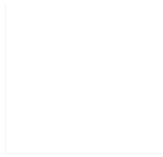


From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Monday, 11 April 2022 10:26:22 AM



Your details

Title

First name

Last name

Email

Postcode

Submission details

I am making this submission as

Submission type

Consent to make submission public

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story

have often spoke about how the water backs more and more into Bexhill since the installation of the LEVEE in Lismore. The most recent March 2022 Flood was unprecedented and shocking at the least. My partner and I started preparing our house late on Sunday afternoon, we always clean out the shed and place tools etc up on tables just incase it goes through our property again. The rain was particularly relentless that night. By the times the light had gone Sunday afternoon there was still no water on the cricket oval next to our house but by 10pm it was like a tsunami of water just appeared it was everywhere and already hitting the 1.8m water sign down from our house. With still no alerts from SES we continued to raise items up out of our studio and got the chickens out of the hen house and place them in the trees, we then proceeded to drive our cars and caravan up the hill. By 12 o'clock at night the water was knee deep surrounding our house, this was now larger than the '2017' flood and the rain was continuing to fall extremely hard. We started to run round to our neighbours to make sure they got there cars out and they were starting to prepare to leave. Still no message from SES or anyone on our phones. Reception wasn't great but I still continued to check the BOM, Lismore Council Facebook page and our local Bexhill page. BY 2am the water was now at waist height - we now had to leave. I quickly packed a change of clothes for myself, my two daughters and my partner. We called a neighbour and my partner and I got a child each onto our shoulders and walked the kids out and up to the car. We took the kids to a neighbours house and popped them into bed, and my partner and I went back to the house. The time we got back to the house the water was one step off entering our house, and my partner grabbed a surf board and went back in for my family Jewellery the only possession I would get out. The water continued to rise the following few hours until it was over the top of our doorway, everything was now gone.

Terms of Reference (optional)

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#)

1.1 Causes and contributing factors

La nina, obviously played a huge roll here. The Northern Rivers has received huge amounts of rain in the last 6 months.

But as I stated above people that have lived in Bexhill for some time, have said they have noticed more and more water backing up into Bexhill since the installation of the LEVEE. Bexhill is North of Lismore on the Wilson River. We have also had a huge storm water problem for some time were the water does not go through the storm water drains because they are damaged in some way. This was raised with council in the 2017 floods and they have not done anything about it.

The other contributing factor could have something to do with all the development the state and local government have allowed in Bexhill. This area is a known flood plain and with more pressure on the storm water services, roads put in so run off is pushed further down and less and less land to absorb the water. There has been 4 new properties built in Bexhill between 2012-2019 and each one of them went completely under. There is also a new development underway on the hill side behind the Bexhill oval which has had so many water problems which has hindered progress... and actually luckily for the new owners as all proposed bottom properties would have gone completely under in the 2022 flood.

1.2 Preparation and planning

We only knew to plan because we had experienced the 2017 flood. But new surrounding neighbours lost their cars because they were given no warning... theses properties had only been recently built too. Our property has been in situ before 86', but I can not believe the state and local government would approve these other surrounding buildings to be built where they have. Its been flagged as a flood

plain since the 80's , so development should not have happened.

1.3 Response to floods

The response from the federal government was appalling , the SES a mostly volunteer organisation was again expected to do so much. We had a friend who is a professional fisherman whom were one of the first people on the seen in Lismore saving people off their roofs, they were also ripping roof sheets off peoples home to pull people out of their roof cavities. The Army should have been deployed MONDAY 1st of March 2022. Why else do we have such trained experts?

1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery

In Bexhill the community was amazing, people were helping from the Wednesday once the water receded. The local RFS was also incredible they were on the scene straight away too. Our house was completely gutted and emptied before the federal government had even called a state of emergency. We are now is April and we still have not heard from the Insurance company, we are lucky enough to have a family property to go to. But when its a state of emergency and declared a natural disaster the government need something in place to help people faster - I believe they know how to respond to these types of situations as they have to do it in North Queensland with Cyclones.

1.6 Any other matters

I really hope with this flood inquiry they make more land affordable for people and stop filling in wetlands and flood plains. People deserve to have a safe home and the poor should not be blamed for living in areas of vulnerability. And lastly I hope the government finally understand these are effects of Climate Change and we need to declare a Climate emergency - and we need urgent action by all levels of government now.

Supporting documents or images

Attach files

- -
-

