

2019-20 GMID Drought Employment Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

At 27 April 2020

What is the Drought Employment Program?

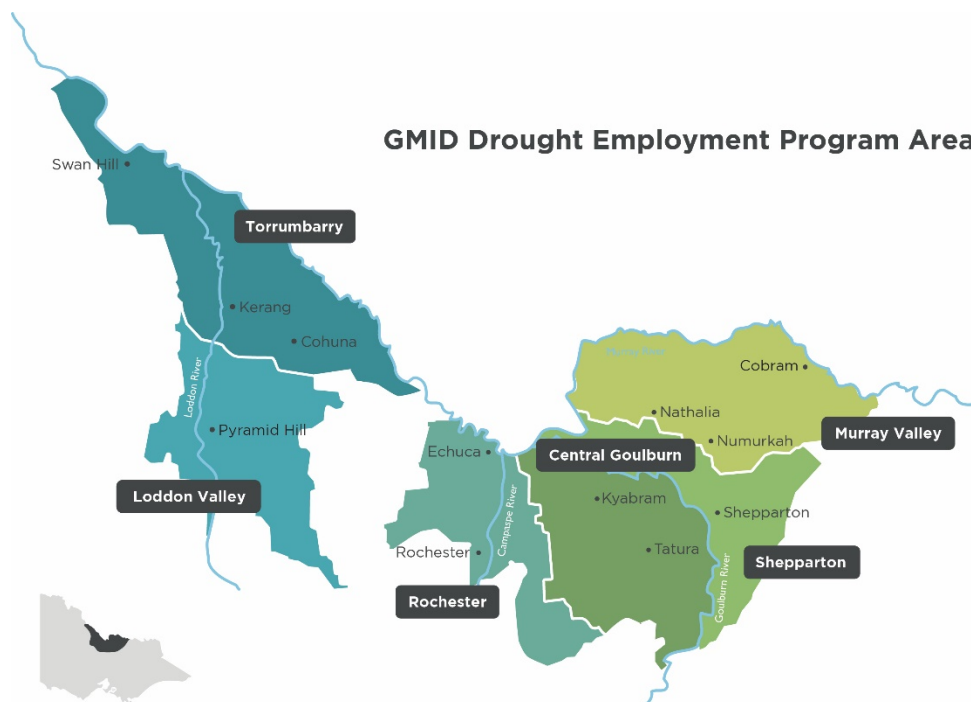
The Drought Employment Program is an initiative funded by the State Government of Victoria and led by Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority in partnership with a Chandler Macleod Group (Employment Provider) as well as North Central CMA, local governments, Goulburn Murray Water and Parks Victoria.

How does it work?

The program provides off farm employment opportunities for workers whose primary income has been impacted by the drought in the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID). Participants will have the opportunity to participate in paid employment across the GMID on projects that will improve the health of the catchment and local environment. The new roles will be created to allow participants to have flexible work whilst maintaining current farm working commitments.

What is the GMID?

The GMID is made up of six irrigation areas: Shepparton, Murray Valley, Central Goulburn, Rochester-Campaspe, Loddon Valley and Torrumbarry. See map below.



I am a private diverter living in the GMID, am I eligible to participate?

Yes, private diverters living within one of the six Goulburn Murray Irrigation Districts are eligible to participate.

I am a private diverter working full time on the farm, pumping out of the Goulburn River at Trawool, can I participate?

No, unfortunately you are outside the GMID (program's boundaries).

I am not a farmer, but I did work on a dairy farm full time at Kyabram, but have just been let go due to the dry season, can I participate in the DEP?

Yes, as long as you can meet the other eligibility criteria as well.

I am working full time at a milk factory and like the sound of the DEP program, can I join in?

No. Recently we have included people employed in Agribusiness to become eligible for the program, however, the program is only for farmers, farm workers and agribusiness employees who have had their income or hours reduced due to the drought.

I am not able to work outside, but could do an office type role, is this available?

Not initially. Our intent is to provide works crews for outside on public good projects (in line with what farmers and farm workers might ordinarily do). However it is possible some of our partners may have limited office roles available as the program progresses.

I am a farm worker living and working in the GMID who was made redundant a couple of months ago, am I eligible for the program?

Yes.

I live in Melbourne and was working last summer in the GMID picking fruit for a couple of months in the GMID, am I eligible for the program?

No. You have not been living or working within the GMID since April 2019.

I am a fencing contractor working on farms in the GMID am I eligible for the program?

Yes, recently the program has been extended to agribusiness workers who have had their income or hours reduced due to the drought.

I am interested in working for 5 days per week on the DEP, would this be possible?

Our experience with the employment program that we have run over the last ten years is that most crews will work between 3 – 4 days per week. It is possible some crews may be working for 5 days per week for some of the time, but this is not guaranteed. The reason most farmers and farm workers are available for 3 – 4 days is this allows time to keep up with some of the normal farm work.

I do not want to undertake a medical, can I still participate?

No. The work that participants will be involved with is physical in nature and standard work procedure is for the employer to pay for a medical to ensure the employee is fit for that work.

I don't think I can work in the summer heat, can I still participate in the program?

The employment provider and host partner will need to meet all required OH&S obligations and these include heat policies.

What other OH&S procedures are in place?

The employment provider and host partners have comprehensive range of OH&S processes in place and these will be communicated to participants, training provided and the expectation is they will be followed. The safety of participants is essential in this program.

Who would be employing me?

The employment provider Chandler Macleod Group will be your employer and they will handle all human resources, training and OHS requirements. A range of host partners (such as local government, CMAs, GMW) will have projects to work on and the employer will assign participants to those projects.

What will I be paid?

You will receive a weekly or fortnightly wage based on the number of hours worked per week. Pay rates are at the public sector outdoor employees industry award and will include a casual loading. The estimated rate inclusive of all loadings is around \$30 per hour for a 25 year old.

How can I apply?

For applications and further information for those interested in participating email: shepparton@chandlermacleod.com

What sort of training will you cover?

The program will cover OHS (construction white card) and first aid training as a minimum. The program will also cover a broad range of other training that is identified in the initial interview and goal discussion with participants (and could include ACUP, chainsaws, forklift, 4 wheel driving, cert 1, 2 and possibly cert 3 courses).

Will I be paid while training?

Yes. Contact hours for most courses will be covered by the DEP

Is there a limit to the cost of training I can access?

Fees for courses identified and agreed to up to \$1500 per participant will be covered by the DEP. The costs of the minimum OHS/white card and first aid training are not part of the \$1500 limit.

Are there other sources of information or courses I can access?

Yes, AgVic, North Central CMA and Murray Dairy often run courses aimed at farmers in the GMID to help manage dry conditions or seek further advice on things like water management or succession planning. More information is available at the links below.

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/farm-management/drought/dry-seasons-support#>

<https://www.dairyaustralia.com.au/news-listing/funding-opportunities-and-support-programs-dec-2019?id=6C90EA2A671E4C0DADD2AB7498DF822F>