



## **Enhanced exit assistance for farmers**

On 25 September 2007 the Australian Government announced a new and improved drought assistance package for irrigators, dryland farmers and small businesses severely affected by the drought. These measures recognise the unprecedented severity, length and extent of the current drought, and subsequent reduced water allocations, and their impact on rural and regional communities, the environment, and the broader Australian economy.

### **What exit assistance is available?**

As this drought continues farmers will be considering their options both within and outside farming. This decision can be a very difficult one, particularly for someone who has lived and worked all their life on the one property.

For eligible farmers who are considering leaving the land, an exit assistance package is now available.

Three elements of this assistance package include:

- an exit grant worth \$150,000 (net assets limit of \$350,000 after selling all farm assets)
- professional advice and re-training assistance worth up to \$10,000
- assistance with relocation expenses worth up to \$10,000 which help a person to obtain a job in another location

Access is not dependent on farmers being eligible for the Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment or Farm Help income support.

The professional advice and re-training grant is available for specialised professional information and advice across a range of disciplines to assist farmers in Exceptional Circumstances declared areas (including prima facie and interim declared areas) re-establish themselves after they exit farming. The grant will also assist with re-training expenses for farmers who are seeking alternative employment.

Relocation assistance is available to recipients of the exit grant, who are relocating to pursue employment prospects.

This assistance package is distinct from Farm Help and is available to farmers who apply and sell their farm before 30 June 2009.

### **Where can I get further information?**

For more information on Exceptional Circumstances support and other Australian Government drought assistance measures call the Drought Assistance Hotline on **13 23 16** or visit [www.daff.gov.au/droughtassist](http://www.daff.gov.au/droughtassist)