

MEDIA RELEASE

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Drought Assistance

The National Council of the St Vincent de Paul Society has welcomed the Prime Minister's announcement today of further assistance to rural communities devastated by the unrelenting drought.

The Government announced today that the St Vincent de Paul Society will participate in the roll out of this next phase of the Drought Community Support Initiative.

National Council President, Claire Victory, said the Society welcomed the opportunity to continue to work in local communities to distribute the funding and ensure people on the ground can access the support they need.

'We have a long history of working on the ground in local communities through over a thousand Conferences in regional, rural, remote and urban areas. We have an ongoing relationship with these communities and are well placed to respond in the face of an emergency.'

'Our members have been helping over 3,700 farmers, farm workers and farm suppliers and contractors since the beginning of the funding in December 2018' Ms Victory said.

The Drought Community Support Initiative concluded at the end of June this year. It is anticipated that the fresh round of support will commence urgently, possibly within a fortnight.

People who used the program said the contribution of Vinnies staff and volunteers was 'outstanding'.

The Federal Government said it was 'pleased to partner with an experienced and trusted organisation to deliver this much needed support in drought-affected regions'.

'We'll be pulling up our sleeves and getting on with this as soon as the funding becomes available,' said National Council CEO Toby oConnor.

'We welcome the opportunity to work with the Federal Government on this initiative and look forward to working in local rural communities to assist local government and community groups to bring dignity to the lives of people who are struggling because of the drought.'

The Society of St Vincent de Paul consists of 60,000 members and volunteers who operate on the ground through over 1,000 Conferences located in individual parishes across Australia.