

DELATITE  
COMMUNITY  
HEALTH  
SERVICE

# Benalla Drought Outreach Service

Adaptive Practice  
Speaker – Diana Chomley

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# History of Drought in Victoria

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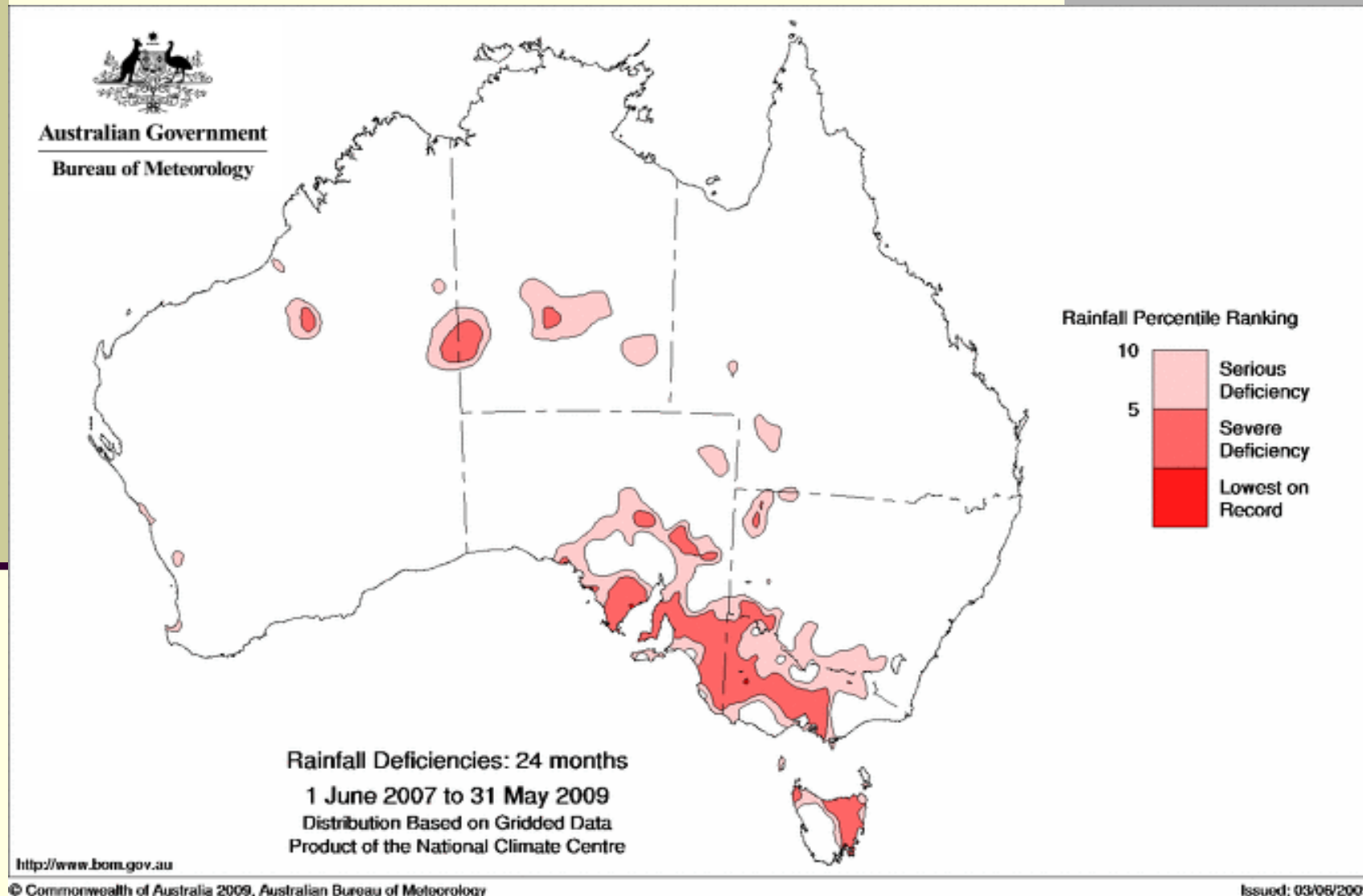
By 2004, Victoria was heading into its eighth consecutive year in drought. This was having a considerable impact on farmers' social interaction and dependency. Issues that faced farming communities included:

- declining public infrastructure (eg) loss of regional banks
- lack of access to health services, especially Bulk Billing General Practitioners
- lack of facilities and services such as telecommunications
- intergenerational/succession issues in an increasingly difficult economic environment
- the ageing farmer population
- globalization
- information and bio-technology revolutions

These issues were contributing to a growing sense of uncertainty and loss of control for farm families and rural communities (Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety, 2008).

# Rainfall deficiencies

## June 2007 – May 2009



# History of the Rural Outreach Worker Position

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- Initial funding was secured by Hume Corridor Community Health Service to employ a Drought Outreach Worker in 2002-2003. The person who would fulfil this role would have a background in Social Worker, Counselling, Community Development or Nursing. This worker was to listen to peoples' concerns, provide social support for affected families and assist these people in having their opinions and concerns heard by the powers that be.
- Ivan Lister was recruited into the position of Rural Outreach Worker. His down to earth attitude was embraced by the local community. Local property owners appreciated sharing their stories with "someone who was a real bloke" and "someone who showed genuine care for the community and its residents".

# Drought / Rural Outreach Workers

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To be effective in their work, Rural Outreach and support workers require a repertoire of skills and knowledge, including:-

- Assertive outreach capabilities
- Flexibility; and
- An understanding of the challenges of rural communities

Rural Outreach and support workers and their organisations need to develop effective and innovative ways to combine counselling and community development approaches.

# Drought conditions, enough to make you cry

Taken by Anne Kiely

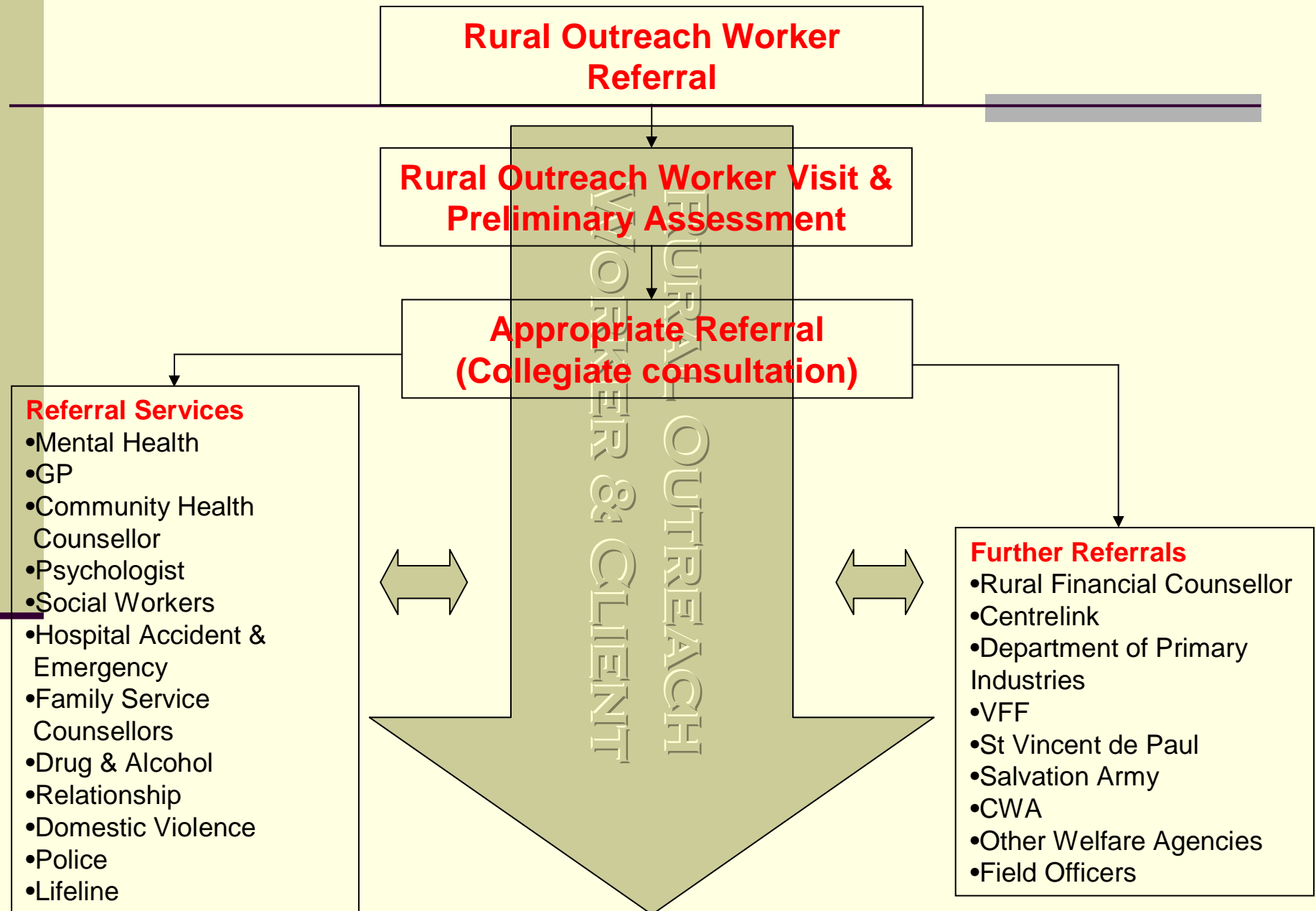


# Benalla Drought Outreach Service

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The Rural Drought Outreach Service is provided by Delatite Community Health Service. There have been different funding arrangements to assist in the ongoing provision of this service. The main contributors to funding the Rural Drought Outreach Service have been Delatite Community Health Service (DCHS), Hume Corridor Community Health Service (HCCHS), Benalla Rural City Council and the Department of Human Services. The service is seen as a means of building bridges for the community to connect to appropriate support services.

# Service Delivery Model





## Lake Eppalock near Bendigo

Taken by Stuart Mcevoy



## Dry irrigation dam, Nathalia

Taken by Griffin Mark



# The Bonnie Doon area of Lake

Eildon - Taken by David Caird



## Dying Orchards – Shepparton

Taken by Zoe Phillips



