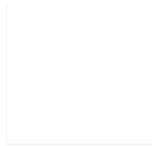


From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, 11 May 2022 6:36:48 PM



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

Thursday 24th and Friday 25th Feb 2022 the STP on Palm Avenue in Mullumbimby was flashing warning lights. Our toilet on Palm Ave was backing up at this point due to the sodden ground and overwhelmed gravity-fed sewage pipes.

The evening of Sunday 27th I sandbagged the

doors of the garage/laundry on ground level and activated the ground-pump in our largest ground sump to remove groundwater from the property out to the verge. Our street gutter is ineffectual in heavy rain events as they are overwhelmed and the water draining from sumps is unable to escape.

In the early hours of Monday 28th February sewage erupted from the toilet and the overwhelmed stormwater system pushed a large volume of water through our property from west to east. As long-term residents of Mullumbimby we have witnessed a dramatic change in the nature of how groundwater behaves since the development of Tallowood Estate and Towers Industrial Estate on opposing sides of Mullumbimby township.

Several hours later creekwater came up over the handrails of the bridge at the mouth of Main Arm Rd and came up to the first house on Palm Avenue. Water was running very quickly at thigh-height down Main Arm Rd from west to east, smashing into the rising creek water on the corner of Palm Avenue.

By approximately 9am Monday 28th we lost power (therefore also NBN and landline). Within 12 hours (from memory) we had also lost mobile service. This situation remained for days, and then the mobile and internet outage went on for many days longer.

My husband volunteers for the RFS, and the SES were not willing to include their member's support in the rescue and recovery of people and buildings. Communication to and between SES, RFS, 000 and other emergency services was non-existent at times.

My family's property is at the end of [redacted] and we had to drive to Fraser's Rd and walk through the creek across 4 destroyed low-level

and bridge creek crossings on Tuesday 29th to check on the welfare of my elderly father. Several days of rain prior meant nobody out there could have evacuated earlier as low-level crossings were unable to be crossed. He also had no power, no communication, no way of getting in or out in a medical emergency. Residents below and above him on the road had been impacted by large landslips.

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

Overwhelmed, antiquated gravity-fed sewage pipes. Stormwater drains broken, blocked and inadequate. Development at Tallowood Estate and Towers Industrial Estate have observably changed the flow of rain/groundwater in Mullumbimby since they were established. The 2 developments have created a dam where water is unable to leave the township.

1.2 Preparation and planning

Resilience of communication and electricity infrastructure.
Co-ordination of multiple emergency services.
Listen to long-time residents with regard to silted up waterways, excessive development, overwhelmed stormwater and sewage systems.

Supporting documents or images
