



Gladys Berejiklian

Premier of NSW

John Barilaro

Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW

Dominic Perrottet

Treasurer

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW BUDGET: MORE SUPPORT FOR FARMERS, ECONOMIC STIMULUS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The NSW Government is continuing to support regional communities, businesses and workers experiencing the flow-on effects of the drought through a new regional economic stimulus package.

During a visit to Coolamon in the State's southwest today, Premier Gladys Berejiklian announced the upcoming State Budget would include \$355 million to extend emergency drought support for farmers and funding to fast track investment in regional infrastructure.

The funding brings the NSW Government's investment in drought support to more than \$1.8 billion.

Ms Berejiklian said the package will fund many critical town water projects as well as other shovel-ready infrastructure projects that will stimulate local economies.

"The impact of this drought has spread quickly off farm and is now being felt by businesses and households in towns and cities across regional NSW," Ms Berejiklian said.

"When farmers can't contract tradies and other workers, there is a flow on effect felt throughout local businesses such as cafes and local stores. This funding package will support these rural communities in their time of need."

Examples of shovel ready projects that could be funded by the stimulus package include regional airport upgrades, activation of industrial lands and CBD revitalisation projects.

Ms Berejiklian was joined in Coolamon by Deputy Premier John Barilaro, Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and Minister for Agriculture Adam Marshall.

Mr Barilaro said the NSW Government was continuing to stand shoulder to shoulder with farmers and their communities battling the drought.

"The lack of rain on farm is having a devastating flow on effect in regional businesses," Mr Barilaro said.

"Every dollar spent by farmers at their local store helps keep someone employed in that business and a family in town. We recognise that in order to keep businesses open and jobs in town, the Government needs to fast track our investment in local infrastructure."

Mr Perrottet said the package would boost water security for local communities and provide support for farmers and their local communities.

“The best drought package for regional NSW is rain, but until the skies open we will stand by communities that are doing it tough,” Mr Perrottet said.

“We will always back our farmers and rural communities as they continue to deal with this terrible drought.”

Mr Marshall said the assistance would allow farmers to cut the cost of farming fees and charges, continue to use transport subsidies and would provide funding for emergency water carting.

“Our farmers are doing it incredibly tough and that’s why we’re directing additional funds to help reduce cost of living pressures, drought-proof properties and transport stock and fodder,” Mr Marshall said.

“While what is needed most is simply more rainfall I’m confident this package will help alleviate the burden associated with one of the worst droughts in living memory.”

Under today’s announcement, \$170 million has been reserved for a special purpose Drought Infrastructure Package, including:

- Up to \$120 million to fast track identified major infrastructure projects;
- \$30 million on new groundwater supply for Dubbo;
- \$8.2 million construction of second water storage at Nyngan
- \$2.2 million to augment bore water supply at Coonabarabran;
- \$2 million for Albert Priest Channel critical maintenance (Nyngan and Cobar); and
- \$1.97 million towards the Coolamon Industrial Estate development.

An additional \$185 million in Budget funding will go towards on-farm drought support measures, including:

- \$70 million for transport subsidies (stock, fodder and water);
- \$50 million to waive Local Land Services rates;
- \$30 million to waive fixed charges for NSW Water Licences;
- \$15 million for emergency water carting; and
- \$10 million to waive interest charges for Farm Innovation Fund loans.

For further information about NSW Government drought support measures, visit www.droughthub.nsw.gov.au.

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