

MEDIA RELEASE

17 March 2020

Federal drought assistance still available in Victoria

St Vincent de Paul Society National Council CEO Toby oConnor said the Society continues to make Federal Government drought assistance funds available for distribution in eligible Local Government Areas in Victoria, in the following LGAs Mildura, Pyrenees, Strathbogie, Swan Hill and Yarriambiack.

Mr oConnor said 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-off payment of \$3,000.

‘Eligible people may not have applied due to old media stories about a backlog of claims. Or, there may be people out there who either still don’t know about the payment, or who might find the prospect of applying for help a bit difficult,’ Mr oConnor said.

‘Experienced, empathetic staff in our national call centre are taking calls and processing claims quickly.

‘Most payments are now in bank accounts within a week or two of applications being received.

‘In addition, our staff are able to refer callers to additional wrap around services in their local areas.

‘Many drought-affected areas have had rain in recent weeks. But we know that recovery will take time and that people are likely to need financial assistance for some time yet,’ Mr oConnor said.

The Federal Government has listed specific Local Government Areas which are officially drought-declared. A list of those serviced by the St Vincent de Paul Society are available [here](https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find_Help/drought_assistance/). https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find_Help/drought_assistance/

Details about the payment, including how to apply, are available [online](#) or by calling 1300 846 643.

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.

Media contact: Judith Tokley 0408 824 306 / media@svdp.org.au