

Question on Notice

No. 144

Asked on 18 February 2020

MR S ANDREW ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme— Will the Minister confirm (a) the total Fodder Freight Subsidy budget available in 2019-2020 financial year, (b) the total extent of Fodder Freight Subsidies paid out to date, (c) scope to immediately increase Fodder Freight Subsidies to \$50,000 per annum and (d) details for future drought schemes proposed for post 30 June 2020?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

Freight subsidies are a sub-component of the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme (DRAS). The other major component of DRAS is the Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate. As such, there is no specific budget allocation for freight subsidies within DRAS, as the scheme and its components are demand driven. \$25 million has been budgeted for expenditure under DRAS in 2019-20. However, should actual expenditure exceed this amount all claims will be paid.

As at 20 February 2020, \$12.169 million has been paid on fodder freight subsidies, from 3 710 claims.

The maximum under DRAS is initially \$20,000 per property. However, this can be extended to up to \$50,000 on approval of a Drought Management Plan, and if the producer is in the sixth and subsequent years of drought. The DRAS guidelines are available on the website www.daf.qld.gov.au.

In order to identify the best policy guidelines and measures to support primary producers in future drought, the Palaszczuk Government conducted a Drought Program Review in 2018-19 which was led by Mr Charles Burke and Ms Ruth Wade. The Palaszczuk Government has considered this report and has provided a formal response.

The response includes the Queensland Drought Management Framework 2019-2024 for future drought preparedness, response and recovery. This Framework is to be updated in June 2020 to reflect the current range of programs that will be available in each phase of drought - preparedness, response and recovery. The Palaszczuk Government is currently working with industry on the implementation of the approved measures from the Drought Program Review.

The Drought Program Review report, the Palaszczuk Government response to the Drought Program Review and the Queensland Drought Management Framework are available on www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/drought-program-review-report.