

7 November 2019

Struggling councils welcome new drought funding: ALGA

- Assistance will make real difference to communities
- Councils can commence projects that will create local jobs & support local businesses
- Flexibility needed because individual circumstances differ

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) has welcomed the Commonwealth's new drought assistance measures, saying they will be of real benefit to drought-affected councils and communities.

The latest funding package follows numerous representations made by ALGA and its member state and territory local government associations to Deputy Prime Minister McCormack, Treasurer Frydenberg, Drought Minister Littleproud, and Local Government Minister Coulton.

"We're really pleased by today's announcement because this much needed money will make a real difference to communities hurting amid the relentless drought," ALGA Acting President, Cr Linda Scott, said.

"Councils have identified a range of projects that can be rolled out rapidly to support their communities, including farmers and farm-dependent businesses. Wherever possible, these projects have multiple benefits including jobs, infrastructure upgrades and community wellbeing.

"In addition to building resilience, these projects also create local jobs, not just for farmers but also other types of local workers who've been unable to find employment due to the drought."

Acting President Scott said councils hoped the Commonwealth would allow flexibility in how the money is spent.

"As the individual circumstances of each drought-affected council differs, we hope there is flexibility in how this money can be used," she said.

"Local governments, as the closest level of government to the community, understand what is required to support their communities effectively.

"Whether this is infrastructure upgrades, buy local initiatives, projects to augment the water supply or local community events, councils will deliver projects that create local jobs, support local businesses, and build community wellbeing.

"We're grateful that the Commonwealth has heard our advocacy on behalf of Australia's 537 councils and acted to help ease the burden of so many communities around the country."

Available for interview:

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