

DROUGHT POLICY REVIEW EXPERT SOCIAL PANEL

MEDIA RELEASE

4 July 2008

Itinerary released for expert social panel's public forums

Farmers, farm families, rural communities and social support service providers are among the many stakeholders being encouraged to have their say by attending one of the public consultation forums being held across Australia as part of the expert panel's assessment of the social impacts of drought.

Chair of the expert panel leading the assessment, Mr Peter Kenny, today released details of public consultation forums to be held across Australia, and encouraged wide-spread participation.

"The social panel will be holding a series of face-to-face public forums across Australia from mid-July until the end of August," Mr Kenny said.

"The social panel is keen to hear how the prolonged drought is affecting individuals, families and communities.

"The social panel also wants to hear about the type of social support people value or perceive they need in times of drought.

"This is a rare opportunity for individuals, families, communities and organisations to have their say on the social impacts of drought."

The social panel is encouraging anyone who is unable to attend one of the public forums to make a written submission.

"Last week I released the social panel's *Issues Paper*, and announced that we will be accepting written submissions until Friday 8 August 2008," Mr Kenny said.

"I strongly encourage all interested parties to participate by attending one of the public forums, or by making a written submission."

The itinerary for the social panel's public consultation forums across Australia is available on the National Review of Drought Policy's website at www.daff.gov.au/droughtpolicyreview.

All media enquiries relating to the social panel or assessment should be directed to Mr Peter Kenny on **07 3238 6033**.

Media enquiries concerning the government's national review of drought policy, including the economic and climatic assessments, should be referred to Mr Dale Starr on **0434 305 166**.

Dates and locations of the social panel's public consultation forums follows... times and venues will be available on the website.

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PUBLIC FORUMS PROPOSED

Location	Date
Bothwell – TAS	Thursday 17 July
Alice Springs – NT	Monday 21 July
Inverell – NSW	Thursday 24 July
Bourke – NSW	Friday 25 July
Merriden – WA	Monday 28 July
Wongan Hills – WA	Monday 28 July
Morowa – WA	Tuesday 29 July
Esperance – WA	Wednesday 30 July
Shepparton – VIC	Monday 4 August
Birchip – VIC	Tuesday 5 August
Gatton – QLD	Monday 11 August
Dalby – QLD	Monday 11 August
Charleville – QLD	Tuesday 12 August
Longreach – QLD	Wednesday 13 August
Emerald – QLD	Wednesday 13 August
Gilgandra – NSW	Monday 18 August
Forbes – NSW	Tuesday 19 August
Griffith – NSW	Thursday 21 August
Goulburn – NSW	Friday 22 August
Colac – VIC	Monday 25 August
Keith – SA	Monday 25 August
Mildura – VIC	Tuesday 26 August
Gawler – SA	Tuesday 26 August
Orroroo – SA	Wednesday 27 August
Wudinna – SA	Wednesday 27 August