

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates May 2010
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Corporate Finance Division

Q1 Senator Back – BA figures (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, pp 10–11*)

Since merging with BSG what are the figures for BA regarding expenditure/revenue/staffing for current financial year and beyond.

Answer:

Biosecurity Australia (BA) was de-prescribed 1 July 2009 and the functions of BA were absorbed by DAFF. At this time the appropriation transferred to DAFF was:

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Appropriation transfer	21,440	20,093	20,585	17,667	17,801

The budget expenditure for BA in 2009-10 is \$21.09 million. Budgets for 2010-11 have not yet been finalised.

2009-10 budgeted operational FTEs are 110 compared with 131 in the BA 2009-10 PBS. The difference is the corporate FTEs which transferred to DAFF corporate divisions

Q2 Senator Heffernan – Budget APLC (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, p. 13*)

Is there a budget allocated to Plague Locusts?

Answer:

Below is the preliminary budget for APLC for 2010-11. This has not been endorsed by the APLC as yet.

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Corporate Finance Division Q2 (continued)

APLC Funding

Source	Proportion	2009 - 2010	2010 – 2011
New South Wales	32.5%	\$1,374,578	\$1,513,525
Victoria	10%	\$422,947	\$465,700
South Australia	5%	\$211,474	\$232,850
Queensland	2.5%	\$105,737	\$116,425
Commonwealth <i>(Matching the States contribution)</i>	50%	\$2,497,101	\$2,488,500
Total	100%	\$4,611,837	\$4,817,000

It is also worth noting that APLC only operates within a geographic subset of each of the Member States jurisdiction. Each State retains full responsibility for any intrastate response.

Q3 Senator Nash – Supplier Expenses (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, p. 18*)

What is included under supplier expenses? Provide a breakdown of costs for each category under supplier expenses. Why is there a \$12m increase in supplier expenses?

Answer:

Below is a breakup of supplier expenses into the major supplier expense categories. Note that 2010-11 and beyond are estimated from the 2009-10 breakup for the purpose of this analysis. The actual budget breakup will not be finalised until 2010-11 internal budgets have been considered.

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Corporate Finance Division Q3 (continued)

Supplier Expenses	Estimated Actual 2009-10 \$m	Budget Estimate 2010-11 \$m	Forward Estimate 2011-12 \$m	Forward Estimate 2012-13 \$m	Forward Estimate 2013-14 \$m
Consultancy Services	17.86	18.39	18.40	18.40	18.40
Levies & Grants	8.24	8.49	8.50	8.50	8.50
IT Comms & Office Equip	35.49	36.55	36.50	36.50	36.50
Property & Accommodation	41.04	42.27	42.30	42.30	42.30
BSG Technical Support Services	13.60	14.01	14.00	14.00	14.00
Temporary & Contract Staff	27.10	27.91	28.00	28.00	28.00
Travel	17.67	18.20	18.20	18.20	18.20
Vehicles	7.27	7.49	7.50	7.50	7.50
General Office Supplies	3.74	3.86	3.80	3.80	3.80
Training, Recruitment and staffing costs	12.04	12.40	12.40	12.40	12.40
Transfer to Industry Reserves	20.69				
Other supplier expenses**	27.96	34.34	35.30	33.76	32.44
Total Supplier Expenses	232.70	223.91	224.90	223.36	222.04

Note that industry reserves have been replenished in 2009-10 to offset the impacts of decreased levels in 2008-09.

The increase in general expenses primarily relates to the employee expenses increasing in line with an ASL increase of 52 and the estimated collective agreement increases.

**Other supplier expenses include but are not limited to memberships, conferences, legal, public relations and marketing and publications.

Corporate Services Division

Q4 Senator Colbeck – Staffing changes (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, p. 7*)

Please provide a breakdown of staffing changes across the department, including staff numbers by divisions?

Answer:

Please refer to Attachment A

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Corporate Services Division (continued)

Q5 Senator Heffernan – CSS Superannuation Scheme (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, pp 14–15*)

How many staff are currently eligible for 54/11 retirement under the CSS Superannuation Scheme?

Answer:

The department currently has 319 employees who are members of the CSS. 130 of those are already over 55. Of the 189 under 55, 33 will turn 55 this year. Age and superannuation scheme membership are not reliable predictors of employee retirement.

Q6 Senator Colbeck – Discretionary grants (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, p. 19*)

Please provide a list of discretionary grants.

Answer:

Please refer to Attachment B

Q7 Senator Colbeck/Heffernan/Adams– Graduate program (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, pp 5–6*)

What is the cost implication of recommencing graduate program in 2011.
What is the cost per head? How many trainees/cadets have we had in the past?
How many have been indigenous?

Answer:

Please refer to Attachment C

Climate Change Division

Q8 Senator Macdonald – EC assistance in the Gulf Country (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, pp 19–20*)

How many have applied for EC assistance in the Gulf Country and what has been uptake?

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Climate Change Division Q8 (continued)

Answer:

As at 25 May 2010, QRAA has received five Exceptional Circumstances (EC) Interest Rate Subsidy applications from the Gulf EC area. These applications are under assessment by QRAA. As at 25 May 2010, Centrelink has received 17 Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment applications from the Gulf EC area. Five applications have so far been approved.

Q9 Senator Nash – Building Farm Businesses (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, pp 35–36*)

What sort of practical, on-the-ground things are you expecting from farmers if they come to you and say, 'We'd like this grant of \$60,000. We've done our farm plan. These are the practical things we're going to do on the ground with that money'?

Answer:

Please refer to Attachment D

Q10 Senator Back – EC exit assistance (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, p. 41*)

How many applications were received for EC exit assistance? How many applications were successful?

Answer:

As at 31 March 2010, Centrelink advises 501 EC Exit grant applications were received for the nine months of 2009-10. Of these, 110 applications have been successfully granted. A further 65 applications have been pre-approved by Centrelink but are pending the sale of the farm.

Q11 Senator Heffernan – Animal emissions sites (*Proof Hansard 24/05/10, pp 46–47*)

Please provide details on the animal emissions sites agreed by MLA, including:

- current sites
- the site selection process
- research focus of each site
- membership of the steering committee

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Answer:

The Reducing Emissions from Livestock Research Program (RELRP) has 18 projects coordinated by Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) selected through the Climate Change Research Program's (CCRP) competitive process.

Site selection was based on the location of appropriate research farms and proximity to research institutions for the specific area of study. Details of the focus of each project and site locations is provided below.

National strategies and coordination

This project will ensure overall strategic coordination of RELRP projects, ensure that the program meets national priorities, and provide quantifiable short and long term methane emission reductions from livestock.

This project is coordinated from North Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney – MLA offices.

An individual enteric methane measuring system for ruminants

This project is focused on identifying novel methane measurement technologies from diverse science and industrial sectors, for potential application in the livestock industries.

This project is located at CSIRO Biosciences precinct, St Lucia QLD.

Genetic improvement of beef cattle for greenhouse gas outcomes

This project is focused on the impact of traditional selective breeding, which is the most wide-reaching, permanent and simple tool to mitigate emissions from the extensive cattle sector.

This project is coordinated by the New South Wales Department of Primary Industry located in Orange and has field sites at the Trangie and Armidale research stations.

Breeding low methane emitting sheep and understanding the underlying biology

The focus of this project is to determine the genetic parameters (heritability and genetic correlation) for methane emissions from sheep. In addition, it is investigating the underlying biological basis for the difference between high and low methane production in sheep.

This project has coordination and site locations in Armidale, Perth, Hamilton, St Lucia Brisbane, Deniliquin, Katanning and Glen Innes.

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Climate Change Division Q11 (continued)

Metagenomic analysis of feed utilisation and hydrogen balance for lower emissions

The focus of this project is to use new technologies referred to as 'metagenomics' to understand both the structure and function of the rumen microbiome in northern Australian cattle. Project outputs include constructing a genetic blueprint for Northern Australian cattle.

This project is located at the Queensland Biosciences Precinct, St Lucia Brisbane.

Rumen microbial profiling: A tool to investigate methane mitigation strategies

The purpose of this project is to evaluate feeding, breeding and management strategies to reduce methane production in ruminant systems.

This project is located at the South Australian Research and Development Institute Urrbrae, Adelaide.

Understanding the mechanism behind the antimethanogenic bioactivity of Australian plants in grazing systems

The aim of this project is to investigate a range of fodder plants for their potential to reduce methane emissions from livestock, mainly cattle.

This project has coordination and field sites located in Perth at The CSIRO and the University of WA as well as the CSIRO in St Lucia, Brisbane and Townsville and Victoria Department of Primary Industries.

Reducing methane emissions by supplementing feed with dietary lipids

This project focuses on developing lipid containing feed material that are known to reduce methane generation and are attractive as nutritional supplements due to the high proportion of concentrated energy and protein they contain.

This project is located at the University of Queensland, Gatton and Yeerongpilly Brisbane.

Archaeophage therapy to control rumen methanogens

This project is focused on phage therapy which is being used to control microbial populations and has the potential to be used to reduce methane emissions from ruminants.

This project is located at St Lucia, Brisbane QLD.

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Climate Change Division Q11 (continued)

Novel strategies for enteric methane production

This project is looking at ways to decrease the amount of hydrogen available to reduce methane production, by using chemical techniques.

This project is located at the NSW DPI research stations at Trangie and Grafton, and in Armidale.

Peptide phage display libraries to discover bioactives against rumen methanogens

The focus of this project is to use bioactive peptides to redirect fermentation end products away from methane formation, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions from livestock production systems.

This project is located at St Lucia, Brisbane QLD.

Methanotrophs in natural ecosystems and their role in ruminant methane mitigation

This project aims to characterise methanotrophic microorganisms from a range of environments and determine their metabolic activity.

This project is located at the University of Queensland, Gatton and Yeerongpilly Brisbane.

Microbial ecology of hydrogenotrophic rumen microorganisms in response to methane inhibitors

This project supports a collaboration with the National Institute of Livestock and Grassland Science (NILGS). It is looking at management of hydrogen in the rumen.

This project is located in St Lucia, Brisbane Queensland.

Manure management to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from cattle feedlots

This project is focused on compiling a set of recommendations to feedlot managers on strategies for effective, quantifiable reductions of greenhouse emissions from beef cattle feedlots.

This project has coordination and field sites at Charlton Victoria, Dalby Queensland Dookie Victoria and Melbourne.

Mitigation of methane emissions from the northern Australian beef herd

The main focus of this project is the development of an open-path laser technique for the direct measurement of methane from cattle in extensive grazing systems. In addition, looking at measurement of changes in methane emissions from cattle fed on a range of commonly used tropical legumes.

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Climate Change Division Q11 (continued)

This project is located in Rockhampton and Belmont Queensland.

Enteric methane abatement strategies for ruminant production systems in South-eastern Australia

This project is looking at evaluating forages and dietary supplements for methane mitigation and production impacts, as well as evaluating open path tracer methods for measurement of methane from grazing ruminants.

This project is located at Ellinbank, Hamilton and Terang in Victoria.

Demonstration projects for on-farm practical methane strategies

This project is focused on delivering knowledge and technologies to enable producers to breed and/or manage ruminants to significantly reduce methane emissions.

This project has coordination and field sites located at Hamilton Victoria and Townsville Queensland.

Information and integration and delivery

The focus of this project is to ensure that research methods, results, data and samples are appropriately documented and stored to provide a legacy for ongoing investigation into options for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from ruminant livestock.

This project is located at MLA offices in North Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney.

Members of the Reducing Emissions from Livestock Research Program Steering committee:

Josh Francis (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry)
Michael D'Occhio (University of Queensland)
Ed Charmley (CSIRO)
David Marland (DPI Victoria)
Annette Cowie (University of New England)
Jane Littlejohn (Australian Wool Institute)
Cathy Phelps (Dairy Australia)
Graeme Martin (University of Western Australia)
Beverly Henry (Meat and Livestock Australia)
Julian Hill (MLA/University of Melbourne)
Kathy Ophelkeller (SARDI).

**Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
FTE by Division from 30 June 2009 to 30 April 2010**

Division	30 June 09 FTE	30 Sept 09 FTE	31 Jan 10 FTE	30 April 2010
ABARE*	145.2	133.7	137.82	132.1
Agricultural Productivity	82.1	106.5	117.42	122.3
AQIS	3151.9	N/A	N/A	N/A
BioSecurity Australia	124.0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Biosecurity Services Group	N/A	3302.7	3319.13	3314.1
Bureau of Rural Sciences	119.1	87.3	83.71	83.1
Climate Change	107.2	93.9	104.29	101.7
Corporate Finance	63.6	^80.9	74.54	77.4
Corporate Policy	88.9	^102.8	101.61	105.0
Corporate Services	229.4	^236.9	224.21	229.0
Prod Integrity Animal & Plant Health	162.3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Quarantine & Biosecurity Policy Unit	20.7	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sustainable Resource Management	147.3	142.6	128.08	128.0
Trade & Market Access	101.5	77.3	74.23	72.6
Graduates and Trainees	62.0	62.0	N/A	N/A
Total	4605.1	4426.6	4365.04	4365.3

^Reflects consolidation of corporate functions

* 20 FTEs previously allocated to Bureau of Rural Sciences were moved in the HR system as part of a central Integrated Research branch

N/A = Not applicable – division not in existence at that time.

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**Programs under which grants are paid 2009-10**

- Australia's Farming Future
 - Climate Change Research Program
 - Community Networks and Capacity Building Program
 - FarmReady - Industry Grant Program
- Australian Collaborative Land Use & Management Program
- Australia China Agricultural Technical Cooperation Program
- Australian Pest Animal Management Program
- Caring for our Country – Landcare Facilitator's Initiative
- Caring for our Country - Landcare Program (2009-2010 Community Action Grants)
- Climate Change Asia-Pacific Forestry Skills and Capacity Building Program
- Forest Industries Climate Change Research Fund
- Forest Industries Development Fund Program
- Live Trade Animal Welfare Partnership Program
- National Plant Pest Surveillance Program
- National Weeds and Productivity Research Program
- National Livestock Identification Scheme - Sheep and Goats Program
- Promoting Australian Produce (Major Events) Program
- Promoting Australian Produce Program
- Quarantine Research & Preparedness Program – National Fruit Fly Strategy
- Quarantine Research & Preparedness Program – Plant Pest Diagnostics
- Recreational Fishing Community Grants Program
- Regional Food Producers Innovation and Productivity Program
- Rural Financial Counselling Service Program
- Science and Innovation Award for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (2010)
- Securing our Fishing Future Grants Program
- Wheat Export Technical Market Support Grants Program

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Programs under which entitlements are paid 2009-10

- Exceptional Circumstances (EC) Exit Grant Package
 - Drought Assistance Exit Scheme
 - Drought Assistance Retraining Scheme
 - Drought Assistance Relocation Scheme
- Exceptional Circumstances Professional Advice and Planning Scheme
- Exceptional Circumstances Farmers Interest Rate Subsidies Scheme
- Exceptional Circumstances Small Business Interest Rate Subsidies Scheme
- Climate Change Adjustment Program - Advice and Training Scheme
- FarmReady Reimbursement Scheme
- Transitional Income Scheme ^(a)
- Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment – Farmers
- Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment – Small Business ^(b)

Notes:

- (a) Transitional Income Scheme was originally for a 12-month period from 16 June 2008, but has subsequently been extended twice and will now cease on 30 June 2011.
- (b) Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment Small Business commenced in September 2006 with extended funding to 30 June 2011 approved in the 2010-11 budget.

AttC

2009 Graduate Program

	08-09 financial year	09-10 financial year	Total for 2009 Program	Avg per graduate
Salary costs	\$1,050,868	\$1,050,868	\$2,101,736	\$40,418*
Training costs	\$291,939	\$429,162	\$721,101	\$13,867
Relocation costs	\$228,135	-	\$228,135	\$4,387
TOTAL	\$1,570,942	\$1,480,030	\$3,050,972	\$58,672

*Based on DAFF Band 1 Work Level 2 for 47 weeks in the calendar year.

Note: Costs associated with each graduate program are paid over two financial years.

2011 Graduate Program (based on 70 graduates)

	2010-11 financial year	2011-12 financial year	Total for 2010 Program	Avg per graduate
Salary costs	\$1,762,390	\$1,762,390	\$3,524,780	\$50,354*
Training costs	\$422,000	\$505,900	\$927,900	\$13,256
Relocation costs	\$315,000		\$315,000	\$4,500
TOTAL	\$2,499,390	\$2,268,290	\$4,767,680	\$68,110

*Based on APS 3.3 for 47 weeks in the calendar year.

Indigenous Graduates

There were no identified Indigenous Graduates in 2008 or 2009.

DAFF is currently participating in the APSC Indigenous Graduate selection process and hopes to employ 5 graduates through this method.

4 Indigenous candidates have applied through the DAFF Graduate Program - these 4 have currently been invited to the DAFF assessment sessions.

These 9 indigenous graduates (should they be successful and accept our offer of employment) will be part of the anticipated 70 graduates recruited for 2011.

Indigenous Trainees

There were 3 trainees in the regions in 2008.

It is anticipated there will be 15 Indigenous trainees commencing in 2010. Of those, 12 will be regionally based and 3 in central office.



Australian Government



GOVERNMENT OF
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Building Farm Businesses

Farm business grants to prepare for the future

The Australian Government, in partnership with the Western Australian Government, is conducting a pilot of drought reform measures in part of Western Australia.

The pilot will test a package of new measures developed in response to the national review of drought policy. The measures are designed to move from a crisis management approach to risk management. The aim is to better support farmers, their families and rural communities in preparing for future challenges, rather than waiting until they are in crisis to offer assistance.

The pilot will be in place from **1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011**. Payments made under one measure—Building Farm Businesses—will continue until 30 June 2014.

What is the Building Farm Businesses program?

Building Farm Businesses provides grants of up to \$60 000 per farm business.

The available grants are:

- **Farm Business Adaptation Grants**—up to \$40 000 for eligible activities that support farm businesses to manage and prepare for the impacts of drought, reduced water availability and a changing climate.
- **Landcare Adaptation Grants**—up to \$20 000 for eligible activities that have a natural resource management focus, have a broader public benefit and are consistent with state and national natural resource management priorities.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible for the grants:

- Your farm business must be located in the drought pilot region. A list of the local government areas included in the drought pilot is available at www.daff.gov.au/droughtpilot.
- A member of your farm business must have completed the Farm Planning program, which includes completion of a strategic plan for the farm business.
- The combined total net value of off-farm assets of all members of your farm business must be less than \$750 000.
- At least one member of your farm business must, under normal circumstances, contribute at least 75 per cent of his or her labour to, and derive at least 50 per cent of his or her income from, the farm business and have been a farmer for at least two consecutive years.
- Your farm business must not be receiving Exceptional Circumstances Interest Rate Subsidies in any financial year in which it is receiving funding under Building Farm Businesses.

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Drought Assistance Hotline: 13 23 16

What activities can be funded?

Activities for both of the available grants must be identified as priority activities in the strategic plan that has been developed under the Farm Planning program. On-farm works and capacity building activities that may be considered for each grant include, but are not limited to:

Farm Business Adaptation Grants: eligible activities

General

- Business diagnostics (e.g. benchmarking)
- Training in management skills, capacity and systems (e.g. succession planning)
- Information/knowledge systems
- Identification and development of enterprise diversification opportunities
- Development or revision of an on-farm water management plan
- Costs associated with improving soil quality.

Livestock

- Laneway fencing, livestock watering points, or subdivisional fencing to control the movement and feeding patterns of animals
- Construction of confinement areas for drought feeding
- Purchase/modification of equipment to conserve fodder (e.g. silos and silage pits)
- Pasture improvements and renovation.

Horticulture

- Change to enterprise mix (not including irrigation infrastructure)
- Purchase and upgrades to on-farm processing and packaging systems
- Adoption of on-farm value add techniques
- Waste management systems.

Cropping

- Land monitoring and evaluation (e.g. soil fertility testing)
- Adoption of precision farming techniques (e.g. autosteer tramlining, yield mapping and weedseeker technology)
- Costs associated with applying soil conditioners, such as clay and lime, including modification of equipment for this purpose
- Planning and implementation of cropping to better match types, varieties, enterprise mix or cropping rotations to environmental conditions
- Equipment purchase or modification to help improve sustainability of production (e.g. modification of seeding equipment to reduce tillage).

Landcare Adaptation Grants: eligible activities

Natural Resource Management

- Training in environmental or climate management
- Managing soil salinity through, for example, engineering works or vegetation, and/or managing acidity
- Costs associated with improving soil quality
- Establishment of locally appropriate native species to revegetate degraded farm land
- Native vegetation planting, including tubestock or direct seeding
- Re-fencing to better match property layout with land capability
- Activities associated with revegetation to improve natural resource management outcomes
- Improving floodplain/stream bank/wetland riparian zone management
- Assessment of farm biodiversity, including the identification of species and communities and on-farm conservation values
- Development or revision of an on-farm biodiversity management plan.

For more information

Visit: www.daff.gov.au/droughtpilot

Email: droughtpilot@daff.gov.au

Drought Assistance Hotline: 13 23 16



Australian Government



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Farm Planning

Planning for the future

The Australian Government, in partnership with the Western Australian Government, is conducting a pilot of drought reform measures in part of Western Australia.

The pilot will test a package of new measures developed in response to the national review of drought policy. The measures are designed to move from a crisis management approach to risk management. The aim is to better support farmers, their families and rural communities in preparing for future challenges, rather than waiting until they are in crisis to offer assistance.

The pilot will be in place from **1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011**. Payments made under one measure—**Building Farm Businesses**—will continue until 30 June 2014.

What is Farm Planning assistance?

The Farm Planning program provides financial assistance for farmers to undertake an approved program of training to build skills in business planning. Under the program, farmers will develop or update a strategic plan for their farm business. The Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia will fund and deliver this program.

The training will cover the economic aspects of a strategic plan such as risk management and financial planning, social aspects such as personal and business goals and environmental aspects such as managing the impact of a changing climate on production.

The plan will identify priority activities to improve the management and preparedness of the farm business to respond to future challenges.

Completion of Farm Planning is a prerequisite for accessing grants under the Building Farm Businesses program. Grants of up to \$60 000 may be available under this measure to implement priority activities identified in the strategic plan (check the Building Farm Businesses fact sheet for more information).

For those who make the difficult decision to leave farming, there are a range of other assistance options available under the pilot.

What assistance is available?

Maximum support of \$7500 per eligible farm business is available:

- Up to \$6500 per farm business to develop or update a written strategic plan by participating in approved training sessions. This includes up to \$2500 available to offset the cost of developing the financial components of the strategic plan, including an independent assessment that the implementation of the plan would lead to a more viable farm business. These funds will be paid to the service providers approved by the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia rather than to the farm business.
- Up to \$1000 per farm business, paid by reimbursement, to offset the costs of attendance at training sessions such as travel, accommodation and childcare costs.

Drought Assistance Hotline: 13 23 16

Who is eligible?

To receive support under Farm Planning:

- Your farm business must be located in the drought pilot region. A list of the local government areas included in the drought pilot is available at www.daff.gov.au/droughtpilot.
- At least one member of your farm business must, under normal circumstances, contribute at least 75 per cent of his or her labour to, and derive at least 50 per cent of his or her income from, the farm business.

For more information

Visit: www.daff.gov.au/droughtpilot

Email: droughtpilot@daff.gov.au

Drought Assistance Hotline: 13 23 16

Drought Assistance Hotline: 13 23 16



Australian Government



GOVERNMENT OF
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FARM PLANNING

The Australian Government, in partnership with the Western Australian Government, is conducting a pilot of drought reform measures in a region of Western Australia. Visit the map at www.daff.gov.au/droughtpilot to view the local government areas included in the drought pilot.

The pilot will be conducted from **1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011**. Payments made under one measure—Building Farm Businesses—will continue until 30 June 2014.

1. What is Farm Planning?

Farm Planning is a program under the drought pilot. The program will be delivered by the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia. It aims to enhance farmers' skills in business planning, with a particular focus on managing and preparing for drought and a changing climate.

Farm Planning provides assistance for farmers to undertake an approved program of training to develop or update a written strategic plan for their farm business and to have an independent assessment that implementing the plan would lead to a more viable farm business.

The strategic plan will identify priority activities to assist farmers to manage and prepare for future challenges including the impacts of drought and a changing climate. Under the related Building Farm Businesses program, your farm business may be eligible for grants of up to \$60 000 to help implement these priority activities.

Completion of Farm Planning is a prerequisite for accessing grants under Building Farm Businesses.

Alternatively, should you, during the course of the Farm Planning program, make the difficult decision to leave farming, there are a range of assistance options available under the pilot.

2. What support is available under Farm Planning?

A maximum of \$7500 per eligible farm business is available.

- Up to \$6500 per farm business to develop or update a written strategic plan by participating in approved training sessions. This includes up to \$2500 to offset the cost of developing the financial components of the strategic plan, including an independent assessment that the implementation of the plan would lead to a more viable farm business. These funds will be paid to the service provider rather than to the farm business.
- Up to \$1000 per farm business, paid by reimbursement, to offset the costs of attendance at training sessions such as travel, accommodation and childcare costs.



Australian Government



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

3. Am I eligible for Farm Planning?

To receive support under Farm Planning:

- Your farm business must be located in the drought pilot region. A list of the local government areas included in the drought pilot is available at www.daff.gov.au/droughtpilot.
- At least one member of your farm business must, under normal circumstances, contribute at least 75 per cent of his or her labour to the farm business and derive at least 50 per cent of his or her income from, the farm business.

4. What will the training cover?

The approved program of training under Farm Planning will focus on the development of a written strategic plan for the farm business and will include core sessions on:

- economic components of the business such as financial management, viability and profitability assessment, risk management and marketing
- social components of the business such as personal and business goals, succession planning, and personal and family well-being
- environmental and physical components of the business such as sustainable land management, natural resource management and managing drought and a changing climate.

The strategic plan will also identify priority activities for the farm business. You may be eligible for grants of up to \$60 000, to help implement these activities under Building Farm Businesses, as part of the drought pilot.

5. How does training provided under Farm Planning differ from assistance provided under the associated pilot program, Farm Family Support?

Training under Farm Planning focuses specifically on approved training to develop or update a strategic plan for the farm business. If a farmer under the Farm Family Support program identifies, in consultation with their case manager, a need for a strategic plan the farmer will be directed to the Farm Planning program.

In contrast, Farm Family Support provides assistance to farmers and their families to help them to understand better, and take actions to improve, the financial position of their households. The program provides funding to cover the costs of seeking professional advice and/or undertaking training to support these actions. A wide range of activities may be supported depending on farmers' individual circumstances and development needs. This includes diversification options aimed at increasing other avenues of income or moving out of farming, as well as activities aimed at improving farm profitability.

Training under Farm Family Support does not satisfy the eligibility criteria for grants under Building Farm Businesses.



6. What is involved in the independent assessment of my strategic plan?

Funding is available under Farm Planning for an independent assessment that the implementation of the strategic plan would lead to a more viable farm business.

This step is essential if you wish to apply for grants under Building Farm Businesses.

7. When and where will Farm Planning be available?

The training will be available in the drought pilot region from **1 July 2010**. The specific location and timing of training courses will be available soon.

Participants wishing to apply for grants under Building Farm Businesses will need to have completed their training and the assessment before **31 May 2011** in order to meet the grant application closing date.

8. How long will it take to do the training?

Developing a strategic plan for the farm business from scratch will require you to participate in three to five days of training including group workshops and an opportunity to review the strategic plan individually with a trained facilitator. Training can be run over a number of weeks or months, with timing of individual days to be determined between the training provider and the participants.

9. What if I already have a strategic plan or have done some training?

If you already have a strategic plan or have recently undertaken similar training you may be able to have this recognised. You will need to demonstrate that you are actively using your strategic plan and/or provide evidence of training that you have completed.

10. How do I apply to do the training?

Application details will be available soon.

11. Who will deliver the training?

The Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia will endorse a range of appropriately skilled trainers to deliver the training.

12. Is there a limit on the number of places available for training?

Yes. The Western Australian Government has committed significant funds for this program; however, places will be limited. The program will be managed so that training opportunities are made available across the drought pilot region at appropriate times.

13. Must the training I attend be an approved course?

Yes, the course attended must be approved under Farm Planning. Funding will not be provided for undertaking an unapproved training course.



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14. Where can I get more information?

Farm Planning guidelines will be available soon.

For information on the drought pilot visit www.daff.gov.au/droughtpilot or call the Drought Assistance Hotline on 13 23 16.

Drought Assistance Hotline: 13 23 16