

Rural and Regional Adjustment (COVID-19 Daintree Area Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2020

Explanatory Notes for SL 2020 No. 198

made under the

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994

General Outline

Short title

Rural and Regional Adjustment (COVID-19 Daintree Area Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2020

Authorising law

Sections 3, 10, 11 and 44 of the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994* (the Act)

Policy objectives and the reasons for them

In July 2020, the Queensland Government announced that the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) would administer assistance equivalent to the amounts provided under the Queensland COVID-19 relief package to off-grid households, small businesses and non-profit organisations in the Daintree area. The payments will be provided for the purpose of providing financial relief for off-grid households, small businesses and non-profit organisations in the Daintree area during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following amounts are to be provided under the Scheme: a \$200 payment for eligible households and a \$500 payment for eligible small businesses and non-profit organisations. DNRME has identified the Queensland Rural and Regional Adjustment Authority (QRIDA) as best-placed to administer the Daintree Area Scheme (the Scheme).

The policy objective of the subordinate legislation is, therefore, to establish the Scheme as an approved assistance scheme in the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Regulation 2011* (the Regulation), enabling the QRIDA to administer the Scheme.

Achievement of policy objectives

The subordinate legislation will achieve the policy objective by inserting the Scheme as a new Schedule 29 into the Regulation, allowing QRIDA to administer the Scheme on behalf of DNRME. Under the Act, QRIDA can only provide financial assistance under an approved assistance scheme prescribed by regulation. Establishing the Scheme will

enable QRIDA to provide payments to eligible households, small businesses and non-profit organisations.

Consistency with policy objectives of authorising law

The subordinate legislation is consistent with the policy objectives of the Act.

The Act establishes QRIDA primarily to administer assistance schemes which foster the development of a more productive and sustainable rural and regional sector in Queensland. QRIDA may also support the State's economy by administering approved assistance schemes to assist primary producers, small business and other sectors during periods of temporary difficulty, or to otherwise benefit the Queensland economy.

Inconsistency with policy objectives of other legislation

This subordinate legislation is not inconsistent with the policy objectives of other legislation.

Alternative ways of achieving policy objectives

An alternative way of achieving the policy objective would be for DNRME to administer the Scheme. However, QRIDA, the primary function of which is to administer financial schemes, is considered best placed to undertake the administration of the Scheme.

Benefits and costs of implementation

The Scheme will provide financial relief to off-grid households, small businesses and non-profit organisations in the Daintree area during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Queensland Government has made available a total of \$250 000 (excluding GST) to fund the Scheme. The total cost to the Queensland Government will depend on the level of uptake.

Consistency with fundamental legislative principles

The subordinate legislation has been drafted with regard to, and is consistent with, the fundamental legislative principles as defined in section 4 of the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*.

Consultation

No stakeholder consultation was undertaken as the decision to implement this Scheme is consistent with the Government's broader approach of providing financial relief where appropriate. The assistance provided under this Scheme is equivalent to the amounts provided under the Queensland COVID-19 relief package.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries consulted the Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR), within the Queensland Productivity Commission, on whether the subordinate legislation is excluded from further analysis under the *Queensland*

Government Guide to Better Regulation. The OBPR assessed that the amendment is excluded from further analysis on the basis of category (k) – *regulatory proposals designed to reduce the burden of regulation, or clearly do not add to the burden, and it is reasonably clear there are no significant adverse impacts.*

©The State of Queensland 2020