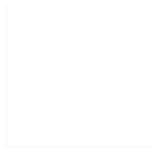


**From:** [NSW Government](#)  
**To:** [Flood Inquiry](#)  
**Subject:** Floods Inquiry  
**Date:** Friday, 13 May 2022 12:25:36 PM



## 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

The small 2 bedroom cottage I part own in the village of Bexhill was built in 1864. The 1974 and 2017 floods entered the back garden only. This house has never had flooding inside before and has the Wilsons Creek as its back property boundary. The flooding was more than 2 meters higher than those 2 floods and a meter or higher in the living areas. On the morning of the 28

February a wave of water rushed into the cottage. The Street on Bangalow Road the Cottage is on becomes isolated with water covering the road in 2 places being Greengates Road and Trimbell Oval making access during flooding by water craft only. Unfortunately being a small village only 7 klm from Lismore it seemed to be forgotten even though more that 20 homes were inundated some like mine had never experienced inside flooding. The only assistance I received was from friends and neighbours. When to roads opened the Village Rural Fire Service advised they were unable to assist as they were tasked to Lismore leaving the cottage clean up to myself.

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## **Terms of Reference (optional)**

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

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### **1.1 Causes and contributing factors**

The Village of Bexhill is upstream from the junction of the Wilsons Creek and Coopers Creek. It appears that the volume of rain recorded in Dunoon some 700 mil in a short timeframe caused a collision of waters at the junction of the 2 creeks and forced the water back up Wilsons Creek causing the wave.

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### **1.2 Preparation and planning**

As this cottage had never flooded before no preparations were required until the water started to enter the cottage. A neighbour on higher ground offered the use of their garage for storage of what I could take from the cottage in the pouring rain to be saved but the water rose too quickly to save most of the furniture and belongings as the possessions had been inundated and were floating. I had to leave for my own safety.

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### **1.3 Response to floods**

The Bexhill community set up a voluntary recovery centre in the local Hall for those who had nowhere else to go. Sleeping arrangements were organised and donations received. I did not need to sleep at the Hall. The cottage at this

stage was still flood water isolated and my only means of access to the Cottage was by my canoe. My first visit to the Bexhill Hall to obtain some cleaning products and food was not successful as I was meet with a very hostile volunteer and not offered food from the BBQ cooking so I left. I did however the next day return as I needed some things and was meet with a much better response but again even though food was being distributed throughout the village in isolation none was delivered to my cottage even though it could have been sent by water craft. Whilst still flood bound a message was received from the Hall that those remaining isolated in my street needed to go to the Hall to register. I advised a neighbour who was going to tell them I was alive if thats what was needed by who ever was going to be at the Hall. The street residents some elderly who had never been in a canoe before and without life jackets were extremely frightened and anxious about the water crossing. After reaching the Hall the residents were not meet by anyone for whatever reason they were supposed to be there for and I do not know who was responsible for this registration request.

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**1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery**

The Cottage is insured for flood with claim lodged on 1 March and at this date 13 May have had assessors visit and a builder allocated. There has been no contact from the allocated builder and when I have phoned to enquire of the progress with the builder the reply is usually I am just one of the many they have to get to.

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**1.5 Recovery from floods**

The Cottage has suffered extensive mildewing on most walls ceiling and floors and as no strip out has been undertaken by the builder I have begun to take down some wall sheeting myself.

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**1.6 Any other matters**

I am extremely disappointed with the NSW Rural Fire Service I understand the volunteers were only obeying orders to leave Bexhill and go to Lismore but some consideration should have been by Management controlling tasks that the

Brigade look after their own residents before going to Lismore. As I was wheeling barrow loads of flooded possessions from the cottage to the roadside the passing parade of mud army volunteers going to Lismore didn't even notice me I only had one motorist stop to help. I now consider Bexhill not one of Lismores historic villages but Lismores forgotten village.

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### **Supporting documents or images**

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