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Weekly Bulletin

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RT : CA's Michael Murray, Bec Fing, Bron Christensen & Marie Offner are being inducted as Flood Recovery Officers to ...

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Weekly Bulletin

22 October 2012

RURAL FINANCE ROUNDTABLE

FEDERAL Treasurer Wayne Swan, Federal Agriculture Minister Ken Wyatt and Federal Finance Minister Bob Katter hosted a Rural Finance Roundtable in Brisbane. The Roundtable presented views about alleged difficulties in the farm sector applying for finance and unsympathetic debt management requirements of the QFFS. A farmer, John Bishop was in attendance and reported that no one believed there was considerable misunderstanding about how the QFFS works if farm debt restructuring is necessary. The Roundtable Workshop which undertook to provide Treasury with options for watching brief over these developments and will follow up with a factual and transparent information is used to assess the financial needs of farmers and the agribusiness sector.

WATER METERING CHANGES

THE State Government has announced changes to water metering. The Government no longer intending to own, install and maintain meters, which will be replaced by private operators. Natural Resources and Mines Minister Andrew Cripps said the 'metered entitlement' areas who took water directly from a bore supply from the operators of large dams. "These changes will involve charges of up to \$100 per year for areas where the Department will install meters," Minister Cripps said. "Many irrigators were unhappy because they believed the overall cost was higher than it needed to be." Mr Cripps said that measuring water use helped protect the resource, but it was a necessary change. Licence holders will need to provide evidence that an accredited meter to ensure an accurate record of water use. The new system will be implemented by mid next year and irrigators will be approached to be informed of the changes. Further information on water harvesting meters at this stage. Further information on www.dnrm.qld.gov.au (<http://www.dnrm.qld.gov.au/>) or by ph

QUAD BIKE CRUSH PROTECTION DEVICE FEDERAL EMPLOYERS

THE Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Bill Shorten, has announced measures to improve quad bike safety at a forum last week of the Queensland Farmers Federation. The Minister has announced the key findings of the quad bike issues paper and the forum, and has asked the Commonwealth workplace safety regulator, to immediately imp

Comcare will work with scheme employers to review their use of quad bikes and consider possible substitution with less hazardous equipment.

Comcare will initiate a program to retro-fit crush protection devices for bikes used by federal employers, along with rider training.

Comcare will also work with other regulators to sponsor the development of a technical standard to underpin the design, manufacture, testing and installation of crush protection devices for quad bikes during manufacture or for after-market applications.

To review the QuadWatch discussion paper click [here](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/QuadWatch/comment) (<http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/QuadWatch/comment>), along with QFF's submission to the paper, which is also available on our [website](http://www.qff.org.au/policy-projects/submission-fact-sheets/) (<http://www.qff.org.au/policy-projects/submission-fact-sheets/>). QFF supports the need to do further work on improving the safety of the design, manufacture and operation of quad bikes. These machines form the backbone of many important farming operations but they are also potentially dangerous pieces of equipment. QFF notes that at this stage there appears to be no agreed standard for the construction or fitting of crush protection devices and there is only a very limited number of manufacturers working on their design. These matters will need further consideration, along with an acceleration in the current research program looking into the overall efficacy as well learning from the experience of other countries where this matter is under review as well.

MEMBER NEWS

Rapping brickie and film students take out top honours in Cane Tube competition

AN animated video featuring more than 3000 digital photographs has taken out the top prize of \$8500 in the second annual Cane Tube competition run by peak sugarcane industry organisation, CANEGROWERS. The winning video, 'Cane-Mation', was created by a group of film school graduate from Brisbane, who took five weeks to develop the film using stop-motion, multi-plane technology. Their video also won the Cane Tube's People's Choice Award – an additional \$2500 in prize money. Cane-Mation features digital photographs of elements hand-crafted from felt, paper, cardboard, wood and various foodstuffs, including coffee beans and, of course, sugar. The digital photographs are played back at 25 frames per second and backed with audio and a voice-over. Second prize in the Cane Tube 2012, and also most viewed, was won by the rapping brickie, James-Anthony Callea, for his 'Swe Aussie Canegrower Rap'. An ex-accountant, and current first-year apprentice bricklayer based in Victoria, Mr Callea said although he had no background in sugarcane or agriculture for that matter, he saw the competition as a bit of fun. Asked as to what made him choose a rap video for his entry, Mr Callea said he saw it as a 'natural' choice. "I have no skills in animation, so rapping seemed the obvious fit. In fact, I have questionable skills in rapping, so really I was just hoping to communicate the advances in Australian cane growing while hopefully making people laugh," Mr Callea said. The winning videos can be viewed at www.youtube.com/thecanetube (<http://www.youtube.com/thecanetube>)

COTTON PLANTING UNDERWAY

WITH cotton planting in full swing, cotton growers are urged to map this year's fields at www.cottonmap.com.au (<http://www.cottonmap.com.au/>). The service is provided free of charge with the purpose of minimising off-target damage from downwind pesticide application, particularly during fallow spraying. Farmers, farm managers, resellers, consultants, agronomists, applicators and

contractors are encouraged to input their cotton fields. Users can also access the Cotton Map to check the location of the paddocks they may be planning to spray to assess the proximity of the nearest cotton crop. The map is a joint collaboration between Cotton Australia, Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC), Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) and Nufarm Australia Limited, developed to meet industry needs.

OTHER NEWS

ABARES Toowoomba Regional Outlook conference

ATTENDING the ABARES Toowoomba Regional Outlook conference is an opportunity to hear from speakers across four sessions on economic, agricultural, environmental and regional development issues. The conference is an opportunity to network with other motivated community members, discuss industry trends and make new contacts. During the final panel discussion, panellists and delegates will explore topics such as current context for innovation, national broadband network, role of science, experimentation and design, future producers, regional development, future industries, new technologies, digital economies and social media. The conference is on Thursday October 25 in Toowoomba. For further information and registration details visit the ABARES [website](http://www.daff.gov.au/abares/website) (<http://www.daff.gov.au/abares/regional>).

2013 SCIENCE & INNOVATION AWARDS

APPLICATIONS are now open for the 2013 Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. If you're 18-35, this is your chance to apply for up to \$22,000 to fund your project on an innovative or emerging scientific issue to benefit Australia's primary industries. More information and applications forms are at www.daff.gov.au/scienceawards (<http://www.daff.gov.au/scienceawards>). Applications close November 23.

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