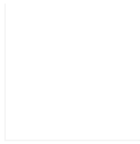


From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, 27 April 2022 5:55:37 PM



Your details

Title

First name

Last name

Email

Postcode

Submission details

I am making this submission as A resident in a flood-affected area

Submission type I am making a personal submission

Consent to make submission public I would like this submission to remain anonymous

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story I moved to Lismore somewhat reluctantly post the 2017 floods. I live on a farm just outside of Lismore. My farm is on a hill and it began to flood three days before the major event on the 28th February. As I live on a hill this was quite distressing. This flooding occurred due to road works and movement of a drain at the top of my property by council in the preceding six months. I

note that this work occurred without my approval and I only became aware of it when I spoke to the road workers as they concluded the project. As I was trying to pump water from entering our home my wife called the SES and explained to them that our carport was flooding. Their response was less than helpful. It astonishes me that the SES are able to make comments to people that they were not informed. I was in Byron Bay at the time of the 2017 flood and observed that the SES refused to listen to experienced locals during this event. The same thing happened this time

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

Post the 2017 floods community advocates fought very hard to ensure that the findings of the community were heard. These findings very clearly stated that local knowledge was a critical input to the capacity for Lismore to deal with floods. There had been extensive rainfall for months leading up to this incident, more rain fell in Queensland, the upper catchment and within the Lismore area than ever before. Given the lessons of 2017 and the rainfall why was the SES not prepared.

1.2 Preparation and planning

the Lismore city Council must be held responsible for their part in this disaster. They announced a few weeks after the flood that they had failed to obtain a grant for approximately \$160,000 to fix gauges that provided updates as to water levels. How can a piece of critical infrastructure such as this be left to the vagaries of a grant application? What is the state of the councils finances that within a few hundred million dollars of budget they could not find the money for this? I understand that the council has protocols in place for preparing people for these disasters, such the lower car park gates, install the temporary flood barriers in Keen Street, alert

the community etc. Why were these alerts not provided to the community via their disaster dashboard. This question must be answered as part of your enquiry.

1.3 Response to floods

The immediate response was traumatic. From the Friday before the flood we were calling neighbours and friends asking them if they had boats just in case they were needed. By the Saturday afternoon we were calling people that lived in the basin area to see if they needed help evacuating. Most had already gone as water had completely risen into their homes and the levy wall had not even broken. The community did an amazing job, the SES completely failed. The decentralisation of the SES has been a major mistake and it has cost our community a great deal.

1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery

This is a very peculiar question. When did recovery actually start? Is it recovery that someone has a bunch of cords running from the one working power point in their home. One room with a floor but no walls, no running water. Is this the commencement of recovery? I think not. The transition has not been communicated as that. Local organisations are still feeding people that cannot cook in their homes (it is 9 weeks on), local organisations are still helping people fill in grant applications, local organisations are finding tradespeople and tools. Shambolic

1.5 Recovery from floods

The petition that was conducted to get the Government to listen finally garnered 19,000 signatures and they came forward and established the NRRC. It does not formally commence its work until the 1st July. Beyond comprehension really. The Mayor is talking about Lismore people going back into areas that are now known to be completely unsafe. I hope that the NRRC looks very carefully at this. I was traumatised from driving around delivering meals, from the damage to my own property and from the people that have been staying with me.

There has to be a new way.

1.6 Any other matters

The SES when responding to my wife's call on the Wednesday before the major event sent an emoji articulating surprise. This demonstrates to me that the SES were not even considering that there was a major event on the way

Supporting documents or images
