

THE FLINDERS RANGES COUNCIL AWARDED HARD EARNED DROUGHT FUNDING

The Flinders Ranges Council has been awarded \$1m in funding from the Commonwealth Government under the Drought Communities Programme.

Funding under the Drought Communities Programme is available to eligible councils for local infrastructure projects and other drought-relief activities. Project funding is intended to provide short-term support, including by boosting local employment and procurement, and addressing social and community needs.

However, as Mark Sutton, Chair Regional Development Australia (RDA) Far North said, The Flinders Ranges Council was initially overlooked in receiving the funding.

“When the extension of this Programme was announced by the Australian Government in October 2018, \$1m was awarded to 60 eligible Councils, including 17 in South Australia, however The Flinders Ranges Council was one of the Councils that was overlooked for funding support despite being identified by the State Government as being in drought.

In seeing this anomaly RDA Far North lobbied Commonwealth Ministers and Members of Parliament to have the Council area recognised as requiring drought assistance.

“In The Flinders Ranges Council region, agriculture accounts for the largest share of the region’s industry value-add at 20%, is the largest contributor to regional exports with 42% of total regional export value and accounts for 21% of local employment, the highest industry in the region. The agricultural industry also provides a significant offering for the tourism industry with a number of pastoral homesteads offering tourism experiences.

“This is a good outcome for The Flinders Ranges Council as it is expected that the grant will stimulate local community spending at local business and suppliers in support of the local community and the agricultural industry that underpins its economy. RDA Far North will continue to work closely with The Flinders Ranges Council in the rolling out of this important funding initiative.”

RDA Far North will continue to advocate both the Australian and State Governments for increased support for those parts of the far north who are also managing the impacts of severe drought conditions.

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