



PRIME MINISTER

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DISASTER RELIEF, QUEENSLAND

The Commonwealth Government has agreed to a request by the Queensland Government for assistance under the Natural Disasters Assistance Arrangements in respect of the granite belt hailstorms, drought and the northern bush fires, all of which have recently been declared natural disasters by the Queensland Government.

As with the drought relief proposals put forward recently by the South Australian Government, the Commonwealth has acted speedily and sympathetically to assist those affected by the disasters.

All producers affected will be eligible for carry-on loans at concessional rates of interest.

Those affected by bush fire and drought will also receive concessional loans for restocking and freight concessions on the transport of stock and fodder.

The terms of the loans are a matter to be settled by the Queensland Government. The Commonwealth will meet the full cost above \$2 million.

When natural disasters causing damage and destruction occur in a State, the Commonwealth stands ready to assist the State financially under the Natural Disaster Assistance Arrangements. The present assistance being given to Queensland and to South Australia are examples of the way in which the Commonwealth helps the States in such arrangements.