36 Territory Properties Drought Declared For 2008

Ten Territory properties declared “in drought” can now apply for subsidies or loans from the Northern Territory Government, Primary Industry Minister Chris Natt said today.

“The pastoral industry is worth more than $200 million to our economy – employing more than 1000 people,” Mr Natt said.

“The Northern Territory Government continues to be a strong supporter of the pastoral industry – and in particular those pastoral enterprises that need some business support to maintain viability during the extended drought conditions.

“Thirty-six properties in the Alice Springs and Barkly districts have been declared “in drought” for 2008 – meaning they can seek financial assistance from the Northern Territory Government through its Drought Assistance Arrangements.

“Severe drought” – meaning a property has been declared ‘in-drought’ for at least two years out of a three-year rolling period including the current year - has been declared on 10 properties.

“The options for properties in severe drought are a breeding stock freight subsidy of up to $20,000 per property per year for de-stocking and/or re-stocking or a drought loan of up to $60,000.

“26 properties have been declared as being in drought for the first year in the three year period leading up to 2008 – meaning they can also apply for assistance if their conditions worsen.

“One focus of the NT Drought Policy is to de-stock to maintain land condition to enable recovery after drought.

“This is why a freight subsidy is offered for breeding stock, to help retain the core breeding herd.

“Pastoralists have moved considerable numbers of stock away to avoid land degradation.

“This is a positive message and demonstrates responsible custodianship of the land.

“I commend the pastoral industry for taking this responsible approach to the situation in recognition of the limited rainfall and pasture.”

Anyone seeking further information on NT Drought Assistance is urged to call the Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines on 8999 2077.

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