To the Inquiry.

Our home near Murwillumbah was flooded in the February rain event.

There are two particular service shortcomings that exacerbated the impact on us.

1. The Bureau of Meteorology forecast consistently advised a flood level below the 2017 level. Unfortunately we believed this and acted accordingly. This meant that when the new flood level was realised, many of our possessions including cars and other goods that could have been moved out of harm's way were lost.
   While we will never again believe the BoM warnings/advice, some folks will, and I think the Bureau should state in bold type on each warning that it's forecasts are speculative and must not be relied on.

2. Telstra and the NBN. All our communications, phone and internet are channelled via Telstra. From mid-morning on February 28 when Tesltra infrastructure failed we were without information inflow or communications of any kind. There was no phone, no news, no 000 emergency contact for over a week. These are essential services, combined with access restrictions as roads and electricity went missing, such a failure has real and potentially fatal consequences for the people of this area.
   The lack of redundancy for this critical service needs to be addressed. I know the state government does not have much sway over Telstra but hopefully the Inquiry report can highlight Telstra's failure to provide the contracted service in an emergency situation. Possibly outside the scope of the Inquiry is the woeful Telstra response. They suggested (after the failure) that we should have invested in a satellite phone, they have still not provided us an explanation for the failure or committed to hardening the infrastructure. Their insulting offer of $3.50 compensation seems illustrative of Telstra attitude to servicing rural communities and anything you can do to motivate Telstra toward a change of heart would be welcome.

   Thank you for your time