

25 September 2020

## Failures in Regional Investment Corporation delivery to farmers

Grain Producers Australia chairman Mr Andrew Weidemann AM expressed frustration and disappointment at the ongoing failure of the Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) drought loan scheme to meeting grower expectations on delivery and roll out.

Mr Weidemann said, “The federal government Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) has failed to deliver for farmers.”

“In my time of watching government-led programs this is the worst example of incompetence – a farmer waiting more than 674 days, with average response times of nearly a year<sup>1</sup>”, said Mr Weidemann.

The RIC scheme is government backed and the failures in the RIC rollout are not mirrored in other schemes, like the rapid rollout of covid-19 related supports for businesses and communities.

“GPA members have been calling with their concerns for the time taken for their applications to be processed and various levels of bureaucracy. GPA has been in contact with RIC and the Department and have been assured that timelines are improving,” said Mr Weidemann.

“GPA has received assurances that the processing times are getting better with increased resourcing, but recent documentation received by members show this is not happening”, said Mr Weidemann.

GPA remains committed to the provision of support and essential services for farmers, however the current RIC system is betraying the expectations of farmers and the wider agricultural community.

“The failures in RIC has stretched the mental health of the people it was set up to help,” said Mr Weidemann.

GPA recommends that an advisory committee be implemented to fast track changes to the administration and processing times of the scheme, to support the necessary changes needed to meet grower expectations and to restore confidence that the scheme CAN ultimately achieve what it was setup to achieve.

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### Further Information:

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<sup>1</sup> [Senate Question on notice 1848](#); notice given 18 Aug 2020; answered 3 Sept 2020