

Will Hodgman

Premier of Tasmania

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Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

## Anniversary of June 2016 floods a time for reflection

In marking the 12-month anniversary of last June's devastating floods, it is a time to reflect on the tragic loss of life and the many families, farms and communities that were impacted.

Once in a century floods swept across 20 of Tasmania's 29 municipalities with enormous speed and causing catastrophic damage to farms and infrastructure and people's livelihoods.

It is difficult to adequately describe the heartache of missing family members, farmers losing stock or a family seeing their home go under water – it has a different impact on every individual.

The community, including the Tasmanian Government, stood beside these families and communities as they rebuilt and we continue to help with rehabilitation grants, loans and financial advice.

The total damage bill is estimated in excess of \$180 million and my thanks go to the many organisations like the local councils, TFGA, Dairy Tas, Rural Business Tasmania, Rural Alive and Well, and DPIPWE who all worked magnificently together to help affected families and communities.

The Tasmanian Government quickly responded with a series of Emergency Assistance Grants, Community and Primary Producer Clean-up Grants, funding to the Rural Relief Fund, established the Flood Recovery Taskforce, the Flood Recovery Loan Scheme and also successfully liaised with the Australian Government for the affected regions to be covered by the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangement.

We are also looking at land rehabilitation schemes so that our waterways are better able to cope with these sort of weather events in the future and we will also review Mike Blake's recently received review into the floods with our intention to release it in full as soon as possible.

The flood recovery has been a major consideration in our two most recent Budgets with an additional \$2 million in the 2017/18 Budget for agricultural landscape rehabilitation, which is on top of the \$2 million announced in

December 2016.

This is on top of the \$2.15 million in disaster funding to restore areas of the Mersey-Dasher river system announced by the Tasmanian and Australian Governments in March 2017.

Administered by NRM North on behalf of the three regional NRM bodies, landholder projects from the Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme are currently being finalised and will be announced soon.

Other flood support includes:

As of June 2, 2017:

- Over \$3.3 million has been paid in assistance through the jointly-funded Commonwealth-State National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) which includes 334 applications for Clean-up Grants totalling over \$2.99 million and 87 applications for Transport Subsidies totalling over \$312,000.
  - Eight loans totalling \$1,199,600 under the Flood Recovery Concessional Loan Scheme have been approved by Department of State Growth, with a further five loans totalling \$550,000 under consideration.
  - Additionally, the Tasmanian Government provided \$135,000 to Rural Business Tasmania's Rural Relief Fund for individual grants of up to \$2,500 to meet the immediate needs of primary producers and their families.

As we again reflect on this anniversary, the pain and loss has been tempered for many by the absolutely brilliant support they received from their local communities.

The Tasmania Government is committed to continuing to work and support farmers, landowners, primary producers and communities impacted by the flood events of 2016 as they recover and rebuild.

- Financial counselling and support is still available through Rural Business Tasmania (1800 883276) or Rural Alive and Well on 1300 4357 6283.

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