

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**  
**No. 789**  
**Asked on 30 October 2013**

**MR KATTER** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (MR McVEIGH)—

**QUESTION:**

Will the Minister take immediate steps to help coordinate and implement a whole of government approach to arrest the increasing mental health crisis which is impacting on our drought affected Queensland farmers and will he outline all current assistance that is available?

**ANSWER:**

The Queensland Government has recognised that the severity of the current drought, coupled with non-seasonal factors such as the temporary ban on live cattle exports in 2011, has increased the strain on many producers.

The Premier, the Honourable Campbell Newman MP and I announced earlier this year at Richmond, an \$11.2 million Drought Assistance Package which is a whole of government approach to the drought.

This package included 40 mental health support workshops to be delivered across the initial 13 drought-declared shires. These workshops are targeted towards key people who regularly engage with farmers, their families and other impacted local stakeholders living in the drought-declared communities.

The workshops aim to build community capacity to support the emotional and social wellbeing of impacted community members and to build community resilience. The program is designed to make individuals more aware of, understand and, where appropriate, assist members of the community who may be suffering stress as a result of the drought. These workshops will commence late November 2013, with the first being held in Charleville.

Mental health services are co-ordinated by Queensland Health, which is the responsibility of the Minister for Health, the Honourable Lawrence Springborg MP. The Member for Mt Isa should direct his questions to Minister Springborg if he requires more specific details of the suite of mental health services currently delivered in this state.