

National Drought Agreement 2024 to 2029: Outcomes Reporting Framework

The NDA is the intergovernmental agreement that guides Australia's drought efforts, signed by first ministers from the Australian Government, states and territories. This shared approach to drought policy by the parties dates back to the early 1990s and continues to evolve. Regular reviews have focused on improving on achievements from previous agreements and learning over time.

About the framework

The framework describes how the NDA will be monitored and reported on by the parties, as an intergovernmental agreement, and how parties will share learnings.

The framework:

- outlines the ways that the parties will demonstrate how outcomes are achieved over the duration of the NDA
- supports continuous improvement, and informs future priorities
- ensures that the parties have a shared understanding of how outcomes will be monitored
- provides transparency to non-party stakeholders.

The reporting will inform:

- to what extent the parties achieved the outcomes listed in the NDA, and why or why not
- what, if any, unintended outcomes resulted
- what future priorities and opportunities exist through trends identified, lessons learned, or outcomes achieved.

Non-party stakeholders may also use this framework to understand the roles and responsibilities of the parties in reporting, and how the parties will demonstrate delivery of the NDA outcomes for the duration of the NDA.

Scope inclusions

- Roles and responsibilities between and across jurisdictions
- Reporting schedule
- Indicators and measures to determine whether the NDA outcomes have been delivered

- Opportunities and challenges for improvement and learning

Scope exclusions

- Collective impact of drought initiatives, policies and programs
- Individual government drought measures

The 2022 NDA review recommended that future efforts should not seek to measure or evaluate the collective impact of drought initiatives, given it would be unlikely to realise the benefits of this complex work. Doing so would also not align with the intent of the NDA, which is primarily focused on parties working together.

Responsibilities

The joint responsibilities contained within the NDA note the requirement of all parties to monitor drought policy and programs, to share information, to draw learnings, and endeavour to make these lessons learned public, where relevant.

The Commonwealth is responsible for coordinating monitoring, evaluation, learning and reporting efforts including the compilation and delivery of the NDA annual report, noting however that this requires input and involvement from all parties.

All parties are responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of individual programs and policies, contributing data towards reporting, and actively sharing lessons learned to improve clarity, decisions, and policy and programs.

What is needed to achieve the outcomes

- Parties remain committed to working together for the timeframe of the NDA (2024 to 2029) and to make a positive difference towards management of drought in Australia.
- Parties continue to share their policies and programs, and lessons learned with each other in the spirit of collaboration.
- Parties provide adequate resourcing and funding to enable adherence to NDA principles.
- Parties share replicable lessons.
- Sufficient and accessible networks, forums, groups and platforms exist to enable effective sharing of information with non-party stakeholders.
- Non-party stakeholders are motivated to access drought information, tools and lessons learned.

Table 1 Reporting framework

Outcomes	Indicators	Reporting measures	Data sources ^a
Outcome 1 Government drought policies and programs are aligned nationally, and consistent with the NDA principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and existing drought policies and programs in each jurisdiction are aligned and meet the NDA principles and responsibilities. 	Jurisdictional self-assessment and peer review, reported in the NDA annual report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jurisdictional drought-related policy and program lists • Jurisdiction self-assessment against principles matrix

Outcomes	Indicators	Reporting measures	Data sources ^a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AMM Working Group on Drought have an annual workplan to progress implementation of the NDA. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case studies AMM/AGSOC workplan and updates
Outcome 2 Government responses across the drought cycle (preparedness, response, and recovery) reflect a focus on preparedness and the ability to respond and recover quickly from drought.	Government responses and actual spending is reflective of the NDA principles and conditions and impacts experienced over the reporting period.	Jurisdictional self-assessment reported in the NDA Annual Report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jurisdictional expenditure for drought-related programs Case studies
Outcome 3 Information, tools and lessons learned are actively shared to improve clarity, decisions, and policy and programs, for parties and non-party stakeholders.	Opportunities are utilised and networks exist for information sharing between parties, and between parties and non-parties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of AMM Working Group on Drought meetings and a summary of high-level agenda items, reported in the NDA annual report. Number of National Drought Network meetings, number of participants and associated meeting notes. Jurisdictional evaluations are shared, where undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case studies Meeting records Meeting notes AMM/AGSOC workplan and updates

^a Commonwealth to lead as Secretariat. All jurisdictions to contribute towards these data sources. **AMM** Agriculture Ministers' Meeting. **AGSOC** Agriculture Senior Officials Committee.

Reporting schedule

As outlined in the NDA 2024 to 2029:

- The parties will report against the outcomes of this agreement annually to the Agriculture Senior Officials Committee (AGSOC) and as agreed by all parties.
- The AGSOC members, or their representatives, will discuss this agreement annually, or as agreed by all parties, to ensure effective and efficient execution of the agreement.
- AGSOC will report annually to the Agriculture Ministers' Meeting (AMM) and as required, on progress against the outcomes of this agreement.
- Parties will produce an annual update to be publicly released by AMM, in line with the Outcomes Reporting Framework. Reporting will focus on progress against the outcomes of this agreement.

Table 2 Reporting schedule

Reporting	Purpose	Timing
Jurisdictional input	Each jurisdiction provides input from their respective regions, enabling monitoring of progress and lessons learned.	As required
NDA annual report	Jurisdictions provide input from their respective regions which provides detail on the collective progress and performance against the agreed indicators, and opportunity to summarise learnings and focus for future priorities.	Published by December each year ^a
2027 NDA review	Building on NDA outcomes reporting, the review will include external consultation and provide recommendations to inform future agreements.	Published December 2027
NDA Outcomes Reporting Framework review	Informal internal review to be completed by the AMMWG to ensure Outcomes Reporting framework remains fit for purpose and incorporates improvements based on ongoing learning.	February 2026 following 2 NDA annual reporting cycles

^a 'Each year' means yearly for the duration of the NDA 2024 to 2029. **AMMWG** Agriculture Ministers' Meeting Working Group.

How learnings are shared and how they contribute to improvement

The parties will use information derived from reporting activities to monitor and determine progress against achieving the outcomes. The parties will also use it to inform continuous improvement in a variety of ways, including:

- through the AMM Working Group on Drought – reviewing jurisdictional evaluations (where performed), observing trends, and sharing examples of lessons learned to inform work on policies and programs being developed across the jurisdictions
- making replicable learnings public, where appropriate and relevant – for example, through the National Drought Network, or publishing information on websites
- through formal NDA reporting including the NDA annual reports and the 2027 NDA review.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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