

# CABINET MINUTE

ATHERTON  
BRISBANE,

171 6 119 86

DECISION NO.

49107

SUBJECT: Cyclone Damaged Mareeba Rice Crops - Eligibility for Natural  
Disaster Assistance/Cyclone Winifred Scheme.

(Submission No. 44291)

30 Copies Received at 10.00 a.m. 171 6 119 86 Turner  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L  
C A B I N E T                      M I N U T E

Atherton, 17th June, 1986

Decision No. 49107

Submission No. 44291

TITLE: Cyclone Damaged Mareeba Rice Crops  
- Eligibility for Natural Disaster  
Assistance/Cyclone Winifred  
Scheme.

CABINET decided:-

That rice growers in the Mareeba area be eligible for concessional loan assistance under the Cyclone Winifred Scheme due to their crops having suffered cyclone damage.

CIRCULATION: Department of Primary Industries and copy to Minister.  
Agricultural Bank.  
Premier's Department and copy to Premier and Treasurer.  
Treasury Department and copy to Minister.  
All other Ministers for perusal and return.

*Ames*  
Certified True Copy  
*MA*



*M. H. ...*  
A/Secretary to Cabinet.





SECURITY CLASSIFICATION "C"  
FOR CABINET

Submission No. ....4291  
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CYCLONE DAMAGED MAREEBA RICE CROPS  
ELIGIBILITY FOR NATURAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE/CYCLONE WINIFRED SCHEME

1. By Cabinet Decision No. 48012 dated 4th February 1986, prescribed areas in North Queensland were declared a Natural Disaster Area for receiving assistance under the Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements.
2. Mareeba rice growers within the prescribed area have suffered a substantial reduction in 1986 crop yields with estimates ranging from 30% to 40% on most farms, with some individual losses suggested as high as 50% as a result of cyclone damage and the associated disease, bacterial blight.

According to local Departmental officers, there is compelling evidence to suggest that the extent of disease spread and the severity of the yield loss are directly due to the influence of Cyclone Winifred. The wind, driving rain and physical damage to the crop combined to provide an ideal means of infection and spread. The wind direction from the west spread the disease to the east from the initial infection area.

3. The 1986 summer rice crop before the cyclone, showed evidence of small outbreaks of bacterial blight in a few paddocks. However, less than two weeks after Cyclone Winifred, the disease had devastated all farms in the Arriga area.
4. There are 10 growers affected with an estimated loss of 2400 tonnes. This represents a monetary loss of approximately \$480,000. The cost of re-establishing the 1600 hectares on which the rice is grown will be approximately \$479 per hectare or \$766,400. As a result of the above losses, it is estimated that growers will need concessional loan assistance to the extent of \$400,000.
5. Disease and pest outbreaks are outside the eligibility criteria for the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements. However, in the case of the damage caused to the Mareeba rice crops, there is no doubt that it has resulted from the severe lodging, wind and rain injury sustained during the onslaught of Cyclone Winifred.

6. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT Cabinet approve that rice growers in the Mareeba area be eligible for concessional loan assistance under the Cyclone Winifred Scheme due to their crops having suffered cyclone damage.

(N.J. Turner)

MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

Brisbane

13 JUN 1986