

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) – DRFA

What is DRFA-WA and why was it established?

The Commonwealth Government established the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) to assist the recovery of communities who have had their social, financial and economic well-being severely affected by a natural disaster. While primary responsibility for safeguarding and restoring public and private assets affected by natural disasters rests with the owner, who should always plan for the uncertainties of nature, DRFA recognises that disaster affected communities do not always have the resources to provide for their own recovery.

DRFA-WA is the Western Australian component, and is administered by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) on behalf of the State Government.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) administers on behalf of DFES assistance measures to primary producers. What assistance measures can be made available to primary producers under DRFA-WA?

Support measures are made available after a declared event. There are a range of measures that can be invoked for primary producers, including grants to obtain professional advice, assistance with freight costs, assistance with replacing/restoring fencing to preserve public safety, and interest rate subsidies on new borrowings needed to repair damage caused by the declared event.

Who is a primary producer under DRFA-WA?

For the purposes of DRFA-WA, a primary producer is someone who operates a commercial scale farming, pastoral, horticultural or fishing business.

What disasters are covered by DRFA-WA?

For the purposes of DRFA-WA, eligible disaster types include bushfire, cyclone, tsunami, flood, storm, storm surge, meteorite strike, earthquake, landslide and tornado.

How will I know if there are any relief measures available to me?

The Department of Fire & Emergency Services (DFES) will announce whether DRFA-WA has been invoked, specifying the areas eligible and the support measures being provided.

You can also check the websites of the DFES and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) at any time or phone DPIRD on Freecall 1800 198 231.

How long will I have after the disaster to lodge an application?

Applications will be accepted for a period of six (6) months following the declaration date of a disaster. Any variance in the lodgement period will be advertised on the DFES and DPIRD websites.

Can I apply for help if I don't own any farm land?

An applicant must either own the farm land or hold a current minimum five year (60 months) written agreement to sharefarm or lease the property for the purpose of primary production, at the time of the event. If the property is not owned, the applicant must provide a copy of the lease/sharefarming agreement in their application.

Can I claim any assistance for replacing fences if I don't have livestock?

For fencing assistance, applicants must demonstrate that the land was used to hold or agist livestock at the time of the natural disaster and that the fences adjoin a main road.

A property that was used solely for cropping purposes at the time of the disaster resulting in the claim would not be eligible for assistance under the DRFA as the intent of this measure is to ensure public safety. To be eligible, all works must be undertaken as soon as is practicable after the impact of the natural disaster event.

Why do I need to provide a current statement of assets and liabilities if I am just expressing my interest in getting an interest subsidy?

Applicants must demonstrate that funds are not available from within their own resources. It is expected that applicants will have committed all liquid assets and credit sources for normal operation of the business, and will need to access extra borrowings to recover from the disaster. This will be assessed mainly from a Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at the time of application. Should your Statement be lacking in relevant details, you will be asked to provide additional information to support your application.

What do I do if I don't have a current Statement of Assets and Liabilities?

If your latest Statement of assets and liabilities is more than 6 months old, it is recommended you prepare an updated one for submission with your application. Your Statement of assets and liabilities should be based on market value of assets and actual value of liabilities (at the time of lodging your application) of all partners, shareholders, beneficiaries - the Statement should not be based on tax financial statements.

Should your Statement be lacking in relevant details, you are likely to be asked to provide additional information that may include balance sheets and financial statements for the farm enterprise including profit and loss statements, trading account and depreciation schedules etc., to support your application.

Is there a template I can use for the Statement of Assets and Liabilities?

A template is available under the documents section of the DPIRD DRFA-WA web page. You should save the file to your computer with your business name as the file name. Type in your details where applicable and upload the document when you lodge your application via the online system.

How do I apply for a grant?

Complete the DRFA-WA Primary Producer Package Application form online (using the link under the links section of the DPIRD web page) and upload all relevant documents within six (6) months of the declared date of the event. Relevant documents include suppliers' tax invoices and receipts and/or any other documents that verify the expenditure and payments.

Should your grant be approved, you will be required to provide your tax invoice to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (ABN 18 951 343 745) for the approved amount. Reimbursement payments for professional advice, freight costs, fencing or other measures will be paid direct to your nominated bank account.

When you submit your application, you will be consenting to DPIRD and/or DFES to seek any additional relevant information that may be required to assess and process your application.

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Also see the DFES web link www.dfes.wa.gov.au/recovery/Pages/Primary-Producers.aspx