

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017

1.8 Australian Government Disaster Financial Support Payments

Question No. BE17-132

Senator Rice asked the following question on 05 June 2017:

1. When was the Commonwealth first asked by the Queensland Government to grant access to Category C funding under the Commonwealth-State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements for Queensland primary producers affected by Cyclone Debbie?
2. What did the Commonwealth finally grant access to Category C funding for Queensland primary producers?
3. How much of this funding has been applied for so far for primary producers impacted by Cyclone Debbie?
4. How much of this funding has been granted so far for primary producers impacted by Cyclone Debbie?
5. Does the Department provide assistance to potential applicants in informing them about the funding stream and/or helping them assess damage to their assets?
6. What is the total funding available for disaster relief AND is there a contingency fund or commitment to a contingency fund from the minister in the event that the existing funding is fully used up?

The response to the honourable Senator's question is as follows:

1. The Queensland government requested Category C assistance from the Australian Government on 10 April 2017. The request did not include accompanying data demonstrating the severity of the event and the need for Category C assistance. On 11 April 2017, Minister Keenan wrote to the Queensland Premier, asking the Queensland Government to provide the impact data necessary to support their request for Category C assistance. The Queensland government provided the information to the Attorney-General's Department on 12 April 2017. On 14 April 2017, the Prime Minister approved Category C recovery grants of up to \$25,000 for primary producers.
2. The Australian Government approved and announced Category C assistance on 14 April 2017.
3. Category C assistance is administered by the Queensland Government.
4. Category C assistance is administered by the Queensland Government.
5. Category C assistance is administered by the Queensland Government.
6. There is no limit on the funding available for eligible assistance measures under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA). For the Budget each financial year,

Australian Government payments under the NDRRA are estimated using known and anticipated liabilities and published in Budget Paper 3, covering both the current Budget year and the forward estimates.