

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 3 March, 2020

GIVIT DROUGHT RELIEF EXPANDING FOR REGIONAL NSW COMMUNITIES

National online charity **GIVIT**, official drought relief charity partner of the NSW Government, has expanded its Drought Relief program with the appointment of a Drought Relief Officer, allowing the online donation platform to provide greater support to charities and residents impacted by drought.

Since August 2018, GIVIT's 'Drought Relief Appeal' has spent over \$400,000 in drought-affected areas, purchasing and coordinating more than 100,000 item donations for 220 charities working with northern communities from Bourke to Casino, to parched Riverina and southern border towns.

NSW Drought Relief Officer, Melissa Bowman, will first travel to the New England and Hunter communities **Tenterfield, Walcha, Gloucester, Narrabri, Willow Tree** and **Tamworth** to meet with key charities and council representatives to address their local needs.

Ms Bowman will then work with local organisations to coordinate donations of items they request - such as equipment, grocery vouchers and school stationery and uniforms for farmers and households facing hardship due to drought conditions, exacerbated in many areas by bushfires.

Based on a farm near Barraba in the New England, Ms Bowman has experienced first-hand how challenging the on-going severe drought has been on regional NSW communities.

"It's been fantastic to see rain fall across many drought-affected areas, but it has missed others. It'll take years for communities to recover so they need our ongoing support," Ms Bowman said.

Ms Bowman urged all charities and community groups assisting drought-affected families and communities to register at www.givit.org.au/charity-registration request and receive items to help those in need.

"I'm looking forward to reaching out and helping those in my own backyard in the New England to struggling communities across the State. GIVIT is here for the long haul to help get exactly what regional and remote communities need - from a set of tyres for a ute, food for working dogs, or essential school items.

"I'll be working with local groups to identify the critical needs, and look for the best way to meet those needs by purchasing items from local suppliers to support local businesses, who are also doing it extremely tough. Unfortunately, it's not just the farmers that are hurting but entire communities and local economies are struggling."

100 per cent of donated funds received by GIVIT are used to purchase essential items, locally wherever possible.

To donate or more information about GIVIT's Drought Relief Appeal, please visit www.givit.org.au.

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For more information or to arrange an interview please contact

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About GIVIT

GIVIT is a national online not-for-profit connecting those who need with those willing to give. Through its website givit.org.au, trusted Australian charities are supported as they request essential, quality items on behalf of their clients. GIVIT matches their needs with public and corporate generosity, facilitating quality goods to reach our most vulnerable, impoverished and marginalised individuals in a safe, easy and timely manner. Since establishment in 2009, more than 1,600,000 items have been donated via GIVIT to assist Australians in need. In 2011 GIVIT established its disaster recovery service following the Queensland floods and managed the donation of more than 18,000 items.

Since then, GIVIT has become the official partner of the Queensland Government managing offers of assistance after disasters on its behalf and has already distributed more than 212,000 items after 2019 Queensland flooding. GIVIT distributed more than 16,000 items to people in need after the 2018 Queensland fires and after 2017's Tropical Cyclone Debbie, coordinated the donation of 92,000 items. In 2015, GIVIT gained national attention with Founder and Director Juliette Wright receiving Australia's Local Hero Award by the National Australia Day Council and inducted into the Australian Businesswomen's Network Hall of Fame. In 2019, she was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM). GIVIT also received a National Resilient Australia Award by Australia's Attorney-General for its disaster recovery service and The Australian National Innovation Challenge Award.

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