



## Media Release



Friday, June 24, 2016

### **New central agency for concessional loans welcomed**

Livestock SA has welcomed Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce's announcement this week that a re-elected Coalition would create a new national body to administer the Commonwealth's concessional loans programs.

Livestock SA President Geoff Power says the current situation where concessional loans and the drought recovery loans are administered by each state is unsatisfactory.

"In the South Australia, we have the Federal Government saying 'these loans are available, let's get them out there' and it would seem that the State Government has strict guidelines which makes it nearly impossible for the loans to be accessed," Mr Power said.

"By creating a national body to administer the loans the process should be accelerated. Drought is a national issue so it makes sense that the Federal Government take control.

"If there is a constitutional issue, we encourage Mr Joyce to leave no stone unturned in making this national body a reality. It will ensure fair and equitable access to the loans across the states at times when farmers most need them."

Mr Power said Livestock SA was disappointed that South East producers have been ruled ineligible for concessional loans but in Victoria the loans seem more readily available.

"Now that there has been some rain in the SE, producers there should be able to access the drought recovery loans to enable them to get back into production.

"The loan repayments are interest only for the first five years and then principal and interest for the remaining five years, which would be a great fit for SE producers.

"These loans aren't a gift, they have to be paid back so we are not asking for something for nothing. It's a matter of getting good young producers and people caught in a difficult situation out of it so they can make their businesses profitable again.

"The SE is a highly productive area so it is appropriate for the loans to be available when the region is a significant contributor to the state's economy."

#### **ENDS**

For media interviews:  
Geoff Power, Livestock SA President, 0428 581 067.

More information about the drought recovery loans is available at  
[www.pir.sa.gov.au/primary\\_industry/drought/drought\\_recovery\\_concessional\\_loans](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/primary_industry/drought/drought_recovery_concessional_loans)