

MEDIA RELEASE

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Vinnies welcomes additional drought funding

St Vincent de Paul Society National Council has welcomed the Federal Government's announcement today of additional funding for drought affected communities right across Australia.

Speaking shortly after the announcement, National Council CEO Toby oConnor said the Government has announced two new packages of money.

'Under the extension of the existing Drought Community Support Initiative, the Society will distribute a further \$15 million to local government areas already receiving support under the DCSI.

'Farmers, farm workers, farm contractors and suppliers struggling to pay for basic household expenses, but who have not yet applied, are encouraged to apply for a one-of payment of \$3,000.

'We're seeing green shoots in some areas after much needed rain, but the impact of the drought will continue to bite for some time yet.

In addition, the Federal Government announced additional funding in newly drought declared local government areas, to be serviced by The Salvation Army and the St Vincent de Paul Society. The Society will distribute \$15 million in these new LGAs, commencing mid- to late- March

'Today's announcement has raised the expectations of people who might benefit from this urgently needed additional funding,' Mr oConnor said.

'When the contracts are signed, the Society can commence assisting potential applicants.

'The Society's national call centre is currently processing applications at a rate of 700 a week and we have commenced a recruitment process to employ more staff to ensure people get access to the additional funding as quickly as possible,' Mr oConnor said.

For assistance, call Vinnies on 13 18 12. Donations to the Vinnies Bushfire Appeal can be made [here](#).

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia consists of 60,000 members and volunteers who operate on the ground through over 1,000 conferences located in individual parishes across the country.