

KIMBERLEY FLOODS — PASTORAL RENT RELIEF

Statement by Minister for Lands

MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Minister for Lands) [12.10 pm]: I rise to inform the house of the McGowan government's provision of pastoral rent relief to Kimberley pastoralists affected by the recent flooding. Our government understands the significant impacts that these floods have had on everybody in the region, including pastoralists, and remains fully committed to the long-term recovery in the Kimberley. That is why, as Minister for Lands, I announced a rent relief package for Kimberley pastoralists following the devastation of the flooding events.

Under section 128 of the Land Administration Act, the Minister for Lands, on recommendation of the Pastoral Lands Board, may allow a payment of rent for a pastoral lease to be delayed for a specified period or be reduced or waived entirely on application to the Pastoral Lands Board by a pastoral lessee whose lease has been adversely affected by drought, fires, cyclones, floods or other disasters. The Pastoral Lands Board and the state government, through the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, have been engaging with pastoralists across the Kimberley in the wake of the recent flooding events. Upon advice from the Pastoral Lands Board, our government will waive the rental payment for the first half of 2023 for 92 eligible pastoralists. Eligible Kimberley pastoralists are encouraged to make an application to the PLB for rent relief for the first half of 2023, and can do so by emailing the board.

This initiative is just one way that our government is supporting affected pastoralists in the Kimberley, with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development continuing to work with primary producers and the Kimberley Pilbara Cattlemen's Association to provide support on the ground, such as delivering feed to stranded livestock and addressing animal welfare concerns. Additionally—this is very important—under changes in the Land Administration Act amendment that is currently before Parliament, the minister will be provided with powers to declare zones for pastoral rent relief. This positive reform will remove the requirement for affected pastoralists to apply for rent relief when disasters or other circumstances affect pastoralists. Our government, through DPLH, the Pastoral Lands Board and other agencies will continue to engage with affected pastoralists across the region and provide ongoing support.