

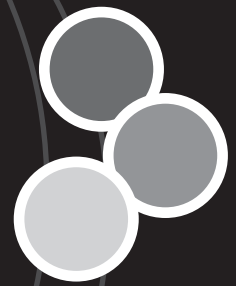
AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY TROPICAL CYCLONE LARRY

In response to the devastation caused by Tropical Cyclone Larry, the Prime Minister has announced a package of Australian Government contributions to the relief effort that are expected to total more than \$250 million. The purpose of this package is to provide assistance for those affected by the cyclone to rebuild their homes, businesses and lives.

Summary of assistance available

Australian Government

- **Ex-gratia payments to those who have lost their principle place of residence, or had them rendered uninhabitable:** \$1000 for each eligible adult and \$400 for each eligible child aged under 16 at the time of the cyclone.
- **Free Travel between Cairns and Innisfail for displaced residents:** Free daily travel on bus services from Cairns to Innisfail and the surrounding areas for displaced residents for three months.
- **Income support for farmers and small businesses:** a one-off income support programme equivalent to the Newstart Allowance for six months.
- **Business Assistance Fund:** businesses adversely affected by the cyclone may be eligible for a one-off, tax-free grant of either \$10 000 or \$25 000, depending on the extent of costs or loss. Where a grant of \$10 000 has already been made and exceptional costs or losses can be demonstrated, an additional grant of \$15 000 is available.
- **Wage Assistance for employers, including farmers:** a wage subsidy of \$400 a fortnight per full time equivalent position will be provided to employers for 13 weeks to help retain their workers and get back to business quickly.
- **Fuel excise relief:** assistance with excise paid on diesel or petrol fuel used by businesses, farmers and households to generate their own electricity, until normal services are restored.
- **Generator Hire:** assistance to dairy farms and aquaculture businesses that have a critical need for power to maintain the health of their livestock. This is in addition to the fuel excise relief.
- **Concessional Interest rate loans/grants for farmers and businesses:** special concessional loans of up to \$500,000, with a grant component of up to \$50,000, will be available to help farmers and business people rebuild.
- **Taxation assistance:** a range of assistance such as fast tracking of refunds, extending debt payment and lodgement obligation time frames, and help in reconstruction of lost/destroyed tax records.
- **Assistance for companies:** extensions of time may be granted and late fees waived where companies and office holders are experiencing difficulties with such activities as lodgements, notifications and payment of fees.
- **Small Business Field Officers:** will provide advice and referrals to assist small businesses affected by Cyclone Larry.
- **The National Harvest Labour Information Service:** The National Harvest Labour Information Service (NHLIS) will provide a central coordinating point for sourcing labour in the affected area.



Support for Individuals and Families

Ex-gratia payments

Ex-gratia payments of \$1,000 per eligible adult and \$400 per eligible child are available to people whose principal place of residence was destroyed by the cyclone or was, or is likely to be, rendered uninhabitable for two weeks or more due to structural damage, because power and/or water supply has ceased or because the residence is inaccessible.

To claim this assistance you will need to fill in a **Claim for Recovery Assistance** form, available on www.centrelink.gov.au, or call **180 2002** and ask for a copy to be sent to you, or get a copy from your local recovery centre. Claims must be lodged by 30 June 2006.

You will need to lodge your completed claim form by:

- taking it to your local Centrelink Customer Service Centre
- calling 180 2002 to lodge a claim over the phone
- taking it to your nearest Centrelink Agent, or
- sending it to:

Centrelink—Cyclone Larry Processing Centre, Area Support Office, Locked Bag 55,
BRISBANE QLD 4001

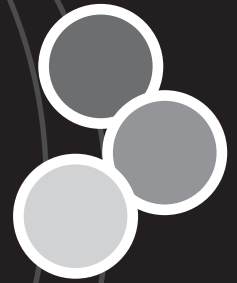
Free Travel between Cairns and Innisfail for Displaced Residents

The Australian and Queensland Governments have agreed to jointly fund daily bus services from Cairns to Innisfail and the surrounding region for three months. These free services have been established to assist tradespeople, relief staff and displaced persons travel from their temporary accommodation in Cairns to their homes and communities.

For information on how to claim this assistance, contact the Queensland Department of Transport on **1800 440 074**.

National Disaster Relief Arrangements

Under the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements, the Australian Government will reimburse the Queensland Government half of eligible expenditure on personal hardship and distress relief assistance to the cyclone victims (such as emergency food, accommodation, clothing and replacement of essential household items). In addition, the Australian Government will reimburse Queensland up to 75% (depending on total Queensland expenditure) of eligible expenditure in responding to the disaster, and for long term recovery measures such as infrastructure repair. An advance of \$40 million has already been paid.



Support for Farmers and Small Business

One-off Income Support Programme

For eligible farmers and small business owners, the Australian Government will provide a one-off income support programme equivalent to the Newstart Allowance for six months. There will be no asset test in relation to the capital value of the farm or business assets. This will mean that farmers and business people deprived of incomes will be able to focus on the immediate task of rebuilding their farm or business without the worry of how to pay their day-to-day bills. Please note that this payment is taxable and you may need to reassess your income for Family Tax Benefit purposes.

To claim this assistance you will need to fill in a **Claim for Farmers and Small Business Income Support Payment** form, available on www.centrelink.gov.au, or call **180 2002** and ask for a copy to be sent to you, or get a copy from your local recovery centre.

You will need to lodge your completed claim form by:

- taking it to your local Centrelink Customer Service Centre
- calling 180 2002 to lodge a claim over the phone
- taking it to your nearest Centrelink Agent, or
- sending it to:

Centrelink—Cyclone Larry Processing Centre, PO Box 115, MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650

Tropical Cyclone Larry Business Assistance Fund

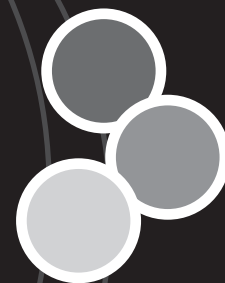
Businesses, including farmers and tourism operators, adversely affected by Tropical Cyclone Larry may be eligible for a one-off, tax-free grant of either \$10 000 or \$25 000, depending on the extent of costs or loss. Where a grant of \$10 000 has already been made and exceptional costs or losses can be demonstrated, an additional grant of \$15 000 is available.

To claim this assistance you will need to fill in a **Business Assistance Fund** claim form, available on www.centrelink.gov.au, call **180 2002** and ask for a copy to be sent to you or get a copy from your local recovery centre. Claims must be lodged by 30 June 2006.

You will need to lodge your completed claim form by:

- taking it to your local Centrelink Customer Service Centre
- taking it to your nearest Centrelink Agent, **or**
- sending it to:

Centrelink—Cyclone Larry Processing Centre, Area Support Office, Locked Bag 55
BRISBANE QLD 4001



Wage Assistance for employers, including farmers

For eligible employers, including farmers. The Australian Government is providing wage assistance of \$400 (GST free) per full time equivalent position for thirteen weeks. This assistance is to help people to retain their employees and get up their businesses and farms up and running again as soon as possible. Employers who qualify for the \$10,000 or \$25,000 tax-free grants will also be eligible for this subsidy.

For more information or to claim this assistance, contact the **Tropical Cyclone Larry Wage Assistance Hotline** on **180 2001**.

Fuel Excise Relief

On Sunday 26 March 2006, it was announced that the Australian Government will provide assistance with excise paid on diesel or petrol fuel used by eligible businesses, farmers and households to generate their own electricity until normal services are restored.

To claim this assistance you will need to fill in a **Claim for Fuel Excise Relief** form, available on www.centrelink.gov.au, or call **180 2002** and ask for a copy to be sent to you, or get a copy from your local recovery centre.

You will need to lodge your completed claim form by:

- taking it to your local Centrelink Customer Service Centre
- calling 180 2002 to lodge a claim over the phone
- taking it to your nearest Centrelink Agent, or
- sending it to:

Centrelink—Cyclone Larry Processing Centre, Cairns Call, PO Box 597, CAIRNS QLD 4870

Generator Hire

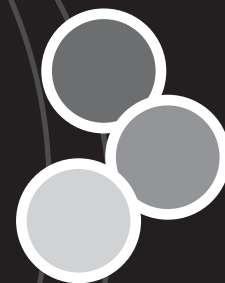
The Australian Government will provide further assistance under the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements to dairy farms and aquaculture businesses that are without power as a result of damage suffered due to Tropical Cyclone Larry. Assistance for costs associated with hiring a generator will be available where electricity is needed to operate equipment that is required to relieve livestock distress and maintain the life of cows and fish and other aquatic organisms. This will help dairy farmers operate milking machines and aquaculture businesses operate pumps and filters.

Callers within Queensland seeking advice about this assistance can call the Primary Industry Cyclone Recovery Advice Service on: **13 25 23**.

This assistance is in addition to the fuel excise relief which is available to households and businesses that are without electricity and are using a generator as a result of the impact of Tropical Cyclone Larry.

The National Harvest Labour Information Service

The National Harvest Labour Information Service (NHLIS) will work closely with farmers and displaced agricultural workers to provide a central coordinating point for sourcing labour in the area affected by Tropical Cyclone Larry. The National Harvest Labour Information Service can be contacted on freecall **1800 062 332** from 8am to 8pm weekdays.



Concessional Interest rate loan/grants

Eligible farmers and businesses will also have access to concessional loans to re-establish their enterprises. Loans of up to \$200,000 under the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements will be available with repayments deferred for up to two years. The first 25 per cent (up to \$50,000) of the loan will be provided as a non-repayable grant.

For special cases, such as enterprises demonstrating extreme damage, the maximum loan amount will be increased to \$500,000, with the grant component capped at \$50,000. There will be no principal or interest repayments in the first two years. These loans will be available to eligible businesses regardless of the number of employees.

The Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority (QRAA) is administering these loans. For more information call QRAA **1800 623 946**.

Taxation assistance

The Australian Taxation Office is providing relief to taxpayers in the cyclone affected area who have suffered damage to their homes and businesses and as a result are experiencing difficulties meeting their tax obligations. The Tax Office is offering a range of assistance such as fast tracking of refunds, extending debt payment and lodgement obligation time frames, and help in reconstruction of lost/destroyed tax records. For information and assistance contact the Tax Office on **13 11 42** (select option 4) between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

Assistance for companies

Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) are providing assistance to companies that have been affected by Tropical Cyclone Larry. Where companies and office holders are experiencing difficulties with such activities as lodgements, notifications and payment of fees, extensions of time may be granted and late fees waived. ASIC will consider these options on a case by case basis. Companies are urged to contact ASIC to discuss their particular circumstances and seek advice regarding their obligations. For further information phone **1300 555 600**.

Small Business Field Officers

Small Business Field Officers will provide on-the-spot assistance to small business operators within the region to help rebuild their businesses, including offering advice for obtaining financial support and how to access Government programs. For further information phone **1800 024 095**.

Prime Minister's and Premier's Cyclone Larry Relief Appeal

The Australian Government has contributed \$1,100,000 towards the Prime Minister's and Premier's Cyclone Larry Relief Appeal. To make a donation to the Appeal please call **1800 150 411**.

Further Information

For more information about Australian Government support or to make a claim, call the Tropical Cyclone Larry Relief Hotline on **1802 002** or visit the Australian Government Disaster Assistance website at www.disasterassist.gov.au.