



North Central CMA Drought Response Package

Drought Employment Program Frequently Asked Questions

What is the North Central CMA's Drought Response Package?

The North Central CMA's Drought Response Package is offered as part of the Victorian Government's Drought Response Package that aims to support farmers who are facing the worst of the difficult dry seasonal conditions. The package offers measures to ensure farmers and their families experiencing emotional and financial stress get the support they need to help them get through these challenging times.

What is the North Central CMA's Drought Employment Program?

The North Central CMA's Drought Employment Program is offered as part of the Victorian Government's Drought Response Package.

The North CMA would like to work with our regional communities and to ensure our natural resources are well-placed to recover from the drought. The Authority's Drought Employment Program will provide employment and training opportunities to drought-affected people from the agriculture sector who are experiencing unprecedented hardships within the dryland farming areas around Donald, Charlton, Wedderburn and St Arnaud.

Why is the North Central CMA offering this program and what will it achieve?

The North Central CMA is conscious of the impacts of the drought across the north central region – on its natural resources and its people.

The dry conditions present opportunities for the North Central CMA, in partnership with the community and agencies, to accelerate a number of on-ground work programs, or add value to existing programs, to restore and protect our natural resources.

The program aims to provide drought-affected people with the opportunity to earn off-farm income to support their families and rural communities, contribute towards local natural resource management outcomes and increase their confidence and skills for the future.



Who can apply to the program?

Any individual residing in the North Central CMA region that is directly affected by the drought:

- People involved in primary industry such as landholders and farmers; and
- People involved in support industries such as contract fencers, block hands.

All successful candidates will be provided with OHS, First Aid, chemical handling, and chainsaw training and supplementary training will be provided to individuals where required, e.g. fencing and monitoring.

When will the Drought Employment Program begin and for how long?

Expressions of interest are being sought from drought-affected people from December 2015 in the North Central CMA region and the program is expected to run until June 2016.

How will the North Central CMA Drought Employment Program be delivered?

The North Central CMA will engage an appropriate recruitment agency to undertake all aspects of recruitment and associated management for the life of the project including payroll. North Central CMA will be directly involved in the selection of candidates and in some cases may provide details of preferred candidates. Work hours will be flexible, allowing farmers and farm workers employed through the program to rotate on and off tasks in order to continue work on their own properties.

The successful candidates will form one or more work crews. The number of work crews will be determined by the number of suitable applicants, availability of work projects and seasonal constraints, e.g. weather conditions. Each work crew will have an appropriate 4WD vehicle, trailer and equipment to undertake on-ground works.

How are on-ground projects determined?

Working together, the North Central CMA, interested landholders, Landcare and community groups, shire councils and partner agencies will apply their skills and experience to determine what on-ground works are undertaken.

While the project will focus on the population centres of Donald, Charlton, Wedderburn and St Arnaud, it will operate under a cooperative “no borders” approach with Wimmera



CMA and Mallee CMA, to ensure the hardest hit farming communities get the support required.

What on-ground works are likely to be undertaken?

- Pest, plant and animal control works
- Watering revegetation sites
- Fencing
- Track and public facility maintenance
- GPS mapping of weeds
- Minor erosion control (e.g. revegetation)
- Monitoring and evaluation of environmental assets

What type of works will not be undertaken?

- Off-setting works as part of a planning approval
- Landholders working on their own land
- Stock containment works (as this is funded through another component of the North Central CMA Drought Response Package).

Will activities be monitored?

All activities will be monitored to determine the environmental, social and economic benefits of the works.

Who should I contact to find out more about the program, to apply or obtain assistance filling in the online expression of interest form?

Please call the North Central CMA on (03) 5448 7124 weekdays between 8.30am and 5pm (except public holidays). Assistance with completing the online expression of interest form can also be given by calling the above number.