

## Drought Relief Assistance Scheme (DRAS)

# Transport of Livestock To Agistment Freight Subsidy

The Drought Relief Assistance Scheme (DRAS) is offered by the Queensland Government and is administered by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF). The purpose of the scheme is to assist primary producers whose properties are drought declared to manage the welfare of their livestock during drought, and to restore their herds after drought. The Transport of Livestock to Agistment Freight subsidy helps with the cost of sending livestock to agistment from a drought declared property to properties located in the North West shires impacted by the North and Far North Monsoon Trough, 25 January – 14 February 2019. This subsidy is only available until 31 March 2020 to promote recovery to livestock producers impacted by the North and Far North Monsoon Trough, 25 January – 14 February 2019 and to assist drought declared producers transport their stock to agistment. This subsidy is funded by the joint Commonwealth and State Government Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) that provide a diverse range of funding relief measures following an eligible disaster.

### Eligibility

To apply for this subsidy, you **must** meet the following conditions:

- You are a primary producer. For the purposes of this scheme, a primary producer is a person or a partner in a partnership, company or trust who spends more than 50 per cent of their labour on and derives more than 50 per cent of their gross income from, a primary production enterprise.
- You are a property owner, share-farmer or lessee in the grazing industry (beef cattle, sheep, dairy cattle, goats, deer or horses that are not normally hand-fed).
- The livestock were sent to agistment while your property was within a State drought-declared area or had an Individually Droughted Property (IDP) declaration or were sent to agistment in the two-month period immediately prior to drought declaration.
- You did not introduce any livestock on to your property while it was drought declared or in the three month period prior to the drought declaration, including any livestock taken on for agistment.<sup>1</sup>
- The agisted livestock are owned by you.
- The livestock being sent to agistment are being sent to a property located in northwest Queensland in one of the following local government authorities that were impacted by the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough:
  - Burke Shire Council
  - Cloncurry Shire Council
  - Charters Towers Regional Council
  - Carpentaria Shire Council
  - Etheridge Shire Council
  - Finders Shire Council
  - McKinlay Shire Council
  - Richmond Shire Council

<sup>1</sup> The subsidy does not apply when livestock have been introduced or agisted on your drought-declared property except where:

- older core breeding stock have been replaced with female weaners or replacement bulls; or
- a property owner introduces livestock to a drought-declared property from a property under the same ownership but with a different Property Identification Code (PIC) as part of an overall drought-management strategy; or
- you have served a relevant suspension period as outlined in the 'Introduction of livestock – suspension of DRAS' section of this document.

○ Winton Shire Council.

- The livestock were grazed on your property for at least three months prior to their agistment and the livestock will be on agistment for at least two months<sup>2</sup>
- The transport of livestock to agistment follows the most direct practicable route. A distance restriction of 2000 km applies and subsidies will be reduced if this distance restriction is exceeded
- Your application is received in Brisbane within **six months** of the date the livestock were transported to agistment.

***Please note: - Due to COVID-19, an extension of the timeframe for receipt of claims by DAF from 6 months to 12 months will apply to invoices dated from and including 11 September 2019 for claims received from and including 11 March 2020. This extension will be reviewed on 11 September 2020. It does not apply to invoices already submitted to DAF and declined prior to 11 March 2020. This extension was reviewed on 11 September 2020 and will now apply up to 31 December 2020.***

The subsidy applies to:

- The movement of all stock (breeders and non-breeders) to agistment in the 12 months from the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough to properties in northwest Queensland impacted by the natural disaster event.

## **Ineligibility**

The subsidy does not apply:

- to the movement of livestock to a stock route
- to the transport of livestock directly to saleyards or feedlots
- to invoices submitted from entities related to the applicant, such as a family member or company owned by the applicant (for example, livestock moved by a hired carrier owned by the applicant).
- To the movement of stock to agistment to localities other than the above Local Government Areas.

## **Introduction of livestock — suspension from DRAS**

This subsidy does not apply when livestock has been introduced or agisted to your drought-declared property. This includes livestock taken onto a drought declared property that was impacted by the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough.

When this occurs, access to all DRAS assistance measures will be suspended from the date the animals are introduced to the property and for an additional 16 weeks after the livestock, or an equivalent number, have left the property.

Drought declared properties that were impacted by the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough and accept agistment livestock onto their property will be suspended from DRAS. To avoid a suspension properties can revoke from drought before any stock are introduced.

Non-breeders that are returned because they have been genuinely forced off agistment may remain on your drought-declared property for up to one month while further agistment is sought, before the suspension period begins.

Breeders genuinely forced off agistment and returned do not incur the 16-week suspension, provided a statutory declaration is presented with the application that indicates why the animals were forced off agistment. This is approved by DAF on a case-by-case basis.

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<sup>2</sup> Special consideration may be given if the drought status of your property is revoked within two months of the livestock being agisted.

Breeders not forced off agistment that are returned to your drought-declared property can remain on your property for a maximum of four weeks while further agistment is found, without incurring a 16-week suspension.

Weaners up to six months old can be returned to your property while it is still drought declared if weaning facilities are not available on the agistment property. A statutory declaration from the agisting property owner is required to support this.

All suspensions are lifted from the property when the drought declaration is revoked.

## Subsidy rates

Subsidy rates are provided for information purposes only; you do not have to make your own calculations. Subsidies will be calculated by DAF and paid out at the following rates:

<i>Hired carrier</i>	<i>Breeders &amp; their progeny – 50% of the total freight cost</i> <i>Non-breeders – 50% of the total freight cost</i>
<i>Rail</i>	<i>Breeders &amp; their progeny – 50% of the total freight cost</i> <i>Non-breeders – 50% of the total freight cost</i>
<i>Droving</i>	<i>50% of the cost of a hired drover to a maximum of the hired carrier rate for the movement.</i>

All subsidies will be paid out to a maximum charge in line with the current average rates per 12.2 m deck as approved by DAF. Other deck lengths are calculated on a pro-rata basis.

Companies that own the property and use vehicles from a subsidiary company are not eligible.

## How to apply

Application forms are available online at [daf.qld.gov.au](http://daf.qld.gov.au) or can be posted or emailed to you if you contact the Customer Service Centre on 13 25 23. Keep a copy of your tax invoices for your records and submit completed application forms and tax invoices to the DAF Brisbane office at the below address.

Please post applications to:

*Drought Relief Assistance Scheme*  
*Department of Agriculture and Fisheries*  
*Level 6*  
*GPO Box 46*  
*Brisbane Qld 4001*

Or email to: [droughtdeclarations@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:droughtdeclarations@daf.qld.gov.au)

## Supporting documents

DAF is unable to process applications without copies of all tax invoices and waybills or National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) that relate to the transport of the livestock travelling to agistment. Please include copies of all tax invoices with your application. Remember to keep a copy of the application for yourself, as tax invoices and supporting documentation will not be returned to you.

For **hired carrier** transport, please attach freight tax invoices for all livestock movements and waybills for the forward journey to agistment, detailing the number and class of livestock, and the date of movement.

For **rail** transport, please attach all tax invoices and waybills.

For **hired droving**, please attach written evidence of agistment, including:

- number of class of livestock
- period of agistment
- proof of payment of agistment fees
- tax invoice for the droving fees.

## Minimum and maximum payments

The minimum payment for each application is \$25. No payment will be made for any claims under this amount.

The maximum level of financial assistance available under DRAS is initially \$20,000 per property, per financial year. **For the purposes of this scheme, all properties or land parcels included under a single Property Identification Code (PIC) are considered to be one property.** This scheme does not allow the splitting of partnerships, properties or land parcels to access more than the prescribed maximum amount.

The initial \$20,000 limit may be extended to \$30,000 if a Drought Management Plan (DMP) for your property is endorsed by a DAF officer. Once a DMP is endorsed, the \$30,000 ceiling applies to the entirety of the current financial year and subsequent financial years. When a property with an endorsed DMP is in its third or subsequent year of being drought declared, the maximum allowable limit per financial year increases from \$30,000 to \$40,000. When a property with an endorsed DMP is in its sixth and subsequent year of being drought declared, the maximum allowable limit per financial year increases to \$50,000.<sup>3</sup>

Once a drought declaration is revoked, the DRAS ceiling is the level the property was on immediately prior to the revocation of the drought declaration and remains at that level for the period that the property is eligible to apply for DRAS. For example, if a property with an approved DMP was in the third year of being drought declared when the property is revoked the DRAS ceiling is \$40,000.

Properties without a DMP prior to revocation can obtain a DMP, and the DRAS ceiling limit will be \$30,000 regardless of the length of the drought declaration. For example, if a property without a DMP was in its third or subsequent year of drought prior to revocation, the producer can apply for a ceiling extension to the limit of \$30,000.

Where you have received a payment that you are not eligible to receive, DAF reserves the right to pursue reimbursement, which may include reclaiming funds from any future eligible DRAS applications that you submit.

## Processing times

DAF aims to process 90% of claims within 21 working days. Incomplete claims or claims that do not clearly meet the eligibility requirements may take longer. To ensure your claim is processed as quickly as possible, please make sure you have provided all of the required information and that you meet the eligibility criteria.

## Payment method

DAF's preferred method of payment is direct electronic transfer into your bank account; however, you may request payment by cheque. You can indicate on your form which method you would prefer.

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<sup>3</sup> When a property with an endorsed DMP is in its sixth and subsequent year of being drought declared, the maximum allowable limit per financial year increases to \$50,000. This increase is eligible from 1 July 2018 only.



## Assessment

DAF will consider all applications for the transport of livestock to agistment freight subsidy received within **six months** of the date of transport.

Applications will be assessed against the eligibility criteria. DAF reserves the right to request further information from you or from any business or individual you have engaged, to assist in assessing your application and to verify any information provided in your application. Failure to provide such information may result in DAF refusing your application. DAF also reserves the right to refuse an application, at its discretion, for any reason or for no reason irrespective of whether the eligibility criteria have been met.

By applying for the FFSRA you authorise and give consent to the DAF to share and/or obtain information, including personal information, relating to the provision of financial assistance to you, including through a subsidy, grant or other similar program for the provision of funding for similar transport activities from the Queensland Rural Industry Development Authority (QRIDA), the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) and/or Emergency Management Australia (EMA). Please note that DAF, QRIDA, QRA and EMA may also need to cross-reference your information from previous or current financial assistance packages, such as for restocking, replanting or infrastructure, for compliance and reporting purposes.

DAF may consult with members of your local drought committee to assist in assessing your claim.

Applications submitted may be subject to audit by DAF, QRA or their agents, in order to determine compliance with scheme guidelines.

## Fraudulent applications

By signing the application form, you are declaring that the information provided in the application form and supporting documentation is true and accurate. Providing inaccurate, untrue or misleading information may be a breach of criminal law for which serious penalties may apply. If any information provided in an application or supporting documentation is found to be inaccurate, untrue or misleading, legal action may be taken against you, including action to recover the subsidy.

## Appeal and review process

If you are declined DRAS assistance because your claim was received by DAF outside of the eligible time limit, you can request a re-consideration by writing to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and outlining the reasons why your application was late. Payment of a declined claim may be approved at the Minister's discretion, if the Minister considers that there are extenuating circumstances that contributed to the late submission.

If you are declined DRAS assistance because DAF officers believe you do not meet the eligibility criteria (for example, DAF officers believe you do not qualify as a 'primary producer'), you may request re-consideration by writing to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and outlining the reasons why you believe you are eligible and including any additional supporting evidence. Payment of a declined claim may be approved at the Minister's discretion, if the Minister considers that the evidence provided by you demonstrates that you meet the eligibility criteria.

## Producer responsibilities

While this scheme is to help you to manage the welfare of your animals, it does not discharge you from your legal responsibilities under the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*. You should continue to manage the welfare of your animals; either by continuing to destock, by supplementary feeding or by carrying water, until such time as conditions on your property improve.



## Guidelines

These guidelines are correct at the time of publishing. DAF reserves the right to amend, alter or change these guidelines at any time, and it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that they check the relevant website frequently. The guidelines that apply to your application will be the guidelines that are current at the time your application is received by DAF.

While DAF has taken all care in preparing these guidelines, DAF will not be liable in any way for any errors, omissions or variation to information in these guidelines or for not advising an applicant of any errors, omissions or variations to information in these guidelines.

This subsidy is only available for freight movements 12 months after the activation of the local government area for Category D DRFA.

DAF may cancel or suspend this scheme at any time.