



Our Reference: ROUT17/2594

Telephone: 1800 678 593

Mr Cameron Hutchinson
Chair
IGA Review Working Group
GPO Box 858
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Hutchinson

I am writing to you in response to the letter as part of the joint review being undertaken of the Intergovernmental Agreement on National Drought Program Reform (IGA) between the Commonwealth and all state and territory governments which is due to expire on 1 July 2018.

The IGA is an important document that has helped shape a more consistent approach to farmer assistance programs across jurisdictions. The programs in NSW have shifted focus away from emergency in-drought assistance to drought preparedness programs. Transport assistance has largely disappeared other than specific and narrow animal welfare measures that are not dependent on drought.

The IGA is a flexible document that allows NSW Government to introduce appropriate programs to help farmers meet the future challenges of drought and as such does not require overly prescriptive changes to the document.

Collaboration between States has been limited previously and we would suggest that the review take the opportunity to improve cross jurisdictional collaboration between the States, Territories and the Commonwealth Government. Sharing of information between jurisdictions about programs implemented will provide a space for learning and ensure the most effective programs can be duplicated across borders.

As you are aware NSW Government released its NSW Drought Strategy in February 2015 to implement the IGA. This strategy aimed to deliver a more transparent and targeted effective response to drought in NSW in accordance with the IGA.

The NSW Rural Assistance Authority Board appreciates your consultative approach in this review and see this as an important process in assisting the farmers of NSW better prepare for the challenges of adverse seasonal conditions.

Yours sincerely

for
David Palmer
Chair
NSW Rural Assistance Authority

13 October 2017