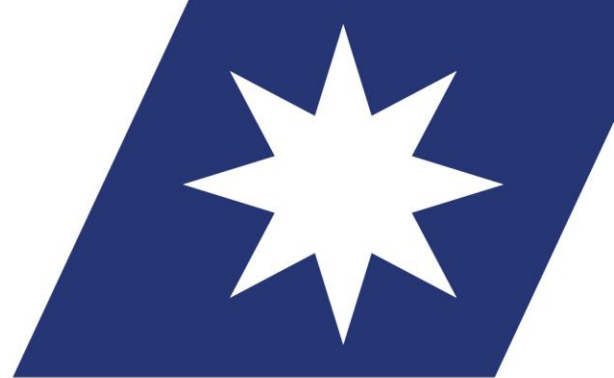


# BOB KATTER

Katter's Australian Party

Federal Member for Kennedy



## MEDIA RELEASE

14 November 2019

### An Open Letter to the Governments of Australia

Pauline Hanson and I toured droughted Australia *inter alia* to pressure the Fed Govt and its Minister for Drought into providing a drought package.

By the fourth day of our tour, and with large crowds attending our meetings, the Govt announced an improved package - it was still not a drought package.

Alan Jones was dead right in saying it's about preserving the cattle herd and the herders. This package doesn't.

The beef herd was 33m in the pre-1980s. By 2017 it had fallen to 25m. Our sheep herd was 173m before Paul Keating deregulated wool. Now it is just 69m.

Pauline and I had a dozen or so meetings. I've attended many hearings and meetings of Robbie Katter's (nearly a thousand people attended the "Last Stand" meeting at Winton).

#### These meetings made 3 Crystal Clear assertions:-

1. Debt is killing us;
2. The Qld Govt is killing us; and
3. Farmers – everyone in drought areas – is in deep trouble.

#### The Fed Govt's drought announced policy:-

- a. Gives responsibility for providing fodder and its transportation to the Qld and NSW Govts;
- b. The provision of low interest loans (to be administered by Qld and NSW Govts);

There is no policy for retiring or reconstructing the farmers "existing" debt. Yet this must happen. Without this the policy is simply "more debt" (albeit at low interest rates);

- c. Farm household assistance grants- If your farm income does not meet welfare entitlements then the Govt tops it up with 'assistance grants' to a full welfare entitlement.

**This is not an LNP drought initiative. This is an ongoing welfare program that has been there for around ten years.** And it was the initiative of Far Nth Qld's "Rural Action Council" secured through KAP Pres "Rowell Walton" at the "Canberra Debt Summit" from the then "ALP Treasurer" Wayne Swan.

The Fed Govt, notwithstanding, is to be praised for extending the grants from 2 to 4 years.

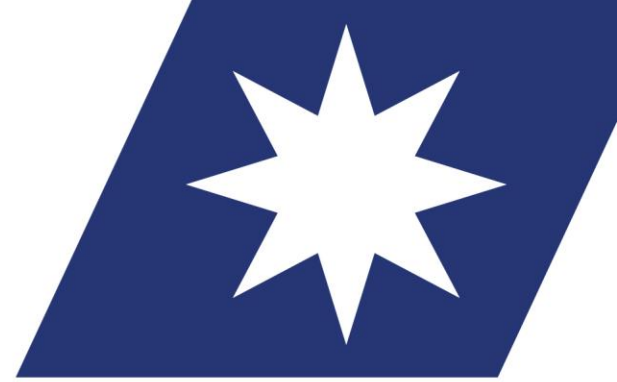
#### The Qld Govt Put in Charge??

1. The Qld Govt (save the planet) has banned any provision of the 61 million (m) acres of mulga for dying cattle (or roos or koalas);
2. The Qld Govt (save the planet) has removed almost all cattle and sheep from nearly 1m acres of S.W.Qld. It is now reserved for carbon credits;

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3. The Qld Govt (save the planet) has effectively banned all roo harvesting by issuing protection orders on the Eastern Greys. Mankind has survived in Australia by (*inter alia*) kangaroo harvesting for 20,000 years.

In light of these realities:

The Fed. Govt. decision to *make Qld responsible for drought rescue* would be akin to *making the Japanese responsible for the life rafts at Pearl Harbour*.

### This must happen:-

1. A Govt. Authority (Reconstruction Bank) is established to borrow and loan money. Government is borrowing at around 1.2% and therefore can loan at 1.2%.  
It must purchase (at a discount) the farmers bank debt. A farmer owes his bank \$1m and he is paying interest, bank charges, valuations, (some) repayments – may be – \$54,000 a year. He transfers his loan to the Recon. Bank which is buying “at risk” debt and rightly demands a discount (say 15%). His commitments are now all to the Recon Bank and no longer \$54,000 a yr. but only \$13,000 a yr. His debt now not \$1m but only \$850,000. (Cost – Nil)
2. Declare the 61m acres of mulga accessible for fodder. Mulga when tree lopped (pruned) coppices and/or regenerates as seedlings. (Cost – Nil)
3. CDEP – “Work for the Dole” needs to be introduced throughout drought affected areas and topped up to an industrial award - providing income, jobs to our jobfarmers, and employees for business and jobs for the unemployed. (Cost est. – \$40m/yr.)
4. Fodder subsidies are a necessity to preserve the cattle herd – a major national income earning asset (Cost est. – \$80m/yr.)
5. Administration of all these measures by Local Govts not State Govts. (Cost est. – at most 0.1% of the loans)
6. Roo harvesting restored. Roo pop. is millions more than before settlement and needs constant culling (especially in drought). (Cost – Nil)

### All three National (LNP) Members and the Senator representing the drought areas responded to the “*farmers being in deep trouble*” by advocating “*exit packages*”.

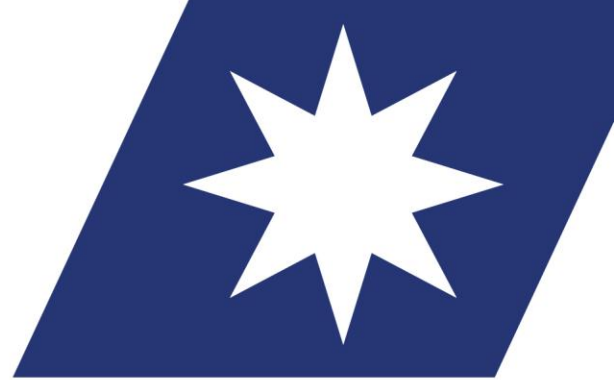
The farmers are in deep trouble – the LNP solution – get rid of the farmers – now there are no farmers in deep trouble. This is also the response of the “Central Exec” of the NFF. This is not the response Pauline Hanson’s One Nation, or Bob Katter’s KAP.

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Like many Australians, some of my family nearly perished in the desert chasing gold. My grandparents came to Cloncurry in a stage coach in the middle of the Kalkadoon Wars. My Great Uncle died at Gallipoli, my Grandmother's brother died sometime after his release from Changi.

All of them dreamed of Australia as a Great Nation. That dream will not be dying whilst I'm alive.

Mr. Government take notice. The battle is just starting.

God Bless,  
Bob Katter,  
Federal Member for Kennedy