EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Issued by the Authority of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

FARM HELP ADVICE AND TRAINING GRANT SCHEME AMENDMENT 2007 (No.1)

Subsection 52B (1) of the Farm Household Support Act 1992 provides that the Minister may, by written instrument, formulate a scheme to be called the Farm Help Advice and Training Scheme, to grant assistance to eligible farmers and their families to obtain advice to assess their long term prospects, obtain training or obtain software needed for the purpose of, or as a result of advice or training under the scheme. Such a grant is called a Farm Help advice and training grant.

This scheme is related to the scheme formulated under section 52B (1) of the Farm Household Support Act 1992 (the Farm Help Advice and Training Scheme). A person who applies for Farm Help income support assistance under the Farm Household Support Act 1992 is required to obtain a financial assessment of the farm enterprise and will be granted assistance to obtain that advice under the Farm Help Advice and Training Scheme. The person will need to undertake a financial assessment and develop a Pathways Plan before income support and/or a re-establishment grant is payable. The advice and training grant may be used, in accordance with the persons Pathways Plan, to obtain advice, undertake training and obtain appropriate computer software.

The Farm Help programme was provided with an additional $92.3 million over the next four years in the 2007-08 Budget. Amendments to the Farm Household Support Regulations 1993, the Farm Help Advice and Training Scheme 1997 and the Farm Help Re-establishment Grant Scheme 1997 will improve access to the programme by allowing previous Farm Help recipients a second chance to obtain professional advice and training and to access an increased re-establishment grant of $75,000.

The proposed enhancements have emanated from the on-going monitoring of the programme’s performance and a mid-term review of Farm Help conducted in 2006.
Farm Help Advice and Training Scheme Amendment 2007 (No.1)

1. Name of Scheme

This item identifies the name of the Scheme as the *Farm Help Advice and Training Scheme Amendment 2007 (No.1).*

2. Commencement

This item refers to the Scheme’s commencement date on 1 July 2007.

3. Amendment of *Farm Help Advice and Training Scheme 1997*

This item refers to the amendment by Schedule 1 of the *Farm Help Advice and Training Scheme 1997.*

**Schedule 1 Amendments**

[1] **Note before Part 1**

This item omits ‘(consisting only of section 52A)’ from the note before Part 1, as Part 9A of the *Farm Household Support Act 1992* consists of provisions in addition to section 52A.

[2] **Section 1.3, note**

This item inserts ‘re-establishment grant’ to allow reference to the definition found in section 3 of the *Farm Household Support Act 1992.*

[3] **Section 2.2, definition of eligible person**

This item provides definitions for ‘eligible person’ and ‘Farm Help income support’. The definition of eligible person provides reference to section 2.3 ‘Who is an eligible person’ and Farm Help income support refers to the meaning of Farm Help income support under Division 1B of Part 2 of the *Farm Household Support Act 1992.*

[4] **Section 2.2, after definition of prescribed advisor**

This item inserts references to ‘re-entry client’ given by section 2.3A and ‘re-entry grant’ given by section 2.5A of this Scheme.

[5] **After section 2.3**

This item inserts reference to a new section 2.3A which sets out who is a re-entry client under this Scheme.

[6] **Section 2.4**

This item amends the section to determine when the grant must be used and differentiates between an eligible person and a re-entry client.
[7] **Subsection 2.5 (1)**

This item amends the subsection regarding the amount of the grant that is available for an eligible person under this Scheme to exclude the re-entry client.

[8] **After subparagraph 2.5 (2) (c) (iii)**

This item inserts ‘professional advice and planning grant under the exceptional circumstances program’ to allow any funds spent under this grant to be deducted from the Farm Help advice and training grant.

[9] **After section 2.5**

This item inserts a new section on the re-entry grant and provides that the total re-entry grant amount be no more than $2,500.

[10] **After subsection 2.8A (1)**

This item inserts a new subsection directing the re-entry client to obtain advice on financial outlook from a prescribed advisor and develop an activity plan.


This item omits ‘A direction for subsection (1)’ and inserts ‘A direction for subsection (1) or (1A)’ providing reference to the re-entry client.

[12] **Subsection 2.8A (4)**

This item amends the subsection and clarifies the requirement for a drought management plan to be included as part of the activity plan for persons that have received Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment or other payments made under the Act due to the person being affected by exceptional circumstances.

[13] **Paragraph 2.8A (6) (a)**

This item omits ‘under subsection (1)’ and inserts ‘under subsection (1) or (1A)’ providing reference to re-entry client.

[14] **Paragraph 2.8A (6) (e)**

This item omits ‘a re-establishment grant under the Farm Help Re-establishment Grant Scheme 1997’ and inserts ‘a re-establishment grant’ in reference to the note under section 1.3.

[15] **Subsection 2.13 (1)**

This item omits ‘Not more than $500’ and inserts ‘Not more than $750’ in reference to the amount that may be used for the purchase of computer software.
[16] **After section 2.14**

This item inserts a new section on additional grant funds for computer software and provides for persons that have spent $500 or less on computer software to access further funds, up to a maximum of $750, for additional computer software if identified in their activity plan.

[17] **After section 3.3**

This item inserts a new section that provides for directions to be given to re-entry clients on obtaining advice about financial outlook.

[18] **After subsection 3.5 (2)**

This item inserts a subsection that provides for the disqualification of a re-entry client from receiving a re-entry grant if they fail to comply with the direction under subsection 2.8A (1A) within 3 months of the date of that direction.

[19] **Section 4.3**

This item omits ‘his or her power under subsection 2.4 (2)’ and inserts ‘his or her power under subsection 2.4 (4) to refer to the re-numbered subsection dealing with when the grant must be used.'