1. Northern and western Queensland is currently experiencing very dry conditions. These conditions led to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry declaring drought in the council areas of Etheridge, Croydon, Carpentaria, Burke, Doomadgee, Cloncurry, McKinlay, Flinders, Boulia, Diamantina, Murweh and Paroo, effective 1 April 2013. This is equivalent to one third of Queensland’s land area.
2. The primary purpose of a state drought declaration is to enable access to the main state drought program, the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme and a number of smaller assistance programs in various government agencies. These schemes can be used and modified as necessary to provide temporary relief to farmers. The Government has also recently announced some additional measures, such as access to grazing in some national parks and reserves, and assistance with the costs of Type 2 road train movements on restricted routes.
3. The proposed 2013 Drought Assistance Package provides a whole-of-government response aimed at addressing the present circumstances of farm families, farm businesses and farm communities. The components of the package will deliver land rent relief, transport concessions, community and animal welfare assistance via freight subsidies, and assistance with water supply, mental health support and other community measures.
4. Cabinet approved the 2013 Drought Assistance Package.
5. *Attachments*
* [Rainfall deficiency map](Attachments/Rainfall%20Deficiency%20map.PDF)
* [Drought map](Attachments/Drought%20map.PDF)