

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Monday, 9 May 2022 2:16:47 PM

Your details

Title	Mrs
First name	Gendy
Last name	Parry-Okeden
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Postcode	2753

Submission details

I am making this submission as	A resident in a flood-affected area
Submission type	I am making a personal submission
Organisation making the submission (if applicable)	Giddiup Pty Limited
Your position in the organisation (if applicable)	Director
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

The floods of 2021 and 2022 heavily impacted our property in the Richmond Lowlands. The issue for us starts when the water is released from the Warragamba Dam. A full river and then the additional release of water from the Warragamba was irresponsible and reprehensible. I understand the dam is legislated for 'water storage' not 'flood mitigation' but there needs to be a duty of care in the time of a Natural Disaster. If this legislation can not be changed for the current dam wall, how can the government be advocating for raising the dam wall without first changing the legislation and allowing sensible flood mitigation with the current dam.

I can visually see the flow change when the Warragamba is released as our property on the Hawkesbury River. The increase in volume erodes the river bank and this will no doubt be a huge issue with greater volumes of water released if the wall is raised and there is more water to release. I flag this as a huge issue and threat to river facing farms.

The water needs to be released prior to the dam being full. The release of water into an already swollen river is not logical.

Additionally, the water released from Warragamba causes the water to 'lie' over our farmlands for longer, increasing the length of the flood. When water lies over these productive flats for more than 10 days the pastures are sterilised and rendered useless until they can be reseeded or planted.

The oversight by Hawkesbury Council to repair the damage to Cornwallis Road, meant more water came onto the lowlands more quickly and did not escape or drain. Compounding the flood. This again is a liable action.

The communication around water release was also lacking. Sydney Water went silent for the 24hrs when the peak of the flood occurred and did not advise on the gigalitres being released from the dam during the two days at the peak. As locals this information is very important to

allow us to understand river heights.
Local roads are not capable of managing evacuation traffic. Local drains have not been maintained and again leading to an extended effect due to water not draining as it should.
With regards to local infrastructure, the Hawkesbury requires a flood free route across the river so residents to the west are not isolated from Hospitals, schools and work.
We have no official alerts or notifications of flood heights or warnings in 2022. We did receive these in 2021, however they were outdated or mostly inaccurate.
I did not see one official SES, police or government body visit our area during the evacuation periods. My family assisted with many rescues of people and animals with our own boats.
The Flood Grants from Service NSW have been more traumatic to navigate than the actual disasters. The inefficiency and ineptitude rendered me to tears and desperation on more than one occasion.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Release of water form Warragamba dam during peak of flood- Hole in River Bank at Cornwallis- Poor comms by council, government- drains and local roads in disrepair and not maintained- lack of flood resilient infrastructure
1.2 Preparation and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dam water should be released before major rain event, Dam height maintained below 100%
1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery	Flood Grants to be actioned with more trained staff. Recovery can not occur without funds and resources
1.5 Recovery from	Roads to be repaired and maintained.

floods

Governments need to invest in flood-resilient infrastructure.

1.6 Any other matters

Change legislation around Warragamaba Dam water storage/flood mitigation
Create a comms unit like Hawkesbury Flood Statistics Unit on Facebook

Supporting documents or images
