

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Friday, 13 May 2022 11:50:17 AM

Your details

Title Mrs

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Submission details

I am making this submission as A member of the general public

Submission type I am making a personal submission

Organisation making the submission (if applicable) N/A

Your position in the organisation (if applicable) N/A

Consent to make submission public I give my consent for this submission to be made public

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story

During the recent Lismore floods of February-March 2022 I almost lost 8 relatives: my niece & her partner plus 2 daughters of _____ St , Lismore & my son & three grandchildren of _____ St , Lismore . Both families had to take refuge in their ceilings & await rescue from the flood waters which rise suddenly to 14.5 metres . The house my son lived in is owned by my husband and I who live in Camden , NSW & we now have a flood damaged property that is not habitable but in need of refitting , so a vicious chain of events has unfolded : we no longer have rent coming in, but still have a mortgage to pay , my son is homeless & had his business wiped out twice by the flood of 27-28 February & again by the flood in March . Rental properties are scarce for housing people in Lismore but are urgently needed but refurbishment of our property has not happened yet as builders & tradies are needed everywhere in N Rivers .

The rivers in Lismore rose only after weeks of rain & there was damage from that as well as the floods . Lives were under serious threat as the BOM predicted a flood if 12.4 m & we thought my son & grandkids were safe as our house had been raised to above that height in a previous year. We received a very sudden alert via LCC to evacuate immediately as the height of the flood had suddenly been realised at 14.5 m, which would put 2.5 m of water into the top storey of the house .

I phoned the SES on behalf of both my niece & my son , as they were dealing with escaping the flood by getting into their ceilings & were busy with that . The SES did not reply & after 1/2 hour I hung up to try a second time . The second time I was on the line 20 minutes without an answer . I hung up & dialled the RFS . I was sniggered at & told I needed to ring 000 & ask for police, which I did . They at least answered and took down the names addresses & ages of my niece, her partner & children & the names & ages of my

son & his children plus their address. The police told me they would pass this information onto the SES. This was circular none sense , as the SES had not answered their phone when I had called them twice.. I was in despair as my son had entered "radio silence" for 1/2 hour while he bashed a hole in the ceiling to save his kids' lives. He had to abandon both his dogs to the flood water . I thought I would have to bury my son & my three grandkids thinking they had drowned. We all have PTSD now from the fear of death & dying, the magnitude of the grief & of the loss . This is multiplied by the losses sustained by others in Lismore , which we all feel too as it is our community too. We need help to rebuild our house , to provide accomodation in Lismore , to get businesses restated BUT most of all we need professional hydrologists to come up with plans for the protection of Lismore from floods : dams, bugger dans, diversion of creeks, streams , rivers . Not levees that do not work in climate change !!!

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	<p>Inadequacy of the SES, RFS & police during this fatal emergency .</p> <p>Inadequacy of the levee in Lismore that was overtopped and also sends floodwaters into other areas of Lismore .</p> <p>Need for professional hydrologists , civil engineers to solve this problem .</p> <p>Need to deepen / widen the rivers of Lismore .</p> <p>Need for damming / diversion of creeks, streams & rivers .</p>
1.2 Preparation and planning	<p>A band aid job is not what is needed . Hire professional hydrologists !!!</p>
1.3 Response to floods	<p>The emergency services were hopelessly inadequate . Most rescues were done by citizens & strangers using personal equipment such as</p>

tinnies and kayaks . A solitary kayaker rescued my son & grand children one by one . The dogs had to fend for themselves . All had no life vests . My niece & her family were saved by a man with his recreational tinny .

1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery

There was no accomodation fir mist in Lismore . My grand children had to stay with their mother & my son was generously housed for about a month by his rescuer in the kayak . My niece & family are in Ballina with the niece's mother .

1.5 Recovery from floods

The second flood wiped out my son's business for a second time , after rebuilding it . He has literally lost everything !!!!

1.6 Any other matters

We in Sydney need help with a property that used to house my son & grand children . The property has a mortgage that still has to be paid off but it needs refurbishing but there are no builders yet available . This is a vicious circle for us as I am retired & my husband wants to retire !!! Only good thing is my family & their pet dogs survived .

Supporting documents or images
