

Question on Notice

No. 1561

Asked on 31 October 2018

MR J MADDEN ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister provide an update on the outcomes of the drought summit in Canberra, and what this means for Queensland producers?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

A Queensland delegation led by the Premier and Minister for Trade attended the National Drought Summit convened by the Prime Minister on 26 October 2018. A range of initiatives were announced by the Prime Minister at this Summit that complement existing Palaszczuk and Federal Government programs.

The major measures announced that are expected to be available to Queensland producers and communities include:

- a reinstatement of the Federal Government's 25 per cent top up to the Queensland Government's Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate, last offered in 2015.
- a Future Drought Fund, with an initial \$3.9 billion committed to the fund, will make available \$100 million each year from 2020 to support community services initiatives, research, technology and infrastructure. This will take time for the Federal Government to implement as legislation is required to create the fund
- funding for council infrastructure including water supply
- modifications to the Farm Household Allowance including form simplifications and an increase in the net assets test to \$5 million
- an extension of the contract for the Rural Financial Counselling Service (to which Queensland contributes) to 2020
- an increase in the loan limit for the Federal Government's Drought Concessional Loans administered by the Regional Investment Corporation to \$2 million
- immediate depreciation of fodder storage assets
- additional funding for the Great Artesian Basin bore capping program
- funding to key charities to support households facing hardship
- a drought round to the national water infrastructure development fund
- additional funding for mental health programs
- a Rural and Regional Renewal Small Grants program
- Bureau of Meteorology finer scale regional weather and climate guides.