

RAWCS – Southern Region Report

Drought Community Outreach Program, Victorian Coordinators Report

The **Drought Community Outreach Program**, is a partnership program with the Australian Government and Rotary, which aims to bring services specific to farmers and their communities to their region for a drop-in style one-stop-shop. The National Drought and Flood Agency brings government and non-government agencies to rural and regional Australia to make it easier to access support and information to support farmers and rural and regional communities living through the immediate and longer-term effects of drought.

The Drought Community Outreach Events include local Regional Recovery Support Officers and representatives from Australian Government agencies such as the Australian Taxation Office, Regional Investment Corporation, Services Australia and NBN Co. State government agencies and non-government organisations with drought support info at each event. Drought Community Outreach Events have been rolled out as the COVID-19 restrictions have eased. Appropriate measures are in place to ensure they are run safely.

Through this Drought Community Outreach Program, RAWCS has been allocated funds to distribute to Farmers, Farm Workers and Farm Contractors and Suppliers. These funds are distributed at events scheduled by the National Recovery and Resilience Agency. Rotary has a twofold role. First to assist in the administration and completion of forms applying for a **\$500 gift card** and secondly, to connect with the communities through a BBQ style initiative.

RAWCS have engaged Rotary Clubs throughout Australia to provide the BBQ facilities at each DCOP event. This invitation has been made available to both city and regional Rotary Clubs, but favour to Rotary Clubs near those locations. The benefit to the Rotary Club is **\$1,500** as a fee for service, plus all expenses are covered for provisions and costs of getting there.

To date the **DCOP project has engaged and provided the following:**

104 Rotary Clubs have now supported 129 Drought Outreach Events nationally:

- Average community benefit from each event \$20,000 (*although as an exceptional effort during the week 2nd to 5th May 2022 over \$500,000 was distributed into 5 regional communities within District 9790*)
- Southern Region DCOP Outreach Events: (3 Planned / 13 completed for 2022)

Developments:

The DCOP Grant is expected to be completed by **30th June 2022**.

Currently working with Southern Region Rotary Districts to distribute cards, engaging with communities through local Rotary Club initiatives and developing a pilot project with NRRRA to assist Rotary Clubs in drought affected areas to develop further outreach projects, with support from the DCOP & NRRRA and with the ability to also distribute \$500 debit cards within the guidelines. These are the proposed DCOP events/activities for Southern Region in 2022.

DATE	TOWN	COUNCIL	EVENT STATUS
Monday 14 Feb 2022	Omeo	East Gippsland Shire	COMPLETED
Tuesday 15 Feb 2022	Bairnsdale	N/A	COMPLETED
Wednesday 16 Feb 2022	Nowa Nowa	East Gippsland Shire	COMPLETED
Thursday 17 Feb 2022	Buchan	East Gippsland Shire	COMPLETED
Friday 18 Feb 2022	Mallacoota	East Gippsland Shire	COMPLETED
Monday 7 Mar 2022	Balranald	Balranald	COMPLETED
Tuesday 8 Mar 2022	Moulamein	Murray River	COMPLETED
Wednesday 9 Mar 2022	Deniliquin	Edward River	COMPLETED
Thursday 10 Mar 2022	Coleambally	Murrumbidgee	COMPLETED
Monday 2 May 2022	Euroa	Strathbogie Council	COMPLETED
Tuesday 3 May 2022	Benalla & Milawa	Benalla & Wangaratta Council	COMPLETED
Wednesday 4 May 2022	Nathalia	Moira Council	COMPLETED
Thursday 5 May 2022	Cobram	Moira Council	COMPLETED
Monday 23 May 2022	Campbell Town	Northern Midlands	PLANNED
Tuesday 24 May 2022	Latrobe	Latrobe	PLANNED
Thursday 26 May 2022	Flinders Island	Flinders Island	PLANNED