Media Release

Willem Westra van Holthe, Member for Katherine
Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries

**Pastoralists receive seasonal hardship rent waiver**

13 June 2014

Minister for Land Resource Management, Willem Westra van Holthe, has today announced a package to waive pastoral rents on properties that have been affected by seasonal conditions like drought and low rainfall.

Mr Westra van Holthe said that pastoralists in the Territory had not been included in the Federal Government’s drought assistance package yet pastoralists in the Plenty and Southern Alice Springs districts had been dry as a bone.

“The decision to waive the 2013-14 pastoral lease rents has been based on a scientific assessment of the seasonal conditions,” Mr Westra van Holthe said.

“This package will be open for all Territory pastoralists to apply. However, pastoralists will have to meet the eligibility criteria, such as: drought like conditions, lack of rainfall, poor pasture growth, the impact on the business enterprise including relevant financial information.

“This is not a handout, this is government foregoing the revenue of pastoral properties that haven’t been able to flourish and capitalise on the Territory’s rapidly expanding pastoral industry.

“Labor’s live export ban of 2011 hurt many families on the land, despite the bounce back from those days, many families were further punished with bad seasonal conditions.

“The Country Liberals Government is doing the right thing to ensure that families who want to stay and work on the land can do so. I am not interested in bankrupting pastoral families who are going through drought like conditions.

“The Northern Territory Cattlemen’s Association has been a great voice for their membership in helping secure this package.”

The Department of Land Resource Management has already identified 39 properties in the Southern Alice Springs and Plenty districts that may be eligible for the pastoral rent waiver.

For more information about the seasonal hardship package, go to: [www.primaryindustry.nt.gov.au](http://www.primaryindustry.nt.gov.au)

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