits; and
- increase in vehicle height limit to 4.6 m when transporting machine-baled hay.

Registration and inspection

Registration fees for motor vehicles operated on drought declared properties can now be paid in four instalments over the relevant 12 month period.

Drought affected primary producers can make the appropriate arrangements at their local Queensland Transport office when they receive their registration renewal notice.

As well, inspection fees have been waived for farm vehicles that are inspected by Queensland Transport and are operated on drought declared properties. Inspection fees for farm vehicles that are inspected by Approved Inspection Stations cannot be waived.

Special registration plates

SPECIAL farm vehicle registration plates have been available at concessional rates for all primary producers since mid-1991 through local Queensland Transport offices, and through Police Stations in remote areas or Clerks of the Court who conduct registration business in remote areas.

Annual costs of the special orange and white farm plates are \$41.80 for vehicles up to 4t GVM and trailers up to 5t tare. Larger vehicles cost \$62.70. A one-off plate fee of \$15.80 and CTP are also payable. Inspectable vehicles are still required to be inspected but fees may be waived as above.

"F" plated vehicles cannot be used in built-up areas but can be driven on roads up to 12 km to travel between parcels of land controlled by the primary producer.

Contact local Queensland Transport offices for more information.

Wide Machinery permit system

THE movement of wide agricultural machinery along public roads has been administratively simplified, so that necessary permits can be obtained well in advance of critical need times.

Primary producers and transport officers should contact their local Police Station for details.

Waiver of Police escort fees for road trains

ROAD trains carrying drought affected livestock or fodder are allowed to travel on lower classification or non road train routes with a Police escort if the necessary permit has been obtained from Queensland Transport.

Further information on permits may be obtained at local Queensland Transport offices.

The normally applicable fee for a Police escort under these conditions can be waived when making escort arrangements with the Police Regional Traffic Coordinator via the local Police station to determine availability of escort staff. Proof of destination must be supplied by means of stock waybills and permits. Eligibility for this assistance has been extended to 24 months.

Maximum hay loading height

TRANSPORT operators and graziers in drought affected areas are now able to transport more hay with the lifting of the maximum height of machine baled hay from 4.3 metres to 4.6 metres.

The lifting of the 4.3 metre restriction applies only to drop deck or step deck trailers operating during daylight hours and allows operators to increase loads of machine baled hay by about 10 percent.

Permits may be issued for road trains, however trailers must have the same coupling height.

Permits to operate under this concession are available to transport operators and graziers from most country Police stations at no cost.

Applications should be accompanied by proof of drought declaration status. This may be obtained by contacting: DPI Drought and Natural Disaster Section, Ph (07) 3239 3181, fax (07) 3239 3454.

For further information contact your local Police station.

Roadside grazing

THE grazing of stock on declared road reserves which are currently closed to travelling stock is now permitted under controlled conditions, provided traffic volumes and other factors are favourable.

Local Queensland Transport offices will assess applications and provide authorisation.

NSW extends load concessions

THE NSW Road and Traffic Authority has extended load concessions applying to Queensland livestock entering NSW.

The concessions effectively remove all volume loading and height restrictions on livestock transports.

The concession will apply until the drought situation in Queensland improves.

However, it should be noted that the concessions apply only to livestock transports and not to trucks used to transport drought fodder.

Other Concessions and Services

Electricity charge relief

THREE forms of relief from electricity charges are available to farmers in a drought declared area or whose property is individually drought declared.

(a) Deferral of payment - Farmers are entitled to defer payment of an electricity account if they cite financial difficulties as a result of the drought. Interest will be charged on deferred accounts. The rate will be reviewed from time to time to reflect movements in community interest rates. From October 1, 1995, the rate has been 7.4 percent per annum.

The terms of the deferred payment will be decided on an individual basis between the customer and the Electricity Corporation. This applies to all farm consumption. The repayment of deferred payments following revocation of Drought Declaration should be individually negotiated between the customer and the Electricity Corporation.

(b) Waiving of Fixed Charge components of Electricity Charges

- Farmers who have no water to pump are eligible for waiving of fixed components of electricity charges. These charges include minimum payments, service fees, fixed charges such as those related to tariffs 20, 22, 62, 65 and 66 and guarantee agreement shortfall charges.

Provided the Drought Declaration remains operative, the waiver applies to all fixed charges applicable to any account covering the period in which pumping ceased and to any subsequent account until the farmers once again have water to pump. If the operative Drought Declaration is revoked before the farmers once again have water to pump the waiver shall continue to apply until water is available or until 12 months after the revocation date, whichever is earlier.

(c) Capping of Pumping Price (9.5 cents per kilowatt hour) -

Where farmers are subject to pumping time restrictions applied by the local water management authority, the maximum average price charged for energy used for pumping under tariffs 62, 63, 64, 65 and 66 shall not exceed 9.5c/kWh for the duration of such restrictions.

If the operative Drought Declaration is revoked before the pumping time restrictions are lifted, price capping will continue to apply until pumping time restrictions are lifted, or until 12 months after the revocation date, whichever is earlier.

Eligibility for relief - Customers must advise the Electricity Corporation in writing of any individual property drought declarations. Advice on local pumping time restrictions is available from Department of Natural Resources and DPI local offices, or, in certain cases, from the local water management authority.

Electricity Boards

Cairns	
Far North Queensland Electricity Board	Ph (070) 502 777
Townsville	
North Queensland Electricity Board	Ph (077) 276 211
Mackay: Mackay Electricity Board	Ph (079) 512 800-
Rockhampton	
Capricornia Electricity Board	Ph (079) 312 312
Maryborough	
Wide bay Burnett Electricity Board	Ph (071) 219 511
Dalby	
South West Power	Ph (076) 690 111
Brisbane	
South East Queensland Electricity Board	Ph (07) 3407 4000

Department of Natural Resources drought services

THE Department of Natural Resources provides advisory and design services to assist drought affected landholders with all aspects of water conservation, irrigation, stock and domestic supplies, drainage and bore site selection and construction. These services are provided through farm advisers and groundwater advisers who can evaluate and help with such issues as: Existing surface and underground water availability; catchment analysis for runoff potential; storage reliability; water quality; drill sites; bore construction; and stocking rates.

Advisers are located in six DNR regions across the State.

CONTACT: DNR District officers

Fee desktop underground water assessment

FEES have been waived for office assessment of underground water prospects provided by Department of Natural Resources staff to drought declared primary producers.

Advice relating to underground water prospects or potential is provided by 20 specialist advisers either by telephone, an office assessment or by a field investigation. These advisers are located across the State.

Charges will be still continue to be levied for those situations that require field investigations.

An office assessment can take from 30 minutes to two hours. Field investigations, if required, may involve up to two to three hours on a property, excluding travel time.

A decision on the appropriate course of action is taken based on the landholder's requirements and the availability of reliable data in the office.

In the current drought conditions many landholders are now opting for advice over the telephone either to allay costs or to obtain quick advice which at times can be of a fairly general nature.

Waiving fees for an office assessment relating to groundwater prospects/potential will ease the financial burden of drought affected producers and ensure they receive more useful information upon which to make decisions.

CONTACT: DNR District officers

Water for drought affected rural communities

THE Queensland Government has a series of programs which can help local government provide water supplies for rural communities affected by extended drought.

Assistance can range from funding the cost of carting water or other short term measures to proving more permanent solutions such as a larger storage capacity.

These programs are accessed by contacting the Department of Natural Resources or the Department of Local Government and Planning (DLGP).

The State Government's "Drought Stricken Local Government Urban Water Supply Assistance Scheme" provides funding for such short term assistance as carting water or any other arrangement that is a more cost effective alternative.

The above scheme is controlled by strict guidelines, with the major eligibility criteria for assistance to local governments being:

- the deletion of the water supply must be as a result of extreme drought conditions which have existed in the shire over an extended period;
- the following actions are in place and will be maintained;
 - severe restrictions on the usage of domestic water by the affected community; and
 - public notice of the implementation of water conservation measures.
- Cumulative costs incurred by the Council must exceed an amount which is 10 percent of the annual water undertaking fund revenue receipts for the preceding

financial year. In instances where the water supply is privately owned by the community, the Minister may determine a required and reasonable level of Council contribution.

More permanent solutions to problems caused by extended drought are funded under:

- accelerated Rural communities Water Supply and Sewage Scheme (ARCWSSS previously RCWSS) and;
- local Bodies Capital Subsidy Scheme.

**Contacts are: DNR District Offices
DLGP Phone (07) 3225 8684**

Land rent deferral offered

LESSEES who received hardship assistance as a result of the 1991 drought will still qualify for hardship assistance provided the property has been continually drought declared since that time and the application has been renewed each year.

Lessees who are seeking hardship relief for the first time because of drought are required to meet the hardship criteria the same as other applicants.

Those who meet the hardship criteria will have their rent or instalments deferred for a 12 months period with interest. Reviews are conducted at 12 month periods, and a further 12 month deferment can be granted.

At present, rents and instalments can be deferred indefinitely at the prescribed rate of interest. The interest rate is currently 6.5 percent.

Eligibility for rental assistance is established through the provision of a letter from the applicant's bank stating loan funds are not available for land rental payments.

This extension ensures that rental assistance is available to lessees who have prospects of long term viability in the industry, while providing a safety net to lessees in desperate circumstances.

Please note that the new eligibility criteria does not apply to lessees of freeholding leases.

For more information or to apply for rent or for freehold instalment deferral, phone the Department of Natural Resources.

CONTACT: DNR Contact Numbers - Deferral of rent and waiver of fees on stock routes

Cairns	Ph (070) 523 971
Townsville	Ph (077) 221 048
Cloncurry	Ph (077) 421 404
Mackay	Ph (079) 518 751
Rockhampton	Ph (079) 319 623
Emerald	Ph (079) 821 377
Longreach	Ph (076) 582 268
Roma	Ph (076) 201 028
Charleville	Ph (076) 541 735
Maryborough	Ph (071) 237 909
Bundaberg	Ph (071) 538 605
Toowoomba	Ph (076) 319 139
Dalby	Ph (076) 622 566
Warwick	Ph (076) 612 964
Caboolture	Ph (074) 900 022
Brisbane	Ph (07) 3227 8118
Beenleigh	Ph (07) 3826 0053

Stock route fee waiver

THE State Government has waived agistment fees for the use of stock routes in drought declared shires.

This means that producers in drought declared shires and

individually droughted properties throughout the State can gain immediate exemption on stock route use for grazing purposes.

To gain the exemption, a shire must write to the Department of Natural Resources and request the fee be waived or reduced for either the whole shire or individual properties.

This means that more than 500,000 hectares or about 0.5 percent of Queensland will be available to producers at no cost in droughted areas.

However, because many of the stock routes are continually grazed they run through individually owned properties, the amount of feed available will vary from shire to shire.

CONTACT: See list for Land rent deferral offered.

Social Support Services

State Government

Family Support

THE Department of Families, Youth and Community Care funds 25 services in community-based agencies in the rural sector of Queensland.

Twelve agencies focus on providing support to reduce the social impact of drought. Rural Family Support Services (RFSS) provide limited direct financial assistance, emotional support and information and referral to farm families adversely affected by the drought. Services also address gaps in social supports through extensive networking and community education. RFSS workers will visit people on their properties, meet with groups or see people in the RFSS office.

Rural Adjustment Advisory Services (RAAS) focus on addressing specific social adjustment needs brought about by dramatic changes in industry through community development strategies. There are currently two RAAS agencies in the State.

Eleven agencies are funded under the Cross Program Initiative (XPRG) which mixes funding from a variety of program sources so that flexibility exists to focus services in rural areas to respond to changing community needs. Program areas which may contribute to the agency's funding include: Child care, supported accommodation, family and individual support, domestic violence awareness and disability.

These services in the rural sector have been operating for at least 12 months and are well established within their respective communities.

Contacts are:

South West Queensland

Miles (RFSS)	Cecily Brockhurst	ph (076) 272 027
St George (RFSS) (XPRG)	Corinne Manare Project-based	ph (076) 255 224 ph (076) 253 222
Millmerran (XPRG)	Gary Fogarty	ph (076) 957 156
Charleville (RFSS) (RAAS)	Mark Dalglish Christine Volker	ph (076) 543 324 ph (076) 543 455
Dalby (RFSS)	David Fenton	ph (076) 623 234
Goondiwindi (RFSS) (XPRG)	Virginia Shippley Carmel Mills	(076) 713 842 ph (076) 713 574
Roma (RFSS)	Noel Nicholls	ph (076) 224 900
Esk/Kilcoy (XPRG)	Rachel White	ph (074) 241 577

North Queensland

Richmond (RFSS)	Jacqueline Walmsley	ph (077) 413 733
Cloncurry (XPRG)	Betty Kiernan	ph (077) 422 379
Atherton Tablelands: (RFSS)	Michael Rayner	ph (070) 925 439
Charters Towers (RFSS)	Greg McKillop	ph (077) 875 617
Cooktown (XPRG)	Donna Gayton	ph (070) 695 859
Central Queensland Duaringa (RFSS)	Chris Durkin	ph (079) 357 319
Boulia (XPRG)	Gay George	ph (077) 463 377
Barcaldine (RFSS)	Pammie Ellem	ph (076) 512 500
Kolan/Isis (XPRG)	Michael Dean	ph (071) 572 135
Middlemount (RFSS)	Linda Pollack	ph (079) 859 280
Moranbah (DAAP)	Joy Deguara	ph (079) 415 222
Blackall (XPRG)	Debbie Lawrence	ph (076) 574 440
Mundubbera (XPRG)	Jenny Hooper	ph (071) 654 690

Education drought initiatives

IN 1995 the Department of Education, with assistance from the Office of Rural Communities, provided drought assistance in two areas - transport and family support for students enrolled in: Schools of Distance education.

Commonwealth educational support is provided through specific Priority Country Area Program activities.

Transport assistance - An increase in the school transport allowance was made to families in drought declared areas or on individual drought declared properties who drive their children to school or connect with school bus runs. This support will continue for two years after drought is revoked.

Parent Liaison Officers (Drought) PLO(D) - Parent Liaison Officers (Drought) were allocated to each of the seven Schools of Distance Education (SDEs) in 1995. Capricornia and Charters Towers SDEs were each allocated a full time and a half time officer while those SDEs who had fewer families on drought declared properties were allocated a half time officer. The core activities of PLO(D)s are:

- facilitate, provide or participate in workshops for parents and home tutors;
- respond to the needs of families and home tutors through provision of wide ranging support, advice and assistance on drought and other matters;
- assist school staff to become aware of difficulties experienced by families and home tutors on drought and other matters;
- liaise with external agencies to access support for families and home tutors and set up networks where appropriate; and
- facilitate parent and home tutor access information on resources and services.

While this generic position description sets out a broad range of activities, the needs in each area are quite specific and the individual roles of the PLO(D)s reflect these differences.

A review of PLO(D) positions at the end of 1995 indicated the value of the position to the families and students. This review identified the need to have full time officers in each SDE, to extend the program to other droughted schools and to identify families who might drop out of education all together.

Support to continue these initiatives has come from the

Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens' Associations and the Isolated Children's Parents Association. While funding is provided on an annual basis, the project will continue two years after families come off the drought listing. Should additional PLO(D)s be allocated, further funding will be required.

The PLO(D)s are:

Longreach	Tricia Cruzado	Ph (076) 584 240
Charters Towers	TBA	Ph (077) 875 775
	Leslye Muller	Ph (077) 872 916
Charleville	Helen Due	Ph (076) 544 133
Mt Isa	TBA	Ph (077) 430 255
Brisbane	Jackie Walmsley	Ph (07) 3214 8200
Rockhampton	Lynne Mitchell	Ph (079) 262 405
Emerald	Carolyn Lleaney	Ph (079) 874 155
Cairns	TBA	Ph (070) 508 203

Priority Country Area Program - The Priority Country Area Program continues to support initiatives in drought declared areas through local community submissions to Management Committees. PCAP supports activities such as travel to school related events, resources, access to cultural and social experiences and personnel through the four areas (Northern, North West, South West and Capricornia) and State Office.

A related but not drought specific project is looking at three issues related to rural and remote areas:

- retention of people in rural areas;
- pre-service provided before personnel move to rural and remote areas; and
- training and professional development available for personnel in these areas.

A project officer is currently undertaking an environmental scan to identify the status quo across government and industry, and the pre and in-service provided by a range of providers. It is anticipated the project officer will report to PCAP State Committee in August-September this year.

Rural Disaster Assistance Trust Fund

THE Rural Disaster Assistance Trust Fund, administered by the Drought Funds Coordinating Committee (DFCC), coordinates the distribution of many forms of community funded aid being sent to people in the drought stricken areas of Queensland.

Established in April 1993, the DFCC has a management committee comprising the United Graziers Association, Rotary, Lions, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Queensland Country Women's Association and Isolated Children's Parents Association.

The committee distributes funds for food, fuel, education, clothing, assistance with the running of properties, counselling and other needs.

CONTACT: Janice Tressler/Paula Laing
c/o United Graziers Association, 1st Floor, Primary
Producers' House, North Quay, Brisbane, 4003.
Phone (07) 3236 4777, Emergency: (008) 636 300,
Fax: (07) 3236 3713

Save the Farm Fund of Queensland

THE Save the farm Fund of Queensland, based on the Gold Coast, is providing significant assistance to drought affected producers and communities and donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

With the Fund staffed by unpaid voluntary workers, money raised and goods collected are directed to farmers in most need through liaison with the CWA and the Drought Funds Coordinating Committee.

Funds are used to buy items people are going without such as work shirts, socks, underpants, linen, bath towels, toiletries etc and sent in a mixed 1.5 metres high pallet.

Donations can be sent to Box 311, Ashmore City, 4214, while goods may be left at Yeomans Plow Co, 19 Enterprise St, Southport, 4215.

For more information contact Save the Farm Fund of Queensland president Chris Yeomans (07) 5592 3017 or (015) 667 823, fax (07) 5597 3949.

Commonwealth Government

Social Security assistance

THE Commonwealth Department of Social Security has three dedicated national telephone lines to handle benefit inquiries.

The telephone numbers are:

- all family payment inquiries - telephone 131 305
- all pension inquiries - telephone 132 300
- Job Search, Newstart, Sickness Allowance and general inquiries - telephone 132 468

Family Payment

FAMILY Payment provides assistance with the costs of bringing up children. Assistance is provided at different levels depending on need. The rate of family payment depends on the number of children, and the family's income and assets. The minimum rate is currently \$22.70 per child.

The asset test lime for minimum family payment is currently \$584,500.

The asset test limit for more than the minimum family payment is currently \$393,750.

Hardship provisions allow families with higher assets up to \$584,500 but lower incomes under a special hardship test, to receive more than the minimum family payment.

Child Disability Allowance

CHILD Disability Allowance is payable for the care of a disabled or chronically ill child at home.

Parenting Allowance

PARENTING Allowance was introduced in July 1995 to provide financial assistance to families where a partner cares for children at home. The payment is income and assets tested.

Parenting Allowance provides an independent source of income to the partner caring for children and some financial recognition of the contribution made by the carer.

Job Search Allowance

JOB Search Allowance provides assistance to working aged people who are temporarily unemployed, including unemployed people who are temporarily incapacitated for work because of illness.

Job Search Allowance is subject to an income and assets test. To qualify, a person must be unemployed, registered with the CES, be available for and actively seeking work.

For rural people, this means that the farmer, small business owner or their spouse must be available for work away from the business or property.

Partner Allowance

PARTNER Allowance is paid to people aged 40 years and over (as at 1 July 1995) who have no dependent children under 16 and no recent workforce experience. The allowance is income and assets tested.

Pensions

ALL Social Security pensions are subject to an income and assets test and a residency test, except where the Disability Support Pension or the Age Pension is paid to blind persons.

Age Pension: Payable to qualified males over 65 years and females over 60 years and 6 months. Over the next 20 years, the minimum qualifying age for women will be gradually increased to 65 years.

Disability Support Pension: Payable to people who are unable to work because of a disability. They must be over 16 years and under age pension care. A blind person automatically qualifies for the Disability Support Pension.

Sole Parent Pension: Payable to a single parent with at least one dependant child under 16 years.

Carer Pension: Payable to a person who is providing substantial care to a severely handicapped Social Security or Service pensioner, or to a person who would have qualified but for the residency test.

Bereavement Allowance: Payable for 14 weeks after the death of a spouse.

Widow B Pension: Payable to a woman with no dependant children who has been widowed or divorced. Women who have been separated for at least 6 months, or has a spouse how has been imprisoned for at least 6 months are also eligible. To qualify, a woman must have been at least 50 years of age on July 1, 1987, or 45 years of age on July 1, 1987 and receiving a Sole Parent Pension on or after that date.

Pensioner Health Benefits Card: This entitles the holder to a range of government

and some private concessions and is issued to ALL pensioners.

Sickness Allowance

PAYABLE to persons who incur a loss of income (such as wages etc) because they are unable to work during a temporary illness or incapacity. This allowance is income and asset tested.

Health Care Cards

HEALTH Care Cards are issued for 6 months to low income earners and are subject to an income test but not to an assets test. Health Care Cardholders can receive a range of concessions including health services.

Farm Household Support

FARM Household Support (FHS) provides assistance in meeting day to day living expenses for those farmers unable to obtain further commercial finance. This must be supported by a certificate from a commercial finance institution.

FHS is a loan at commercial interest rates administered by Social security on behalf of the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy. It is available for up to two years and payments are made fortnightly.

FHS replaces the former Part C of the Rural Assistance Scheme (RAS) paid by the Department of Primary Industries and Energy.

Review and Appeals

WHERE a person is concerned about any decision on eligibility or assessment of a claim, there are several options available:

- discuss the matter at the regional office with the person who made the decision;
- request a review of the decision by an authorised review officer;
- if the decision has been reviewed by the review officer, apply to the Social Security Appeals Tribunal for a review; and
- seek a review of the Social Security Appeals Tribunal decision by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

Austudy

STUDENTS can gain exemption from the existing Commonwealth Austudy family assets test if either parent gets Farm Household Support or Drought Relief Payment (DRP). In other cases on-farm assets are not counted if parents live in a specified exceptional circumstances drought affected area; however, the Austudy income test, Actual Means Test and off-farm assets tests will apply.

There are six Austudy Student Assistance Centres in Queensland, each with a freecall number. The Indooroopilly Student Assistance Centre also handles all applications for the Assistance for Isolated Children's (AIC) Scheme for Queensland.

Chermside	1800 819 706
Indooroopilly	1800 177 959
Mt Gravatt	1800 755 018
Rockhampton	1800 175 212
Toowoomba	1800 176 006
Townsville	1800 019 231

Australian Country Information Service

THE Australian Country Information Service aims to provide rural people's access to information on Commonwealth programs and services. The Service has offices in a number of locations including:

Chinchilla:	Vicki Dickman	Ph (076) 627 879
Cunnamulla:	Graham Reid	Ph (076) 552 121
Hughenden:	Collette Venning	Ph (077) 411 766
Julia Creek:	John Kimmorley	Ph (077) 467 285
Monto:	Vicki Downs	Ph (071) 661 877
Richmond:	Julie Moore	Ph (077) 413 227

Publications

THE Department of Primary Industries publications dealing with drought management information including drought leaflets (see pg5) are available at DPI Information Centres throughout the State.

Regional Information Centres include:

North Region

Townsville	(077) 222 666
Mackay	(079) 518 724
Mareeba	(070) 921 555
South Johnstone	(070) 642 400
Bowen	(077) 852 255

Central Region

Biloela	(079) 921 588
Emerald	(079) 828 800

Tropical Beef Centre Rockhampton

(079) 360 111
(079) 360 360

West Region

Longreach	(076) 584 400
Charleville	(076) 544 200
Mt Isa	(077) 446 828
Barcardine	(076) 511 390
Cloncurry	(077) 421 311
Blackall	(076) 574 311

South Region

Toowoomba	(076) 314 200
Applethorpe	(076) 811 255
Warwick	(076) 616 600
Roma	(076) 229 999
Goondiwindi	(076) 711 388

South East Region

Maroochy	(074) 449 600
Redlands	(07) 3286 1488
Yeerongpilly	(07) 3362 9400
Caboolture	(074) 951 511
Gympie	(074) 821 522
Monto	(071) 661 433

Brisbane

Primary Industries Building (07) 3239 3105

Publications are:

DPI North Region:

- Drought Management Handbook/Beef Information Package
- Rural Entitlements Package
- Rural Services Directory
- Northern Muster
- Managing for Drought - Technical Paper No.1
- Drought Information Resource Kit

DPI South East Region

- Drought Feeding and Management
- Managing Livestock in Drought
- Feed Cals Computer Program
- Using Rainfall Figures for Decision Making
- Using SOI Phases
- Managing for Climate Workshop
- Dairy Information
- Beeftalk Newsletter

DPI South Region

- Assessing Your Options
- Dairy Information

DPI Central Region

- Today, Tomorrow and the Next Drought
- Supplementary and Drought Feeding of Beef Cattle

Drought Notes

Information Series Q192017 - ISBN 0724239499. A 64 page booklet for beef producers containing information from DPI Farm Notes on drought management strategies. Available for use at DPI Information Centres and for purchase from DPI Publishing Services, Brisbane, and major DPI selling centres.

WaterNotes Collection

WATERNOTES Collection is a compilation of Water Notes on water supply conservation, use and maintenance for wet and dry times. The booklet includes sections on dams, bores, pumping equipment, water weeds and algae and water quality. A list of other available WaterNotes is also included in the booklet. WaterNotes Collection is available at DPI Information Centres, DPI offices or by contacting Damien O'Sullivan, **phone (071) 600 700**

DPI Fact Sheets on CD-ROM

PRIME NOTES (Version 3) CD-ROM. DPI Software Series QZ96001 - ISSN 1325-8737. DPI has published a Compact Disk with Read-Only Memory (CD-ROM) for use with computers and attached printers that has many fact sheets on drought, water, tree and feeding management and conservation cropping.

It includes:

- Water Notes - a compilation of Notes on water supply, conservation, use and maintenance
- Tree Notes - a compilation of Notes on tree growing, uses, management and care
- Farm Notes - which include compilations of Drought Notes on beef and sheep feeding and management in drought, conservation cropping, and feedlotting.

Also on the same CD-ROM are:

- the Queensland Department of Natural Resources *PESTFACTS* which cover pest plants and animals in Queensland, touching on history, habitat and control methods;
- selected Agriculture Victoria *AGNOTES* covering pastures and pasture management and horticulture in Victoria; and
- selected Primary Industries South Australia *FACT SHEETS* covering many topics including water management, blue-green algae, sheep drought management, salinity management, agricultural crops and other topics.

As examples, searching for information on the CD-ROM instantly gives the user access to 41 Notes on 'beef and drought', 34 on 'sheep and drought' and 127 Notes from three States that discuss 'drought' in some form. The user can print each Note.

The PRIME NOTES CD-ROM is available for use at DPI Information Centres, and for purchase from DPI Publishing Services, Brisbane and major DPI selling centres.

FARMFAX

FARMFAX is a 24-hour automated faxback information service offered by the DPI. To order a document simply dial **(07) 3222 2996** and follow the instructions. Each item has its own number which must be entered when requested. For a full document list, enter 999.

Regional callers may find their phone/fax must be switched to TONE dialling in order to access **FARMFAX. Trouble-shooting line: (076) 690 824.**

Drought information items include:

Item 021 - WHAT'S ON? This handy Farmfax item details what's on around Queensland. If you are looking for drought seminars, meetings and information days just request number 021 and scan the list for functions close to you. Notices for this popular service are welcome. **Contact Ross Porter, DPI Toowoomba on (076) 314 200.**

Item 022 - DROUGHT BULLETIN NO. 9. Want to recommend this bulletin to a friend or relative? If they own a fax machine it is simple to access the Drought Bulletin by requesting item number 022. You can also enter their fax number and have the item sent directly to their fax.

Item 033 - INFORMATION UPDATE FORM. Information is at hand! This new service offered by the DPI allows you to register to receive monthly updates on new information as it comes onto the system. At present the service is limited to cropping information but shortly it will be extended to other industries and topic areas - including the latest on drought management.

Item 606 - FEED INGREDIENT PRICES. For producers chasing details of feed ingredient prices, a comprehensive table provides quote prices delivered to Toowoomba at the start of April. The table lists cereal grains, meals and additives and quotes average \$/tonne, price movements and the range in price, including minimum and maximum prices. The all-important availability factor is rated from good to not available.

Item 351 - DROUGHT INVESTMENT ALLOWANCE. This item deals with the guidelines for the approval of water conservation plans under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1936.

Item 342 - FINANCIAL COUNSELLING SERVICE. If the drought has left you wondering which way to turn to restructure your finances and enterprise mix, call up this item for your nearest farm financial counsellor.

Item 348 - PRIMARY INDUSTRY PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT SCHEME. The latest PIPEScheme assistance for Landcare activities is detailed here.

Item 350 - RURAL FAMILY SUPPORT SCHEME

Item 352 - QUEENSLAND RURAL TASK PROJECT. Looking to improve profitability? This project may be able to assist you.

Other items available include 12 items on water storage and management. See the Farmfax document list for further information.

For further information contact: Rachel Bowman, DPI Information Officer, Dalby Ph: (076) 690 827.

DPI Long Paddock

PRIMARY producers with access to the World Wide Web on the Internet system can now visit the DPI's Long paddock to make better weather-related decisions.

The Long Paddock provides information and maps that can be used to show the chances of rainfall being received, based on Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) phases, from rainfall records starting as early as 18882.

The Long Paddock contains more than 200 Megabytes of data - a big part of this space being taken up with more than 13,000 coloured map files. Also included are data files which on a daily basis provide SOI values and a selection of information taken from the SOI Fax Hotline service.

This includes monthly, quarterly, half yearly, yearly and two yearly rainfall percentiles which show the rainfall received at a district's meteorological collection point relative to the historical average rainfall.

Other information includes monthly rainfall, rainfall probability maps for the next three months based on the SOI trend for the previous two months, drought situation maps for Queensland, world sea-surface temperature maps, vegetation greenness maps for Queensland and SOI graphs.

Long Paddock's Web address outside DPI is - <http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/longpdk/> and inside DPI - <http://dpiweb.mh.dpi.qld.gov.au/longpdk/>

Free Call Numbers

Assistance for Isolated Children
freecall 008 177 959

Austudy
freecall 008 175 212 or 008 176 006

Care line
freecall 008 017 223

Community Justice
freecall 008 017 288

Countrylink
freecall 008 262 222

Crisis Care
freecall 008 177 135

Domestic Violence
freecall 008 811 811

DPI Drought Information Centre
freecall 1800 808 555

Drought Funds Coordinating Committee
freecall 008 636 300

Kids Help Line
freecall 008 073 008

Legal Aid
freecall 008 805 817

Lifeline
freecall 13 1114

Queensland Law Society
freecall 008 017 719

Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority
freecall 1800 623 946

Relationships Australia
freecall 008 176 002

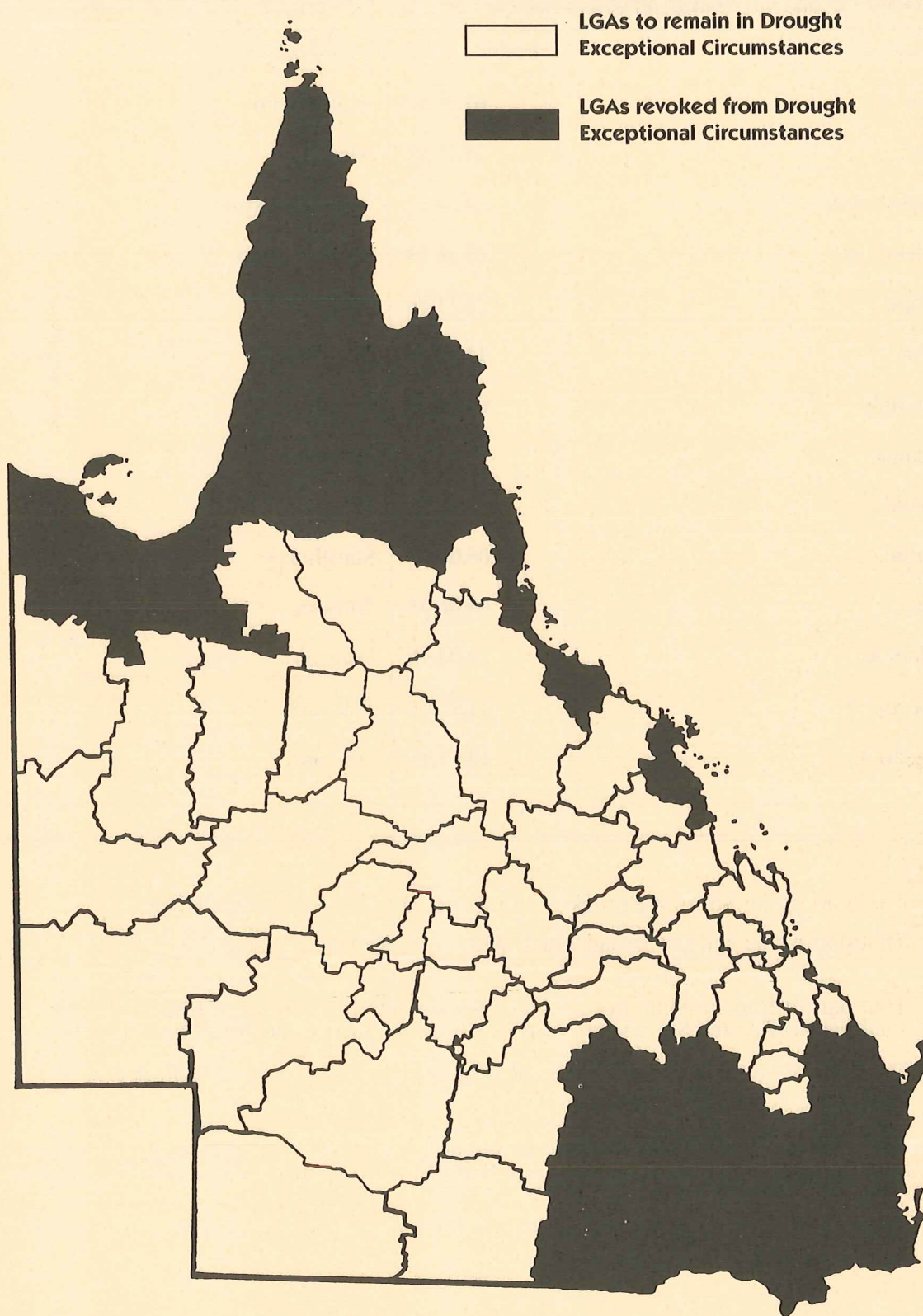
Social Security
freecall 132 468

Smith Family
freecall 1800 622 701

Women's Health
freecall 008 177 676 or 008 017 382

Women's Infolink
freecall 008 177 577

DROUGHT EXCEPTION CIRCUMSTANCES AREAS QUEENSLAND
as at 11 JUNE 1996



DROUGHT DECLARED SHIRES as at 24 June 1996

SHIRE	DATE DECLARED	SHIRE	DATE DECLARED
Banana +	21.06.93/01.05.93	Mc Kinlay ▲	22.04.96
Belyando	01.09.92	Millmerran	14.10.91
Bowen	25.10.91	Monto	10.10.94
Broadsound ■	24.04.92	Mount Morgan	09.06.93
Burdekin ●	25.10.91	Mundubbera	10.10.94
Calliope	28.11.94	Nebo	24.04.92
Clifton	11.08.94	Peak Downs	15.09.92
Dalrymple	01.05.93	Pittsworth	11.08.94
Duarina	17.03.93	Quilpie ★	01.09.92
Eidsvold	10.10.94	Richmond ▲	22.04.96
Emerald	08.04.93	Stanthorpe	07.07.94
Fitzroy	09.06.93	Taroom	13.09.91
Flinders ▲	22.04.96	Wambo	10.10.94
Herberton *	11.11.91	Warwick	07.07.94
Livingstone	14.11.94	Winton	18.03.96

Notes:

● That part of the Shire of Burdekin, south and east of the Burdekin River.

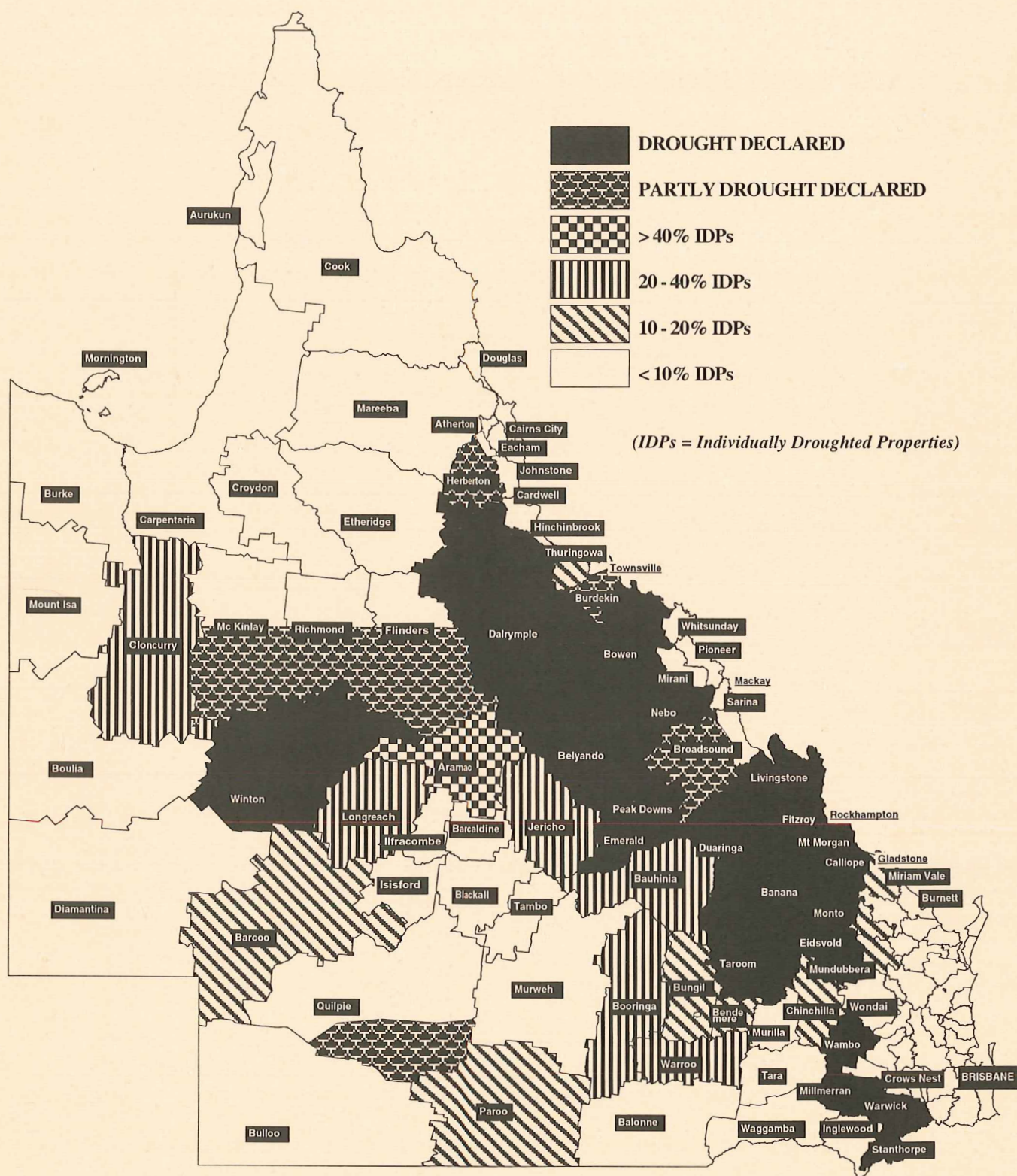
■ That part of the shire of Broadsound, west of the Connors Range.

+ That part of Banana Shire north of the Dawson Highway declared from 01.05.93
That part of Banana Shire south of the Dawson Highway declared from 21.06.93

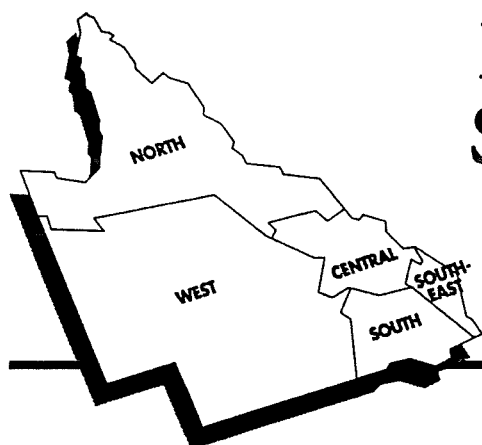
* That part of Herberton Shire, south of Blunder Creek and west of Wild River.

★ That part of Quilpie shire south of the Great Western Railway line and the Quilpie to Eromanga road, and east of the Cooper Developmental Road to where it meets the southern boundary of the shire.

▲ Those parts of the shires of McKinlay, Richmond and Flinders, south of the Great Northern Railway line



For more information contact: Blair Chadwick (07) 3239 3010



DROUGHT SITUATION

JULY 1996

DPI

QUEENSLAND
DEPARTMENT OF
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

DROUGHT AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT

CURRENT SITUATION

In the North of the State productive rainfall was limited to the Atherton Tablelands and surrounding areas and the coastal fringe above Ingham and below Bowen. In the latter part of the month, good falls of rain were received in some areas of the West Region, particularly the south-west and channel country. Some useful falls were also recorded through Central Queensland, the Darling Downs, Burnett and the Brisbane and Lockyer Valleys.

During the month the Shires of Taroom, Clifton, Stanthorpe, Pittsworth, Millmerran and Wambo had their drought declarations revoked and the Shire of Jericho was drought declared as at the 22 July 1996. Therefore at the end of July, 18 Shires and 7 part Shires are declared drought stricken along with 674 Individually Drought Declared Properties (IDPs) in 37 other Shires. This represents approximately 24% of the State by area.

RAINFALL

North Region: During the month totals in excess of 100 mm were recorded around Mossman, Babinda, Topaz, Cape Tribulation, Innisfail and Tully. Many areas around the Atherton Tablelands received in excess of 20 mm but little to no useful rainfall fell in the upper Gulf Country and western section of the Cape. Areas of the lower Gulf received scattered light falls with Normanton recording 12 mm. The Townsville and Charters Towers areas remain dry with no productive rainfall recorded at either centre during the month.

Central Region: Some useful falls of rain were recorded throughout the Region during the last week of July. Clermont received 68 mm and the Mackay area received totals of between 30 mm and 50 mm. Other areas in the Region received totals of around 20 mm to 25 mm but falls were generally scattered and will consequently bring very little relief to the droughted areas around Jericho and Alpha.

South East Region: Good to excellent falls of rain were recorded in many areas of the Region during the last week of the month. While many centres throughout the Region recorded falls in excess of 20 mm, Kingaroy received the highest total with 68 mm. This contrasts strongly with the 1 mm recorded at Monto. Much of the coastal fringe received falls in excess of 10 mm which should not damage the sugar cane harvest currently under way. The Brisbane Valley, Beaudesert/Boonah area and the Lockyer Valley all received useful falls of rain which will ensure winter cereal crop viability and relieve irrigation demand in the small cropping areas for the short term.

South Region: Much of the Region received good falls of rain during the month especially during the last week. Totals exceeding 50 mm were recorded at Talwood, Stanthorpe, Dalveen and Pilton. Western areas again received good totals with St George and Roma both recording above 25 mm. Many areas of the Darling Downs also received totals in excess of 20 mm which should ensure good yields in winter crops.

West Region: Good falls of rain were recorded in the last week of the month throughout much of the Channel Country and far south-west. Birdsville and Boulia both received in excess of 50mm as did Thargomindah and Eromanga. Some other centres received in excess of 25mm but the droughted areas of Winton, Richmond, McKinlay and Flinders Shires received little to no productive rainfall.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES

North Region: Frosts during the month have had an adverse affect on pasture quality in some areas of the southern section of the Region, but overall these parts are in fair to good condition except for the area around Eaglefield in the Nebo Shire. Most lines of cattle in Dalrymple Shire are holding condition with the exception of wet cows which are starting to deteriorate due to pasture protein deficiency. The Atherton Tableland has responded well to recent rainfall and stock condition is fair to good. Etheridge Shire has some very dry areas and stock condition reflects pasture availability and quality. Overall Mareeba Shire is well placed this far through the year and pasture should hold out till the start of summer storms.

Central Region: Much of the Region remains in fair to good condition for this time of year but frosts in the central highlands have started to take their toll on pasture quality. Pasture availability and quality remains good around the Mackay and Sarina areas but then falls off around Rockhampton and Miriam Vale. Rainfall experienced during late July should produce some pasture response if weather conditions remain mild and frosts are not too severe. Stock condition in the Jericho Shire continues to deteriorate as pasture availability declines, while stock throughout the rest of the Region vary according to pasture availability and quality. Stock movements to agistment and supplementary feeding are increasing in the areas which missed out on rainfall earlier in the year especially in the western part of Clermont and Jericho Shires.

South East Region: Pasture condition throughout much of the Region has suffered due to heavy frosts during the month and consequently pasture quality has been affected. Stock in most areas are in good condition but are expected to slip over the next month as a result of the annual decline in pasture quality. Numbers of cattle moving to sale have been low reflecting current prices and availability of feed. Very little drought feeding is occurring in the Region with the exception of the Mundubbera, Monto and Kilkivan (east) areas which to a large degree missed out on summer rainfall and any subsequent falls. Some supplementary feeding has also been reported in the Murgon Shire.

South Region: Standing pasture in many areas of the Region has hayed off considerably during the month due to frosting. This has been offset to some extent by the continued growth of winter herbage and clovers. Consequently stock throughout most of the Region are in good to excellent condition. Rainfall experienced throughout much of the Region during the last week of the month will provide an excellent boost for winter dominant plants which should ensure that stock condition remains good throughout winter. There have been some isolated reports of supplementary feeding commencing in the Murilla Shire due to lack of follow up rain in May. Reports from the various selling centres throughout the Region indicate that stock numbers at sales have increased during the month due to higher returns and increased demand.

West Region: The north-west continues to hay off as drought conditions worsen in the Winton, Richmond, Flinders and McKinlay Shires. In the central-west pasture condition ranges from denuded to good dependent on the amount of summer rainfall experienced. In the south and western parts of the Region conditions range from poor to excellent, but with many areas experiencing good falls of rain during the month pastures should respond provided weather conditions are mild. Stock condition varies throughout the Region dependant on amount and quality of standing feed. Cattle condition in the north is poor to forward store while in the south and west it ranges from store to fat. Agistment in the region is becoming difficult to procure and consequently producers are continuing to unload stock at reduced returns. Markets for sheep still exist in the southern states and consequently interstate movements have increased during the month.

CROPPING AND HORTICULTURE

North Region: Rainfall on the Tablelands during the month assisted potato growers and dairy farmers. In the Bowen area rainfall provided temporary relief from irrigation for small crop growers. Cane growers throughout the Region also received good falls during the month but the grain growing areas around Nebo received very little beneficial rainfall and as a result crops have begun to show signs of moisture stress. Follow up rain is needed urgently in the Nebo area to ensure a harvest.

Central Region: Frost damage to winter crops has been reported from the Callide-Dawson and yield reductions could be expected in some of the low lying areas which were hardest hit by frosts. Crops which missed out on the rainfall of May/June have failed to develop secondary roots and are starting to show signs of stress as the upper soil moisture profile dries out. It is thought that the recent rainfall experienced across much of the Region's grain growing areas will resurrect much of the wheat crop but at least one more fall of rain will be needed in many areas to finish crops, ensure good yields and provide adequate soil moisture for spring plantings. Conversely, crops planted earlier in the year which received follow rain during May and late this month are virtually assured of excellent yields as long as frost damage does not occur during flowering.

South East Region: During the month final winter crop plantings were completed. Earlier plantings have been affected by a dry spell in June and early July but should respond to the recent rainfall. In the central and north Burnett winter crops have benefited greatly from the recent rain but follow up rain will be needed in many areas to ensure good yields. Rainfall during July has been welcomed by cane growers and early indications from the Isis and Maryborough areas point to a record crop this season. Conversely, growers in the Bundaberg area are expecting reduced yields due to lack of summer rainfall and follow up falls. Reports from the area indicate that some cane crops may not be harvested as they will be unviable, but these are expected to be in the minority. The outlook for small crop growers in the Region remains favourable with the harvest of winter crops currently under way. Recent rainfall has been a bonus for many growers and should assist spring plantings.

South Region: Farmers throughout the Region are expecting high yields from winter crops due to the rainfall experienced during the last week of the month. Crops in most areas received between 15mm and 35mm and if follow up rain occurs around flowering an excellent harvest should be assured. Mice numbers in some areas of the Darling Downs remain high and there is concern that populations will explode during spring and the onset of warmer temperatures. On the eastern downs there have been reports of losses in wheat and chick pea crops due to Root Lesion Nematode and it appears that the disease is also spreading into the Waggamba and Tara Shires.

WATER STORAGE/SUPPLES

North Region: Water supply problems continue in many areas of the Region reflecting the lack of summer rainfall and follow up falls. In areas that are experiencing years of consecutive below average rainfall surface water shortages are continuing to be a major concern for cattle producers. The light scattered falls recorded through areas of the Region have done little to alleviate surface water shortages in the extensive grazing areas.

Central Region: The majority of streams in the Region continue to recede with the exception of the Pioneer River and Cattle Creek which responded to the larger rainfall totals recorded in the area. Levels in minor storages on the Dawson, Mackenzie and Fitzroy Rivers are beginning to decline while the major storages, Fairbairn and Callide Dams have not received any inflow. Storages on the Pioneer River are full and Kinchant Dam is still overflowing. Groundwater levels remain low in some areas except where

stream flows remain high. Generally bore levels have not responded to the rainfall experienced earlier in the year. Stock water supplies remain critical in the Jericho Shire with no relief from the recent rain.

South East Region: Stream flows have slowed considerably due to the lack of run-off but are consistent with normal seasonal occurrences. Ground water levels remain variable throughout the Region depending on location. Storage capacities in most of the Region's dams and weirs have dropped from the previous month due to consumption and evaporation. Fred Haigh Dam is currently at 24% and Wuruma Dam 21% of their normal capacities.

South Region: Groundwater supplies remain depleted on the eastern Downs but surface water availability is abundant throughout most of the Region. Recent rainfall has reduced the demand for irrigation and consequently supplies of irrigation water in off stream storages remain high. This will ensure the availability of water for summer plantings as well as reduce the burden placed on underground supplies. Most Dam capacities throughout the Region remain near peak capacity with the exception of Leslie Dam at Warwick which remains at 77% of capacity.

West Region: Reports of shortages in surface water from the northern sections of the Region indicate that conditions in these areas are deteriorating rapidly. Elsewhere surface and underground water storages are adequate for the present.

OUTLOOK

The average SOI for July was +6.7, while the average SOI for the 30 days ending 31 July was +6.5. The SOI trend during June-July was phase 2 (consistently positive).

Most climate forecast systems are suggesting 'average to above average' rainfall for the next three months in Eastern Australia. Thus the probability of exceeding the median rainfall in these areas, is about 65%. Exceptions are coastal districts from Bundaberg to north-eastern Victoria and the southern half of the Western Darling Downs where probabilities are about 55%.

FREIGHT SUBSIDIES

For the month of July 1996, 137 claims were processed to the value of \$192,544.75. The relatively small number of claims processed during the month has been brought about by the end of the financial year and the introduction of a new recording and payment system. The new Drought and Disaster Assistance Management Scheme (DDAMS) is linked to APS and will ultimately provide a quicker turn around time for the payment of claims as well as updated information on each property. Problems associated with the switch from DRAPS to DDAMS appear to have been rectified and the Drought and Natural Disaster Section are again operating at optimum capacity.

M Doyle

MANAGER

DROUGHT AND NATURAL DISASTER

WATER SUPPLY SITUATION

The current water supply situation in the State is extremely variable reflecting the highly variable rainfall and runoff conditions which have occurred in the major catchments over the past four or five years of drought.

Streamflow

Streamflow in most river systems has been generally below average. Exceptions are in the Wet Tropics and parts of the south and south-east areas of the State. In much of the central region of the State streamflow has all but ceased.

Surface Water Storages

The attached map shows the location of State owned surface water storages and indications of their current status of water storage. The accompanying table shows the outlook for these storages in terms of their ability to meet water demands in 1996/97.

This information shows that the storages position for most storages is good. Exceptions to these are those storages located in the Central Region near Rockhampton and those in the Lower Burnett near Bundaberg.

The accompanying table shows a comparison of storages currently at low levels with their corresponding position this time last year.

Local Government Water Supplies

The water supply situation in most Local Government systems is good. Exceptions are those small localities which rely solely on groundwater supplies which have not been replenished as a result of rains earlier in the year.

Groundwater

The groundwater storage situation for the main groundwater areas throughout the State continues to be below or well below normal except for a few isolated areas near Atherton, Cairns and Mona Park in the Lower Burdekin River area. Areas near Mackay, the Callide Valley, Wowan, Bundaberg, the Condamine Valley, Oakey Creek and Lockyer Valley are the lowest ever recorded and remain critical despite rains earlier in the year. In some areas near Bundaberg and Mackay seawater intrusion into the aquifers which has occurred as result of the depleted levels, is posing a serious problem and is being closely monitored.

It should be noted that in many of the areas recovery of groundwater levels will be slow. Even in areas such as the Lockyer Valley where recharge from rainfall is very efficient ie the aquifer recharges quickly and easily through the overlying strata, it is estimated that three consecutive years of well above average rainfall will be required to replenish the aquifer. However areas such as the Callide Valley, Condamine, Mackay and Bundaberg areas the overlying strata is less permeable and recharge is much slower. In this situation a prolonged period of many years of above average rainfall will be required to restore groundwater levels. Areas such as the Callide will therefore remain in drought if future relief is only in the form of isolated high rainfall events.

STATUS OF WATER SUPPLIES FROM DEPARTMENTAL STORAGES MAY 1996

CRITICAL

- 10 Tartus Weir
- 11 Bingegang Weir
- 12 Bedford Weir
- 13 Fairbairn Dam
- 18 Kolan Barrage
- 19 Fred Haigh Dam
- 20 Bucca Weir
- 21 B. Anderson Barrage

FAIR

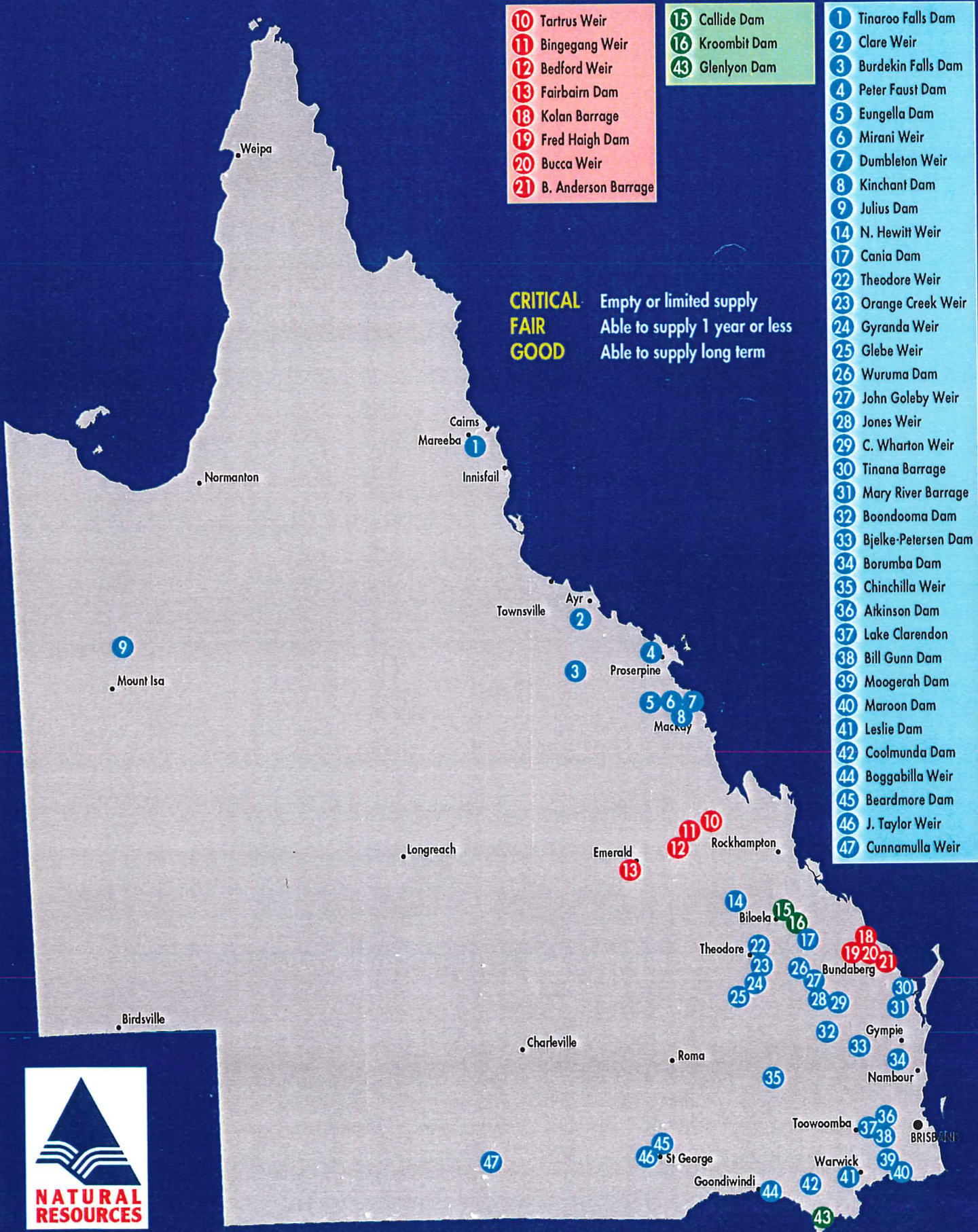
- 15 Callide Dam
- 16 Kroombit Dam
- 43 Glenlyon Dam

GOOD

- 1 Tinaroo Falls Dam
- 2 Clare Weir
- 3 Burdekin Falls Dam
- 4 Peter Faust Dam
- 5 Eungella Dam
- 6 Mirani Weir
- 7 Dumbleton Weir
- 8 Kinchant Dam
- 9 Julius Dam
- 14 N. Hewitt Weir
- 17 Cania Dam
- 22 Theodore Weir
- 23 Orange Creek Weir
- 24 Gylanda Weir
- 25 Glebe Weir
- 26 Wuruma Dam
- 27 John Goleby Weir
- 28 Jones Weir
- 29 C. Wharton Weir
- 30 Tinana Barrage
- 31 Mary River Barrage
- 32 Boondooma Dam
- 33 Bjelke-Petersen Dam
- 34 Borumba Dam
- 35 Chinchilla Weir
- 36 Atkinson Dam
- 37 Lake Clarendon
- 38 Bill Gunn Dam
- 39 Moogerah Dam
- 40 Maroon Dam
- 41 Leslie Dam
- 42 Coolmunda Dam
- 44 Boggabilla Weir
- 45 Beardmore Dam
- 46 J. Taylor Weir
- 47 Cunnamulla Weir

CRITICAL
FAIR
GOOD

Empty or limited supply
Able to supply 1 year or less
Able to supply long term



OUTLOOK FOR THE 1996/97 WATER YEAR

Storage	% Full	Announced Allocation	Remarks
Beardmore Dam	100 %	70 % *	Water year begins October
Glenlyon Dam	100 %	90 % *	Water year begins October
Leslie Dam	75 %	100 % #	
Atkinson Dam	100 %	100 %	
Bill Gunn Dam	65 %		
Lake Clarendon	60 %		
Moogerah Dam	100 %	100 %	
Maroon Dam	60 %	100 %	
Fred Haigh Dam	25 %	30 % #	Drastic water shortages expected to continue
Bjelke-Petersen Dam	100 %	100 % #	
Boondooma Dam	100 %	100 %	
Dawson River Weirs	100 %	20 % #	High usage expected before end of water year (Sept). 20% Est. Allocation increasing by Christmas (normal). High Security 100%
Callide Dam	21 %	see remarks	High Security 100%, Irrigation 80% #
Eden Bann Weir	100 %	100 %	
Kroombit Dam	49 %	see remarks	High Security 100%, Irrigation 80% #
Fairbairn Dam	19 %	see remarks	Irrigation 0%, Towns & Mines 100%
Eungella Dam	46 %	100 %	All uses
Pioneer River Weirs		see remarks	Irrigation 60%, Towns & Industrial 100%
Peter Faust Dam	41 %	100 %	
Kinchant Dam	93 %	100 %	
Burdekin Falls Dam	92 %	100 % #	Allocation reduced from 125% to safeguard supplies for future years
Tinaroo Falls Dam	74 %	100 % #	Allocation up from 95% in 95/96
Wuruma Dam	23 %	100 %	
Coolmunda Dam	100 %	100 %	

* Proposed Announced Allocation

Estimated Announced Allocation

COMPARISON OF AUGUST 95 AND AUGUST 96 POSITION
FOR STORAGES CURRENTLY AT LOW LEVELS

STORAGE	CURRENT STORAGE AVAILABLE - AUGUST 1996		STORAGE AVAILABLE AUGUST 1995	
	(ML)	(%)	(ML)	(%)
CENTRAL REGION				
Kroombit Dam	2 400	18	36	0
Callide Dam	27 300	20	16 300	11
Fairbairn Dam	353 100	17	480 700	27
	36	0	40	0
SOUTH EAST REGION				
Fred Haigh Dam	173 600	24	141 500	18
Wuruma Dam	35 400	20	1 800 0	10
Cania Dam	34 200	38	22 300	25

NEW ON INTERNET!

The Long Paddock



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email: rouseabout@dpi.qld.gov.au

QDPI Climatic Information Highway

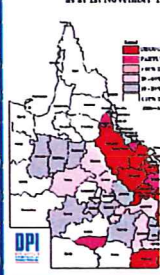
URL - <http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/longpdk>

Climate (El Niño) Information for Australian Agriculture

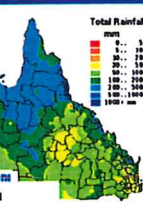
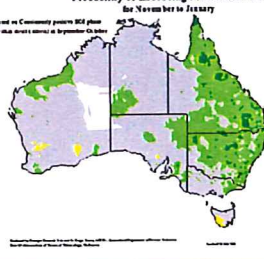
Over the last five years, the Queensland Department of Primary Industries has conducted considerable research, development and extension aimed at improving management for climatic variability. An Australiawide climatic data base has been established and a wide range of decision-support information services / tools / training developed to help clients to better manage climatic risks and opportunities. This work has been supported by a range of funding bodies and collaborators.

A large range of rainfall, rainfall analysis, sea-surface temperature, and satellite imagery maps are now available on-line, at no charge!

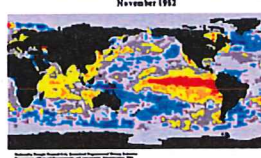
QUEENSLAND DROUGHT SITUATION
as at 1st November 1995



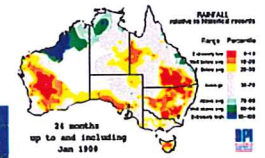
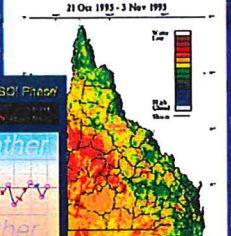
Probability of Exceeding Median Rainfall
for November to January



Variation of Sea-surface Temperature from Average
November 1992



Density of Green Vegetation
from NOAA 11 satellite
21 Oct 1995 - 3 Nov 1995



Climate Impacts & Spatial Systems

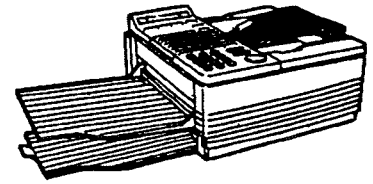
DPI staff may use the following URL - <http://dpiweb.mh.dpi.qld.gov.au/longpdk>



SEASONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICE
SOI FAX HOTLINES
(Southern Oscillation Index)

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SOI MESSAGE - 7 AUGUST 1996

SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE

May 96	*	+ 1.7
June 96	*	+ 10.5
July 96	*	+ 6.7

Last 30 days		+ 5.1
Last 90 days (b)		+ 6.2

SOI trend^(b) during June - July was
Phase 2 (i.e. positive ▲).

NOTE: (a) SOI values calculated using mean barometric pressures from 1880 to 1992 - subject to revision by Bureau of Meteorology.

* Preliminary value ** Revised value

(b) See AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN for effects of SOI on rainfall at your location.

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

Most climate forecast systems are suggesting 'average to above average' rainfall in eastern Australia during the next three months. Probabilities of receiving median rainfall are mainly about 65% in the eastern half of Australia. Exceptions are coastal districts from Bundaberg to north-eastern Victoria and the southern half of the Western Darling Downs where probabilities are about 55%; in parts of north-eastern Queensland, southern NSW, inland Victoria and the south-east corner of South Australia the probabilities are about 75%.

That is, when we have experienced a similar SOI pattern to the current one, over the last 130 years, we have received at least median rainfall in about 5-in-10 years to 8-in-10 years, with some variation from one location to another.

The next passage of the 30- to 50-day Oscillation is due about the fourth week of August.

The Bureau of Meteorology indicates that easterly winds have restrengthened in some parts of the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.

Sea-surface temperatures are mostly neutral in the central and eastern Pacific, except for a cooler-than-normal area in the extreme east. The western Pacific Ocean remains mostly warmer-than-normal.

The trend in the SOI over April/May suggests little variation from the median date of last frost for most of Queensland and northern New South Wales, except for the Biloela, Emerald and Tamworth areas where it is about one week later than normal.

The average SOI over the last 30 days was +5.1. Climate forecasts indicate that the chances of receiving median rainfall over the next three months range from 5-in-10 years to 8-in-10 years.

THE BOTTOM LINE

To obtain more information for your location, we recommend combined use of the AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN package and the Bureau of Meteorology's Seasonal Climate Outlook. Also a lot of additional information is available on our Internet World Wide Web service, 'The Long Paddock', at URL - <http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/longpdk/>.

The next SOI HOTLINE update will be on the 14th of August (usually by 5pm).

Climate Impacts and Spatial Systems - Department of Primary Industries

Compiled by Dr Roger Stone, QDPI, Toowoomba and Col Paull

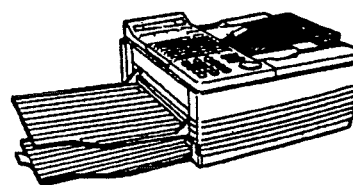
If you would like any further information, please contact Col Paull on (07) 389 69587, or one of the Climate Risk Co-Ordinators located at Cloncurry (077) 421 311, Charters Towers (077) 872 155, Emerald (079) 828 801, Kingaroy (071) 600 717 and Roma (076) 229 999

Some information courtesy Bureau of Meteorology,
CSIRO and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, USA



DROUGHT INFORMATION SERVICE
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INDEX TO SERVICES

019 - 725 300 (03) 272 7220
[1 page]

The page you are reading.

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[1 page, updates weekly, approx time 1' 30"]

Latest **SOI message**, recent Southern Oscillation Index Values and information on possible trends. (This information can be obtained verbally via your Telephone on (07) 3896 9602)

019 - 725 302 (03) 272 7222
[4 pages, updates monthly, approx time 4' 17"]

Graphs showing SOI values for a series of recent months and data from 1890 to the 1990's

019 - 725 303 (03) 272 7223
[1 pages, updates monthly, approx time 5' 45"]

maps **Recent rainfall** of Queensland showing total rainfall and rainfall compared with the long-term average.

019 - 725 304 (03) 272 7224
[3 pages, approx time 3' 53"]

Explanation of the Southern Oscillation and El Niño phenomenon with text and diagrams.

019 - 725 305 (03) 272 7225
[2 pages, current status approx time 2' 45"]
Queensland **drought-declared Shires**, map & listing.

019 - 725 306 (03) 272 7226
[2 pages, approx time 4' 26"]

AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN details and order form for the DPI computer software package (for IBM PC's).
WILL IT RAIN? details and order form for the DPI book about the effects of the Southern Oscillation and EL Niño on Australia.

019 - 725 307 (03) 272 7227
[1page, updates monthly, approx time 3' 45"]
World sea surface temperature anomalies, map.

019 - 725 308 (03) 272 7228
[1page, updates weekly, approx time 1'30"]
SOI data, daily / 30 / 90-day average SOI values for the past 31 days with Darwin / Tahiti pressure readings.

019 - 725 309 (03) 272 7229
[1page, updates monthly, approx time 5'30"]
Map showing **rainfall outlook** - > median for Qld.

019 - 725 324 (03) 272 7230
[1page, updates monthly, approx time 5'45"]
Maps showing **rainfall outlooks** - specific amounts for Qld.

1800 808 096
[Multiple pages, free call]

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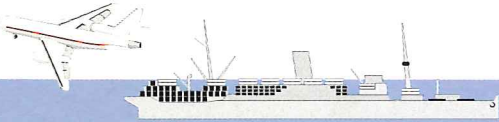
Some areas do not have access to 0197 numbers at present. However, the same information can be obtained using the alternative 03 numbers listed above.

*Primary industries:

A key contributor to Queensland's economy



21% of Queenslanders are employed in the rural sector, in industries servicing this sector and adding value to rural-sector products, and in food-and-fibre wholesaling and retailing.



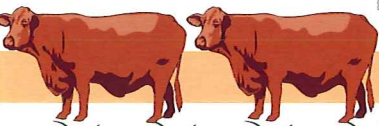
37% of Queensland's overseas exports



24% of Australia's rural exports



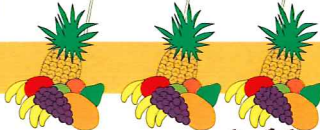
\$5831m total production value



\$1593m in cattle



\$1157m in sugarcane



\$875m in fruit & vegetables



\$284m in cereal grains



\$290m in milk



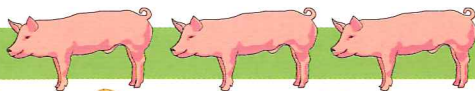
\$285m in fisheries



\$256m in cotton



\$190m in poultry & eggs



\$160m in pigs



\$239m in wool



\$80m in forestry

DPI location map

