

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Friday, 20 May 2022 1:01:18 PM
Attachments: [DelaceyBossardFloodInqSubmission 1.pdf](#)

Your details

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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 give my consent for this submission to be made public

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story	See attached
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Terms of Reference (optional)

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

Supporting documents or images

Attach files

- [DelaceyBossardFloodingSubmission_1.pdf](#)
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Submission to Flood Inquiry

We are submitting as members of the public and as active volunteers who are working to assist flood-affected residents.

We are aware that many people are traumatised by the floods and are unlikely to place a submission as they too grief-stricken to revisit the night of the floods. The aftermath of the floods has worsened that trauma. This is further compounded by the state and federal government's lack of commitment to provide appropriate levels of social and financial support to affected parties.

People appear to be disheartened that they are being asked to submit grant applications etc. electronically, when it is clear that they do not have the means to do so. We have spoken to numerous people who have not received any financial support yet. Instead these people say that they have been consistently asked for more documentation that they certainly would not have, given that many have lost all of their personal belongings.

We are aware that insurance costs are so high that it is not affordable for many home- and business owners to pursue. Whilst it is not appropriate to socialise the entire cost of repair associated with the floods, it is important that a safety net is cast to ensure that people's living arrangements meet an acceptable level of safety. This is particularly poignant given that Lismore City Council has approved much of the development in Lismore and surrounding flood-prone areas. The federal government similarly refuses to acknowledge the impact of climate change, nor our increasing propensity for flooding. In that vein, we believe that inappropriate coastal and flood-prone development, as well as inappropriate bushfire-prone development needs to be much more considered than is currently the case. The concept of 1: 100 year floods is no longer meaningful because we have had such a quantum shift in our climate and weather systems.

The high proportion (greater than 90%) of public money spent on disasters is spent on disaster clean-up rather than mitigation (which accounts for less than 10% of expenditure). This is not an efficient use of public money. Funding for disaster response and ongoing support services is clearly inadequate. We clearly need more coordination and less bureaucracy. Both federal and state governments need to take a more significant role.

During the flood clean-up, the dedicated military commitment was obviously helpful but needed to be more timely and coordinated and available for a much longer period of time. In the US, for example, there is a dedicated corps of military personnel tasked with civil works on a perpetual basis.

Hillslopes in the region are now highly vulnerable to landslip, particularly on steep slopes below the tree line, which were once used agriculturally for now abandoned banana growing. These slopes have long been left without any vegetation rehabilitation, and are now infested with shallow-rooted plants, a scenario all too common during recent landslip events. As these soils are already completely saturated, further rainfall events are likely to result in more landslip and further road damage. Revegetation programs should be implemented as a matter of urgency with government support.

The current La Nina climatic situation is obviously worsening an already complicated situation. The combination of climate change, an exceptionally high-rainfall wet season and long-duration wet

season have all contributed to the current scenario. Engineering solutions are expensive, and whilst they might have once been a reasonable response to flooding in Lismore, the IPCC report makes it clear that these events will become more frequent. Such solutions are not guaranteed to work and invariably push the problem elsewhere. Given the federal and state government's inaction on climate change and the wholesale approval of inappropriate development on floodplains, the federal and state government should contribute to a buyout scheme to enable landowners from the flood-prone parts of Lismore to move on.

Claire Delacey and Karl Bossard