



# MEDIA RELEASE

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Approved by: Chair of Central NSW Councils, Cr John Medcalf, Mayor of Lachlan Shire Council

## DROUGHT BREAK AND RECOVERY A LONG ROAD AHEAD

While some regions across south-west New South Wales measured the best rainfalls seen in over two years last week, not everyone was so lucky with parts of the Central West receiving a lot less than was predicted.

“As soon as it rains, people in the city think the drought has broken, but it’s still a long way off. It takes more than one rain event to end a drought,” said Cr John Medcalf, Chair of Central NSW Councils and Mayor of Lachlan Shire Council.

Speaking at a meeting of the Central NSW Council’s Drought Sub-Committee in Parkes on 7 May, Cr Medcalf said that drought conditions continue to deteriorate in some of the worst hit areas of the region.

“While the rain has come at an ideal time for some farmers sowing their winter crops, for others the sowing window is half way through. Without a decent drop of rain in the next few weeks farmers won’t be able to sow those precious winter crops.”

“Added to this, the need to destock over the summer months while stock prices have been relatively good mean that there will be a deficit of breeding stock that will be felt for years to come,” said Cr Medcalf.

Considering recommendations from an Issues Paper developed with the Western Research Institute, the Drought Sub-Committee has identified a need to improve drought preparedness in addition to measures to manage and assist communities suffering under the current drought conditions.

“The impact of this drought on both cropping and grazing and the flow on affect to agricultural support services is unprecedented and recovery by farming families and communities could take years.”

It’s critical that Governments maintain drought assistance programs in to the future and extend these to businesses and those who rely on primary producers for their livelihoods.

**ENDS**

**For comment please contact Cr John Medcalf 0429 937 248**

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## Meeting of the Central NSW Drought Sub-Committee, Parkes 7 May

L-R: Backrow- Peter Layton, community member, Roger Kitson, Parkes, Drought Response Officer, Christine Weston, Chair, Regional Development Australia, Central West, Cr Bill Jayet, Parkes Shire Council, Cr Pat Smith, Parkes Shire Council, John Magill, member, RDA Central West Board, Jeremy Voss, community member, Maurice Simpson, Weddin Shire; Front: L-R Cr Ken Keith, Mayor Parkes Shire Council, Jenny Bennett, Executive Officer Central NSW Councils, Cr John Medcalf, Chair, Central NSW Councils & Mayor, Lachlan Shire Council, Cr Neil Westcott, Parkes Shire Council and Cr Mark Liebich, Mayor Weddin Shire Council