



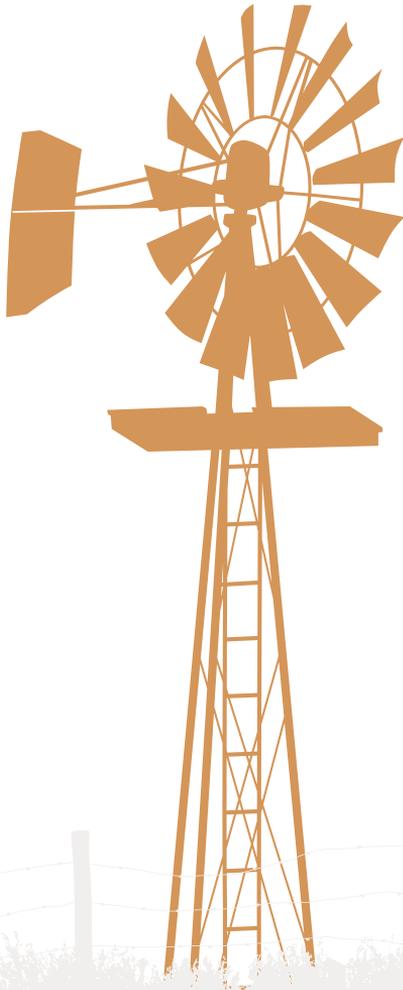
Drought and Flood Agency  
**Corporate Plan**  
2020-21 to 2023-24



Australian Government  
National Drought and North Queensland  
Flood Response and Recovery Agency



*Cover Image: The Galton family from Gunnedah, NSW, after some welcome rain  
(Image credit: AAP)*



## Table of Contents

Message from the Coordinator-General	2
Our Purpose	4
Our Objectives	4
Our Guiding Principles	4
Our Values	5
Our Operating Context	13
Our Risk Oversight and Management	15
Our Capability	18
Our Performance	20

**Locally led.  
Locally understood.  
Locally implemented.**

# Message from the Coordinator-General

I am pleased to present the National Drought and North Queensland Flood Response and Recovery Agency (the Drought and Flood Agency) Corporate Plan for 2020 to 2024.

With the unprecedented impacts of drought, flood, bushfires and COVID-19, it's imperative that communities are supported by people who understand the unique challenges of living in the regions. My team will walk alongside these communities for the many years it takes to recover, rebuild and prepare for future challenges.

The Drought and Flood Agency, through its work since early 2019 in the North Queensland flood zone, and following its expanded remit to include drought in December 2019, has proven to be an excellent model for on-the-ground delivery of support in regional Australia. I, along with my staff, have turned up and listened to people's needs, provided information and advice on how to access Australian Government assistance measures and acted to ensure communities are appropriately supported in the short, medium and long term. The Agency will continue over the coming years to build on the extensive work achieved in the regions to date.

As an Agency we understand that the issues affecting economic recovery in regional communities are complex. We see the bigger picture, adapt our approach to reflect changing circumstances, and empower communities by ensuring the work we undertake remains *'Locally led, locally understood and locally implemented.'* We continue to use our influence and congestion-busting approach to *'Work together. Simplify. Act.'*

Our long-term goal is not just to help communities recover, but to build back stronger and give those living and working in the regions the tools they need to better prepare for future droughts, floods and other threats to their business' viability and way of life.

The Agency recently took carriage of the National Drought Map – an interactive online tool to assist farmers and the agricultural sector in decision-making processes. We are also soon to launch Recovery Connect – a website where people living anywhere in Australia can find all the support available and relevant to them for a range of events, including drought and flood, in one convenient location.

The Agency remains committed to a 'boots on the ground' approach, because we know it works. Regional Recovery Officers have been recruited from, and are based in, communities across Australia to serve as champions for their region, working with people to access the support and information needed to help them prosper.

Our Regional Recovery Officers play a key coordination role, working with all levels of government, health professionals, small businesses, charities, agricultural and community organisations to ensure the Australian Government is delivering coordinated and effective on-the-ground assistance. The regional team also provide a voice for people living outside of the larger cities directly into the Agency to ensure that local ideas and feedback are regularly being delivered to the highest levels of government.

When I appeared before the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements in June 2020, I emphasised the importance of being there for the long haul, engaging directly with people, hearing their stories first hand, and developing trust by being a reliable and constant presence within affected communities. We cannot expect to fully appreciate their situation unless we are prepared to immerse ourselves in the same environment.

It has been 18 months since the 2019 North Queensland flood event and we have finalised a blueprint for the region's long-term recovery and future prosperity. The lessons we take from the flood event will continue to inform our work supporting regional communities for a range of future challenges they face.

While we have seen some pleasing rain in recent times in parts of the country, the impact of drought is not over, and our response, recovery and preparedness efforts must be maintained.

This Corporate Plan shows our progress to date and outlines how the Agency will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with people in the regions to develop and implement strategies for the long-term viability and prosperity of regional and remote Australia.

## Statement of Preparation

I, as the Accountable Authority of the National Drought and North Queensland Flood Response and Recovery Agency (Drought and Flood Agency), present the 2020-21 Drought and Flood Agency Corporate Plan, which covers the periods of 2020-21 to 2023-24, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.



### **The Hon. Shane L Stone AC QC**

Coordinator-General and Chairman

National Drought and North Queensland  
Flood Response and Recovery Agency



*The Hon. Shane L Stone,  
Coordinator-General*

*Photo Courtesy Scott Gelston  
The Examiner*

# Our Purpose

The purpose of the Drought and Flood Agency is to provide strategic leadership and coordination of the Australian Government's response and recovery assistance to communities affected by drought and the 2019 Monsoon Trough. The Agency advises Government on the timeliness, effectiveness and delivery of existing programs, as well as strategies that enable communities to be better positioned to respond to future droughts and natural disasters.

## Our Objectives

### Response and Recovery

Coordinate, communicate and collaborate with stakeholders to enable the delivery of Australian Government support to affected families, primary producers, businesses and communities so that they can recover from the impacts of the drought and 2019 Monsoon Trough.

### Consult and Advise

Engage with stakeholders to inform the development of advice to the Government on Australian Government policies and measures which enable families, primary producers, businesses and communities to be better positioned for future droughts and natural disasters.

## Our Guiding Principles

Our guiding principles put those impacted at the centre of solution design and implementation. Our work is:

**"Locally led, locally understood and locally implemented",**

where we use our influence and congestion busting approach to:

**"Work together. Simplify. Act".**

We have demonstrated that the best people to decide how and what is needed to get through adversity and shape their future in regional and rural localities are the people who live there.

Our purpose and guiding principles, when taken together, are a clear statement of the Agency's vision – to provide strategic leadership and effective coordination for the Australian Government's response to drought and flood impacted communities, as well as providing stakeholder-centric advice to Government that streamlines processes and informs decision making in relation to long term preparedness.

Further, this positions the Agency as the centralised body providing a coordinated whole-of-government approach to information and advice. This approach requires ongoing collaboration with drought and North Queensland flood affected individuals, businesses and communities to ensure that their voices remain central to the recovery, response and preparedness processes.



## Our Values

Our work has a real impact on the lives of Australians, particularly those living in rural and regional areas. The Coordinator-General and Agency staff engage regularly and work closely with primary producers, local communities, charities, small business, industry organisations and all levels of government.

The Agency's values set out our standard of behaviour and what stakeholders can expect to see when they interact with the Agency. The Agency's values are:

### Work Together

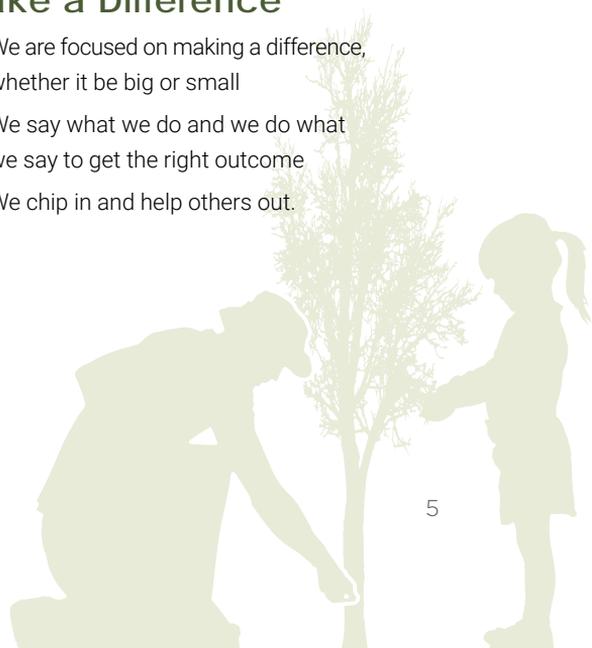
- We have a boots on the ground approach to better understand what it's like firsthand
- We make an effort to understand individual circumstances, and then share our insights to influence others
- We are authentic and compassionate and aim to empower others.

### Get Stuff Done

- We are flexible and make informed decisions quickly
- We are courageous in our thinking and are not bogged down in process
- We are accessible, contactable and responsive.

### Make a Difference

- We are focused on making a difference, whether it be big or small
- We say what we do and we do what we say to get the right outcome
- We chip in and help others out.



# Our Activities

**Coordinate** with partners and stakeholders, including Local Governments, community groups, not-for-profit and advocacy groups, to deliver assistance to affected families, primary producers, businesses and communities.

**Communicate** with affected families, primary producers, businesses and communities to provide them with information on the support available, and preparedness strategies for the future.

**Engage, Consult and Collaborate** with stakeholders to understand their experiences, requirements and concerns, and inform the streamlining of processes and development of future policy settings and deliverables.

**Advise** Government, using reliable data and information, on drought and North Queensland flood conditions, to support the optimisation of Australian Government assistance for recovery and long term preparedness.

In fulfilling its purpose, the Agency plays a key role in providing strategic leadership and coordination of the Australian Government’s North Queensland flood and national drought response and recovery efforts in affected regions across Australia.

The Agency also seeks to become a more data-driven organisation and is investing in maturing our organisational data management capability, to better support our strategic leadership and coordination role.

The Agency works collaboratively with affected communities, Local Government Areas (LGAs), State and Territory governments, Australian Government agencies, primary producers and the not-for-profit sector to enable improved access to Australian Government support, as well as consulting local communities to identify and design appropriate and effective mechanisms for recovery and long- term strategies to enable them to be better positioned to respond to future drought and natural disasters.

By being on-the-ground with the affected communities, and working alongside delivery agencies, the Agency is well positioned to advise Government on how existing and new Australian Government policies and programs can best contribute to the recovery and preparedness efforts.



Figure 1: Relationship between the Agency’s functions

# Providing National Leadership and Coordination

## The National Drought

Primary producers and regional communities know that managing through drought can be challenging. Droughts are an enduring part of the Australian landscape, and the current drought will not be the last.

The environmental impacts of the current drought have been severe. 2019 was Australia's warmest and driest year ever recorded. The mean temperature for the 10 years from 2010 to 2019 was the highest on record. Severe rainfall deficiencies plagued every state and territory for the 24 months up to December 2019.

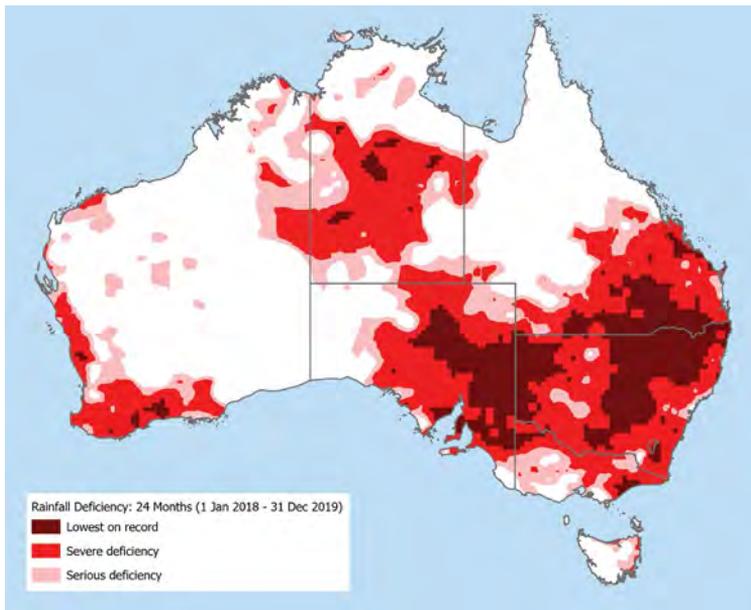


Figure 2: 24-month rainfall deciles up to 31 December 2019

In terms of the economic impact, average farm business profit is expected to be down \$88,000 between 2017-18 and 2019-20 due to the drought. In New South Wales alone, average 2019-20 broadacre farm business profit is projected to be the lowest recorded in over 40 years. Meanwhile, agricultural exports fell from \$49 billion in 2017-18 to \$43 billion in 2019-20.

Across Australia, the national sheep flock and cattle herd levels are at historic lows. At June 2020, estimates place the national flock at 63.5 million head – the lowest level in over a century. The national herd is also estimated to have contracted by almost 12% over the extended drought period, reducing to historic low levels last seen in the early 1990s.

To support farmers, small businesses and regional communities, it is critical that all levels of government, industry, not-for-profit organisations and communities themselves collaborate to respond to the current drought and better prepare for future droughts.

The Agency provides strategic leadership and coordination by actively managing and reporting on the 2018 National Drought Agreement (NDA), reviewing the efficacy and gaps of existing Australian Government drought measures, and striving for harmonisation and positive outcomes for drought initiatives across state and territory boundaries. The Agency is working with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment to generate a long-term NDA



reporting framework in 2020-21. The Agency will also lead and develop the first NDA report in 2020-21, and provide annual reports to the Agriculture Ministers' Forum (AGMIN) thereafter.

The Australian Government's Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan (the Plan) sets out a vision for drought management and investments. The Agency is responsible for overseeing the Plan, including funding decisions, key milestones and delivery risks. The Agency is responsible for reporting on the Plan's implementation annually to the Cabinet from 2020-21 onwards.

The Agency manages a range of forums that bring together stakeholders, including the AGMIN Drought Working Group, the biannual Minister's Roundtable on Drought and ongoing not for profit sector roundtables. Working collaboratively with affected groups provides opportunities to better design, coordinate and deliver effective initiatives, while also helping communities better position themselves and respond to future droughts.

The Agency plays a pivotal role in providing advice on Australian Government policies and programs, to continuously improve the way in which drought assistance is provided. In 2019-20, the Agency undertook a forensic review into the Government's drought response, looking into the 25 measures that made up more than \$8 billion in assistance and concessional loans since 2018-19. The Agency reviewed the consistency of the measures against key frameworks, such as the NDA, the Plan and international principles. We also reviewed the effectiveness of the suite of measures as a whole, and identified opportunities to strengthen our support. Following this review, the Agency will work to address any gaps identified in the Government's drought response from 2020-21 onwards.

Part of this work will include developing a more consistent approach to defining when regions move into, and out of, drought. This includes enhancing climatic, social and economic indicators that can help determine eligibility for drought support programs. Generating a suite of indicators that can better guide policy makers will, in turn, create better targeted programs that support our farmers, communities and regional industries.

The Agency has also recently assumed responsibility for developing the National Drought Map, an online tool that brings together climate, spatial and population data, as well as information about available government assistance. The Agency is currently building the capability of the mapping tool to provide impacted communities with real-time, high quality information on more drought-related services. Over the period of this Corporate Plan, we will continue to increase the information available through this tool, while also creating a more user-friendly and accessible platform.

## North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough 2019

The North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough (25 January – 14 February 2019) (the 2019 Monsoon Trough) caused widespread flooding, low temperatures and high winds across North, Far North and Western Queensland. This was an unprecedented event exacerbated by several precursor years of drought.

The 2019 Monsoon Trough impacted 39 shires in total, covering more than 100 million hectares (an estimated 56 per cent of Queensland's land mass). Accumulated rainfall in Townsville alone exceeded 1,200 mm over a 10-day period. The key areas of focus for the Agency have been the 14 LGAs most impacted by the event: Burdekin, Burke, Carpentaria, Charters Towers, Cloncurry, Douglas, Etheridge, Flinders, Hinchinbrook, McKinlay, Richmond, Townsville, Whitsunday, and Winton.

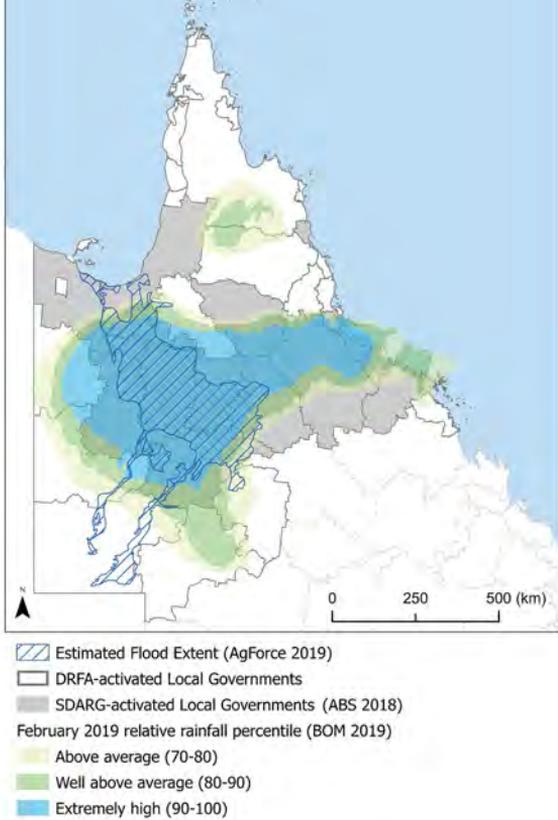


Figure 3: Map of affected regions of North, North West and Far North Queensland (2019 Monsoon Trough)

The region suffered substantial losses, totalling an estimated \$5.68 billion in social and economic costs. The flooding, wet conditions and cold weather in north-west Queensland caused the death of an estimated 457,000 head of cattle, 43,000 sheep, 710 horses and over 3,000 goats across 11.4 million hectares.

There were also significant losses to cropping and horticulture businesses and extensive damage to critical infrastructure, including at least 22,000 km of fencing and 29,000 km of farm roads and tracks destroyed or damaged in conjunction with riverine and landscape erosion. Damage to roads and essential public assets was around \$800 million and direct impacts to small business was estimated to be many tens of millions of dollars.

A central role of the Agency is the coordination of information on all 2019 Monsoon Trough measures across the Australian Government, as well as monitoring the progress of those measures.

The Agency continues to provide this information through a monthly report to government.

Under the National Partnership Agreement (NPA) with the Queensland Government on the Restocking, Replanting Infrastructure Grants (RRIG) program, the Agency will continue to co-chair the monthly steering committee meetings with the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment, the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) on the grants program.

These grants are used to help secure the long-term viability of disaster-affected primary production enterprises by helping producers in their recovery from the 2019 Monsoon Trough. The role of the steering committee is to monitor progress of the RRIG program as well as conditions on the ground. The steering committee is well positioned to identify any genuine challenges, barriers or issues around grant uptake and work to resolve these. The Agency will ensure an independent review of the RRIG program is conducted six months prior to expiry of the NPA on 30 June 2021.

One key deliverable has been the development of a strategy for long-term recovery following the 2019 Monsoon Trough (the Strategy). In close consultation with the affected communities, the Strategy delivers a vision for a prosperous future and is designed as a blueprint that the affected regions, government, non-government and industry can use to drive investment in the future.

The Strategy highlights five strategic priorities, including: the need to broaden the regions' economic base; build more resilient infrastructure (including water infrastructure); support prosperous enterprises, foster connected and cohesive communities; and improve the quality and accessibility of information to support decision-making by those in the region.

While the 2019 Monsoon Trough has been the catalyst for the development of this Strategy, the five strategic priorities can be used as a blueprint for the recovery from, and to strengthen resilience for, a range of future shocks – whether that be from another flood, drought, fire or other economic disruption such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The success of the Strategy will rely on its effective implementation as the Agency continues to work closely with a number of other Australian Government departments to facilitate the timely design and delivery of a range of other assistance measures.

The Agency proposes to work with relevant stakeholders to support implementation of the Strategy under two Implementation Working Groups

(IWGs) – one for the north-east and one for the north-west of Queensland. The IWGs will comprise members across government, non-government, community and industry ensuring representation of local expertise and experience to ensure that their voices remain central to the recovery process.

The IWGs will ensure communities and governments use local knowledge and expertise to identify and develop fit-for-purpose actions and facilitate information sharing to support the regions they represent. The Agency is aiming for quarterly meetings of the IWGs with a joint meeting of the two IWGs to be convened annually.

The Agency remains committed to helping empower local people to actively participate in this process.

## Collaboration, Cooperation and Engagement

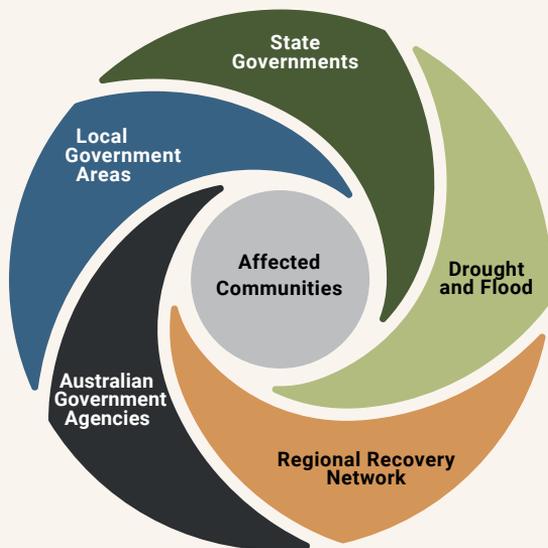


Figure 4: Drought and Flood Agency's Relationships across all levels of government

Key to the Agency successfully delivering on its purpose is the extent to which it effectively collaborates with all stakeholders involved in facilitating the timely and effective response, recovery and ongoing preparedness of affected regions.

The Agency will continue to coordinate efforts by working closely with our key stakeholders and also foster new relationships through our Regional Recovery Officer network, identifying opportunities to meet common objectives, including the provision of advice on whether measures are appropriately targeted, timely and effective, both in the short and long term.

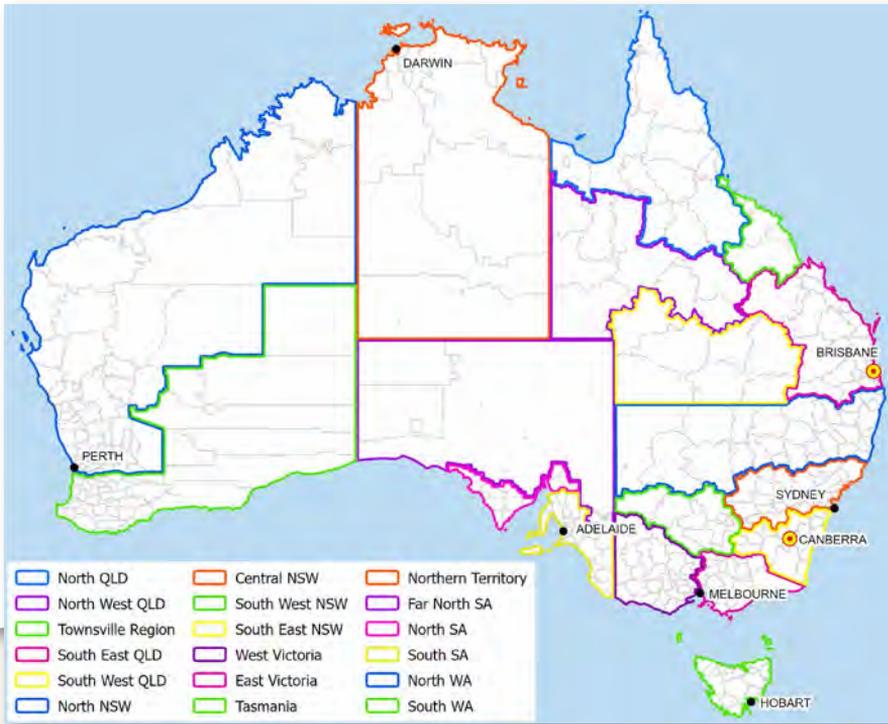


Figure 5: Regional Recovery Officer Locations

Over the period of this Corporate Plan, the Coordinator-General, Agency staff and the Regional Recovery Officer network will undertake regular travel across the regions (adhering to COVID-19 travel restrictions) to talk to drought and flood affected communities, listening to their views and experiences, providing information about existing Australian Government support and assistance measures and linking people with the relevant program information and application process.

### Regional Recovery Officer Network

The Regional Recovery Officer network works directly with rural communities across Australia. The network works closely on the ground with other Australian Government agencies such as the Rural Financial Counselling Service, Regional Investment Corporation, Australian

Tax Office and Services Australia to assist people impacted by flood and drought. This ensures farmers and businesses in affected areas are aware of Australian Government drought initiatives and how to access them, that they receive the correct information and advice for their individual circumstances, and that they have the opportunity to provide local feedback for government about how to better prepare for and withstand future challenges. The officers also provide advice on a range of Australian Government assistance that is available for rural and regional communities.

The Regional Recovery Officers are an important conduit between people in our regions and the Australian Government, providing a direct voice from the regions to the Coordinator-General and his team. The Agency regularly reviews the footprint of the Regional Recovery Officers network and adjusts as necessary.

## Community Outreach

Drought community outreach events are a partnership between the Agency and Rotary Australia World Community Service (Rotary) that bring together farmers and community members to access information, raise awareness and increase uptake of drought support measures. Under this initiative, Australian Government agencies, in partnership with state government agencies and non-government organisations, travel to regional communities to assist farming households and small businesses.

The events provide face-to-face confidential conversations for farmers and community members seeking information on how to access Australian Government drought initiatives, COVID-19 support and whole-of-government regional assistance measures. Events also provide an opportunity for the Agency to learn what policy and program settings are working well, where improvements are required and to identify gaps in existing drought support and recovery measures.

The Agency also leads the Drought Communication and Engagement Cross-Government Group which aims to ensure consistent communications and information across all levels of government, the National Farmers' Federation and charities to ensure awareness of, and ease of access to, government assistance and services.

## Data and Information

Data and information are key to our role. Throughout the life of this Corporate Plan, the Agency will continue to develop its Information and Communications Technology capability to better meet the needs of its staff and stakeholders.

Our Information Management Framework will form the foundation and is based on robust and efficient information gathering and management activities. Specifically, the Agency will:

- Work to improve the quality and nature of information available to support decision making by individuals, businesses and communities
- Reduce duplication and improve the evidence base to support policy development, and
- Simplify and tailor access to information on available assistance and services delivered by all levels of government and other key organisations such as charities.

Achievement of these objectives will be primarily delivered through the development and enhancement of the following systems:

- National Drought Map – providing access to spatial data from Australian Government agencies to support planning and risk management activities.
- Recovery Connect – a location-based service finder connecting users to all levels of government and charity services based on their address or device location, and
- Client Relationship Management system – supporting tailored communications with external stakeholders and a comprehensive view of our interactions with them, as well as issues raised. It will also allow Regional Recovery Officers to engage more effectively with affected communities.

# Our Operating Context

Drought and natural disasters are an ongoing feature in the Australian landscape and much of the Agency's work is twofold – assisting with the immediate response and longer term recovery, and ensuring those impacted are better prepared for future events.

## COVID-19

Over the period of this Corporate Plan, front of mind for the Agency is the uncertainty and challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have also exacerbated the impacts of the flood and drought on regional communities. For example, some small businesses that were only just reopening following the monsoon trough have had to close again or had decreased revenue due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted, and will continue to impact, on how the Coordinator-General, Agency staff and the Regional Recovery Officer network engage with drought and flood affected communities. To address this, the Agency remains in close contact with

stakeholders in drought and flood affected regions to ensure they continue to feel supported and to remind them that they haven't been forgotten.

Where travel is restricted, community engagement continues over the phone, via social media and through regular communiques. Where travel restrictions have allowed, we have also relocated staff for extended periods to support the work of the Agency.

In relation to the Agency itself, a Pandemic Plan has been implemented to ensure the continuity of its operations, and the Agency will work closely with relevant government agencies and other stakeholders to ensure the needs and concerns of rural and regional communities continue to be heard.



# Challenges and Opportunities

In a constantly changing landscape, it is critical that the Agency maintains visibility of the full context of the environment that we operate in. Through our planning process, the Agency has identified challenges and opportunities that may impact or influence our delivery over the

period of this Corporate Plan. These will inform decisions when prioritising our activities to ensure we adequately address risks, or equally seize any opportunities.

## Opportunities

- Identifying, designing and delivering simple, concise and more accessible data to better meet the needs of individuals, businesses and communities, such as the National Drought Map, to better inform policy development
- Assisting the Australian Government better understand what policy and program settings are working well, where improvements are required and to identify gaps in drought support and recovery measures
- Establishing operational arrangements that are scalable and efficient through sourcing relevant public and private sector expertise and leveraging the Regional Recovery Officer network as a direct conduit between people in the regions and the Australian Government, and
- Coordinating community outreach events that bring together government agencies, non-government organisations, farmers and community members to share information, raise awareness and increase uptake of support measures.

## Challenges

- Our target stakeholders are not able to access the assistance mechanism(s) in a timely manner due to shortfalls in engagement and/or administrative arrangements, resulting in poor outcomes for them and reputational damage for the Australian Government
- The lack of reliable data impacts our ability to inform policy and evaluate performance.
- The cascading effects of multiple and more frequent disasters, including COVID-19, limits our ability to engage and as a result we lose momentum and focus on the issues we are advocating for, and
- We are not able to attract and retain adequate resourcing and capabilities resulting in the Agency not being able to effectively deliver its objectives.



Figure 6: Drought and Flood Agency 2020-21  
Opportunities and Challenges

# Our Risk Oversight and Management Governance

The Agency's governance structure is shown in Figure 7.

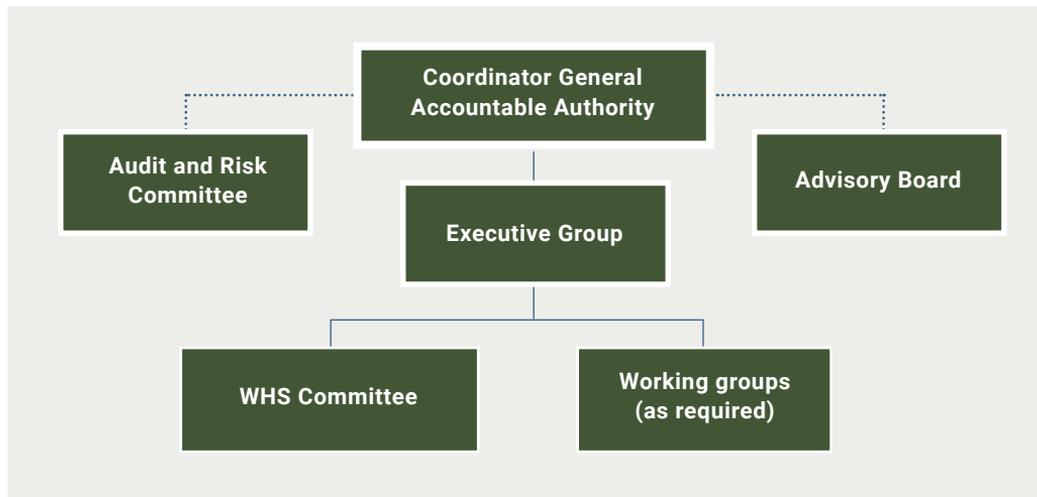


Figure 7: Drought and Flood Agency Governance Arrangements

The **Executive Group** comprises of the Coordinator-General, Chief Operating Officer and Executive Directors. The role of the Executive Group is to govern and provide leadership to the Agency in accordance with its outcome, purpose and objective. Executive Group considers matters that are of whole-of-agency significance and where there is interdependence between groups.

Where required, the Executive Group will set up **Working Groups** which bring together specific skills to address an opportunity, challenge or issue.

The **Advisory Board** comprises members with on-the-ground industry knowledge, as well as experience in government and non-government organisations. The Board plays a vital role in providing expert advice to the Coordinator-General.

The **Audit and Risk Committee**, established in compliance with Section 45 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, provides independent advice to the Coordinator-General on the Agency's financial and performance reporting responsibilities, risk oversight and management, and system of internal control.

The **Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee**, established in compliance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth) (WHS Act) and the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Cth) WHS Regulations is the Agency's overarching work health and safety governance body.



Advisory Board July 2020

## Risk Management

The Agency's effectiveness requires an active approach to managing risk in order to achieve our purpose, and minimise administrative congestion, in an environment that is constantly evolving.

Risk is managed in accordance with the *Commonwealth Risk Management Policy*, with our enterprise risk management framework encouraging a structured yet agile risk management philosophy, based on sound judgement and the best information available. This enables the Agency to identify, manage and derive maximum benefits from new opportunities in the pursuit of our purpose while effectively managing risks.

The Coordinator-General has overarching responsibility for the Risk Management Framework, which includes setting the Agency's risk appetite. The Coordinator-General is supported by the Executive Group, the Chief Risk Officer, a central risk function and key governance committees to embed a positive risk culture. Risk management is also integrated into our business planning and operations to ensure informed decision making. Responsibility for strategic and key operational risks is assigned to individual senior executive officers, who report to Executive Group and the Audit and Risk Committee.

Together, these provide appropriate mechanisms for proactively identifying and treating risks and for ongoing monitoring of the operating environment. To build on our existing internal practice for managing and monitoring risk, the Agency will investigate an enterprise risk management system that facilitates improved ownership, assessment, treatment, monitoring and reporting of risks.

## Our approach to managing risk

Taking a tailored approach to risk management (depending on the risk) is critical to designing appropriate strategies and controls that enable the mitigation or pursuit of risk in line with the Agency's objectives.

In particular, we accept that the nature of the Agency's work: exposes us to uncertainty from a number of external factors; relies on the strength of our relationships with entities across all levels of government as well as the private and not-for-profit sectors; and demands a focus on agility and innovation.

As such, risk engagement is critical to our success. We cannot eliminate risk from our activities, but rather we must engage with and respond to risk in a way that is proportionate to the circumstances and consequences of the risk materialising. In many parts of our operations, risk comes with opportunity, and we are mindful that risk mitigation strategies need to be designed to ensure that opportunities are not missed as a result of risk aversion.

## Our strategic risks

The Agency's strategic and day-to-day operations rely upon our ability to collaborate and coordinate with the wide array of stakeholders who contribute to an understanding, and the delivery, of the Australian Government's response and recovery efforts in affected rural and remote regions. As such, significant effort is devoted to addressing our strategic risks, which include:

- We fail to effectively lead, coordinate and collaborate with stakeholders in the design and delivery of Australian Government assistance for drought and the 2019 Monsoon Trough, and
- Our engagement with affected communities, including through relevant stakeholders, fails to assist them respond and recover from the immediate impacts, and be better prepared for future droughts and natural disasters.

Ensuring that we adequately support our Regional Recovery Officers when they are on the road, to ensure their ongoing safety and wellbeing, presents a key operational risk for the Agency and one which is actively managed.

In addition, consistent with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework, the Agency has undertaken a fraud risk assessment to identify the key fraud risks for the Agency to actively manage in line with its Fraud Control and Corruption Control Plan 2019-22.

Preventing the realisation of risks at all levels is crucial, as they have the potential to inhibit the Agency from best supporting affected individuals, families, primary producers, businesses and communities in recovering from the effects of the drought and the 2019 Monsoon Trough, and their ability to respond to future events.

We mitigate these risks through:

- Direct engagement with stakeholders to clarify assumptions and on-ground conditions, and establish what assistance is most valued and when
- Building strong, respectful and value-add relationships with stakeholders to optimise respective goals. These relationships have been formed through face-to-face interactions, but as we move through uncertain times we need to explore other collaborative platforms and continue to be agile and responsive in our engagement
- Building effective systems to improve access to information and services for affected families, primary producers, businesses and communities, and
- Progressing long-term financial sustainability and the required workforce capabilities to achieve the Agency's outcomes.



# Our Capability

## Our People

Our people are critical to delivering on our purpose and objectives. The Agency's values and our strong community focus gives our staff a genuine connection with the communities and stakeholders we work with.

Developing and strengthening organisational capability is, and will continue to be, a priority for the Agency. To ensure we deliver on government priorities in line with community expectations and prepare for future opportunities, we will invest in our workforce, and build capability through our values, our people, processes and systems.

As a newly established entity, the Agency has prioritised the development of a workforce plan and capability strategy to ensure it has the right people, skills and capabilities on the ground to effectively deliver on our purpose. The focus for 2020-21 will be on further developing the following capabilities:

- Data and digital literacy
- Stakeholder engagement and collaboration
- Leadership
- Wellbeing and Mental Health, and
- Specialist training in disaster response, resilience and preparedness.

Our current staff profile represents a diversity of backgrounds with many staff having connections to rural and regional areas.

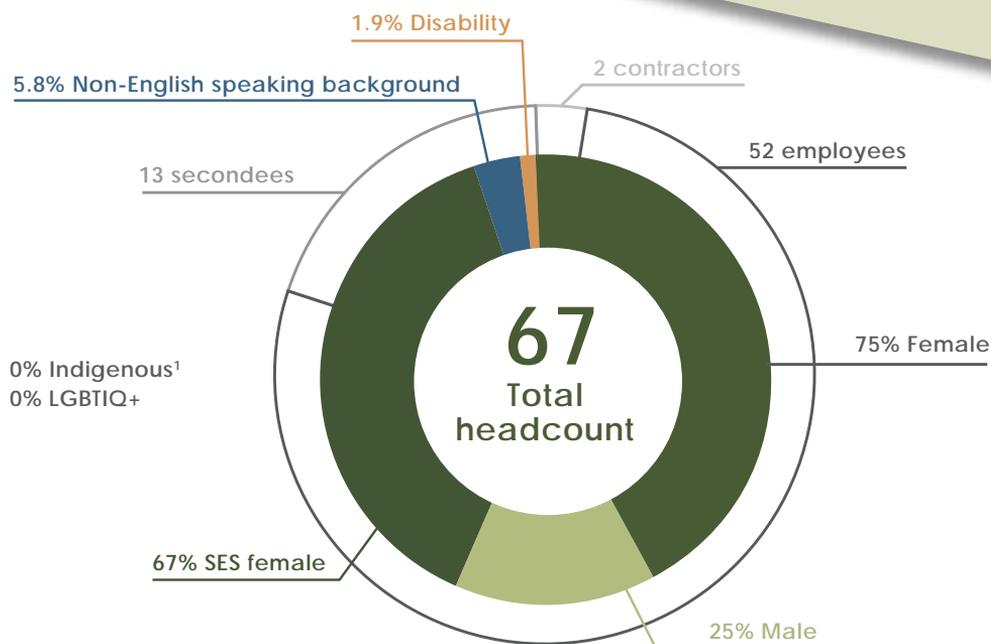


Figure 8: Staffing representation as at 1 July 2020

<sup>1</sup> Does not include those staff who choose not to identify as Indigenous

As a small Agency we have the ability to work flexibly to integrate our work and personal commitments. We have the opportunity to use our skills, share our experiences and learn along the way. Our demonstrated ability to be responsive, agile and remain highly productive in uncertain times, confirms the strong can-do culture and ethos displayed by our people.

## Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

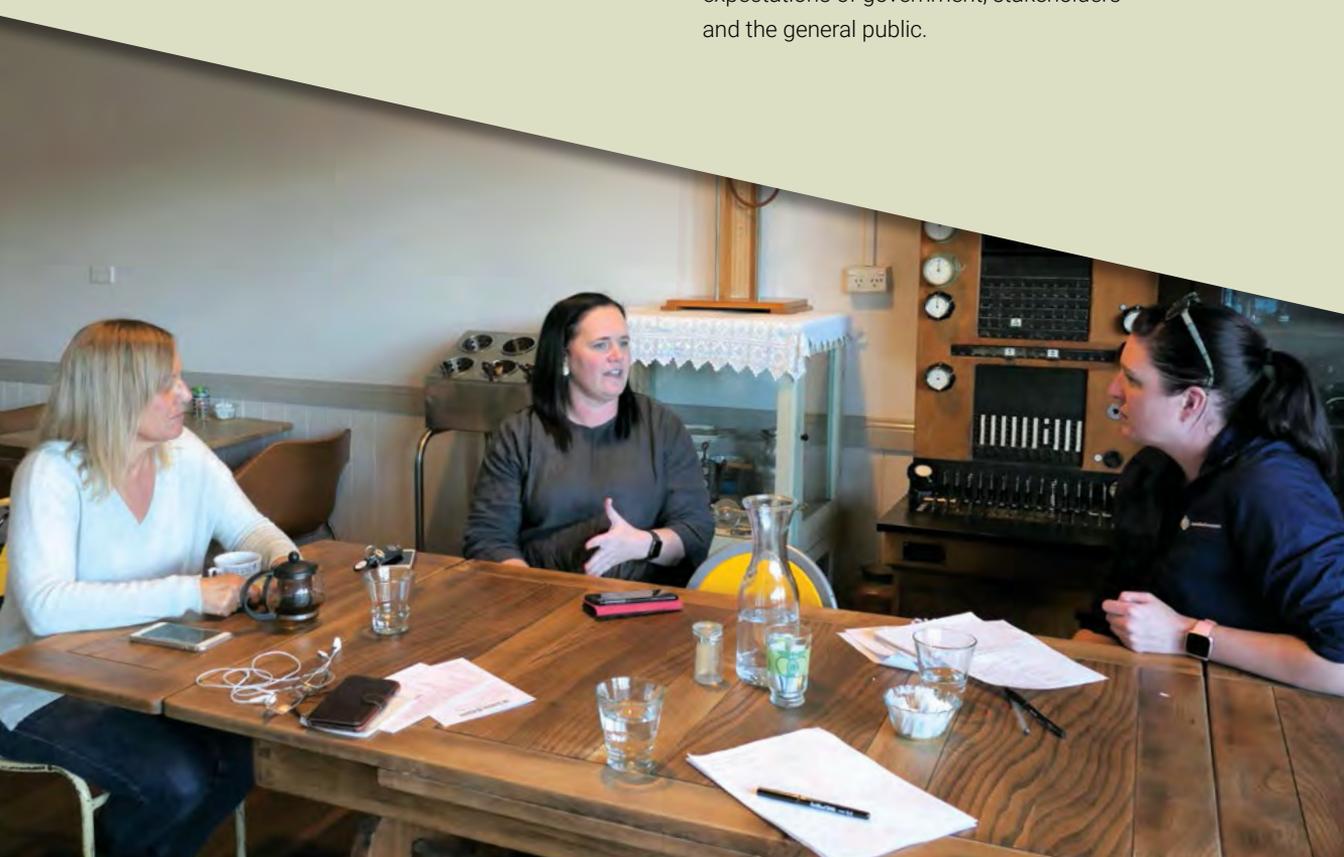
As a data-driven organisation, the Agency continues to invest in maturing our data and information management capability.

While the Agency has largely relied on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet for the provision of ICT services to date, in

2020-21 the Agency will develop an ICT strategy that better meets its needs. This will set the direction for providing technology solutions that are less complex, easier to maintain and responsive in addressing business and stakeholder needs and support our mapping and analytics capabilities as well as public information and data services.

## Financial Sustainability

The Agency is committed to financial sustainability and sound financial compliance. Effective budget management will ensure the Agency achieves its purpose and fulfills the expectations of government, stakeholders and the general public.



# Our Performance

The Agency has an integrated performance cycle and the Corporate Plan is our primary planning document. This is complimented by performance planning and reporting through our Portfolio Budget Statements and the Annual Performance Statement in the Annual Report.

The Agency continues to review and improve its approach to performance measurement,

as we: learn from experience; encounter changing circumstances; and assess the availability of relevant and reliable data.

As such, the performance information has changed from our previous Corporate Plan. We have refined our performance measures from seven to five by combining measures with a similar intent.

2019-20 to 2022-23 Performance Measures	2020-21 to 2023-24 Performance Measures
Affected communities utilise Australian Government assistance to contribute to their recovery.	Affected communities utilise Australian Government assistance contributing to their recovery and strengthening their preparedness for the next drought or natural disaster.
The Agency provides leadership to the coordination of assistance to affected communities.	The Agency provides leadership in the coordination of Australian Government assistance to drought and North Queensland flood affected communities.
Impacted parties report a heightened level of awareness for Australian Government assistance.	Increased community awareness of Australian Government assistance for drought and North Queensland flood affected communities.
Affected communities report a heightened level of awareness for ways in which they could be better prepared in relation to future droughts and natural disasters.	
The Agency consults with stakeholders to understand their experiences, requirements and concerns.	The Agency contributes to better outcomes through improved collaboration in the design and delivery of assistance across all levels of government and with the charity sector.
Stakeholders report that the Agency contributed to better outcomes through collaboration in design and/or delivery of Australian Government assistance.	
The Agency delivers timely and relevant advice to Government in line with commitments.	The Agency delivers timely, coordinated and robust advice to government to improve the circumstances of drought and North Queensland flood affected communities.

The Agency has not established any separate efficiency measures. The size of the Agency, its policy, consultation and co-ordination focus, and the cost and reliability of available data against which efficiency can be measured are all factors to be considered. The best measure of our efficiency is the delivery of our objectives and our ability to meet stakeholder expectations within the funding the government has set for our operations.

We have included targets for each of our performance measures. In some cases,

the Agency will be working towards developing its baseline measurement as an initial priority in the absence of existing data.

Further details of the data sources and methodologies used to measure our performance against each target can be found at: <https://www.droughtandflood.gov.au/reporting>

### Performance Measure 1:

Affected communities utilise Australian Government assistance contributing to their recovery and strengthening their preparedness for the next drought or natural disaster.

Target	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
<b>Target 1.1</b> Recipients of Australian Government flood assistance indicate that it has assisted their recovery and they are better prepared for future natural disasters.	X	X	X	X
<b>Target 1.2</b> Recipients of Australian Government drought assistance indicate that it is supporting them through the current drought and that it will assist them to be better prepared for future droughts.	X	X	X	X
<b>Target 1.3</b> Deliver the Drought Community Outreach Program, which includes holding at least 50 events across Australia attended by at least three partner agencies.	X			

## Performance Measure 2:

The Agency provides leadership in the coordination of Australian Government assistance to drought and North Queensland flood affected communities.

Target	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
<b>Target 2.1</b> Lead and report on the implementation of Australian, State and Territory government obligations under the National Drought Agreement.	X	X	X	X
<b>Target 2.2</b> Oversee a whole-of-government response to drought including implementation of the Australian Government's Drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan, in accordance with agreed actions.	X	X	X	X
<b>Target 2.3</b> Deliver on the Strategy for long-term recovery (the Strategy) for those areas impacted by 2019 North Queensland monsoon event.	X	X	X	X



### Performance Measure 3:

Increased community awareness of Australian Government assistance for drought and North Queensland flood affected communities.

Target	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
<p><b>Target 3.1</b> Increase access to, use of, and functionality of the <i>National Drought Map</i>.</p>	X	X	X	X
<p><b>Target 3.2</b> Develop and implement Recovery Connect to simplify and streamline access to Australian Government information and services associated with drought and the 2019 North Queensland monsoon event.</p>	X	X	X	X
<p><b>Target 3.3</b> Lead a whole-of-government approach to North Queensland flood and drought related communications, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotion of Australian Government assistance available in impacted regions</li> <li>• social media campaigns that encourage the uptake of Australian Government assistance measures.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X
<p><b>Target 3.4</b> Regional Recovery Officers effectively engage with affected communities and stakeholders on support and assistance available, including on strategies to be better prepared for future droughts and natural disasters.</p>	X	X	X	X



## Performance Measure 4:

The Agency contributes to better outcomes through improved collaboration in the design and delivery of assistance across all levels of government and with the charity sector.

Target	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
<b>Target 4.1</b> Improved collaboration across all levels of government, as well as charities, in the design and delivery of assistance to individuals, businesses and communities impacted by drought and the 2019 North Queensland monsoon event.	X	X	X	X

## Performance Measure 5:

The Agency delivers timely, coordinated and robust advice to government to improve the circumstances of drought and North Queensland flood affected communities.

Target	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
<b>Target 5.1</b> Quality and timeliness of advice received supports the Government to respond to conditions on the ground.	X	X	X	X
<b>Target 5.2</b> Advice and options provided by the Agency to government, by 30 June 2021, to address any identified gaps and potential improvements in the Australian Government's drought response.	X			