

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Friday, 20 May 2022 4:23:19 PM
Attachments: [2022 Flood Inquiry Submission - Gunnedah Shire Council.pdf](#)

Your details

Title Mr

First name Jeremy

Last name Bartlett

Email

Postcode 2380

Submission details

I am making this submission as Other

Submission type I am submitting on behalf of my organisation

Organisation making the submission (if applicable) Gunnedah Shire Council

Your position in the organisation (if applicable) Director Infrastructure Services and Local Emergency Management Officer

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

Share your experience or tell your story

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

- [2022 Flood Inquiry Submission - Gunnedah Shire Council.pdf](#)
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NSW Government – Flood Inquiry Submission

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/flood-inquiry-submissions-portal>

20 May 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

Gunnedah Shire Council Flood Inquiry Submission

Please find this letter as Gunnedah Shire Council's submission to the 2022 Flood inquiry. We are encouraged by the opportunity to provide this input to the inquiry. The following issues were identified during the major flood events of November and December 2021 that our community is still recovering from, and from observations of emergency management, and recovery arrangements generally.

- Infrastructure restoration funding needs to allow provisions to improve resilience of the restored essential public infrastructure to future similar events – upgrades that will prevent the restored infrastructure being damaged again in a reasonably foreseeable future event need to be made eligible. Failing to do this simply results in repeat claims for the restoration of the same infrastructure in future events.
- Appropriate land use planning decisions need to be made/enabled to mitigate risk – existing building entitlement measures where a dwelling or commercial property is within identified risk areas need to be removed. The cost of this needs to be funded by the State Government. The current house raising and buy back scheme is too constrained in criteria, requires property owners, and/or Councils to have adequate funds to co-contribute, and is inadequately funded by the State Government to enable any meaningful change to the risk profile to occur (statewide funding for this program is less than \$2m annually).
- Service NSW local touch points for community contact in recovery. Service NSW Centre's should have agility to operate as touch points for service referral during the response and recovery phase of disaster events. Combat agencies commonly refer members of the public requiring assistance directly to Councils who don't deliver any of the services impacted members of communities are in need of. Most of these services are delivered by NSW Government Agencies, and Service NSW would be best placed to be the central point of contact for this.

- Recovery Committees - Council run recovery committees are simply not appropriate or realistic given the business as usual responsibilities to be delivered also within existing resourcing levels. In the most recent events in Gunnedah, Council became the default call centre in the absence of appropriate resourcing by State Government agencies. WELFAC in particular requested Council Customer Service be the nominated point of contact for individuals needing WELFAC assistance as they did not have capacity to provide this service during the event. This was raised in the post event, After Action Review process also.
- Funding needs to be made available for the provision of Emergency Operations Centres in each LGA if they are going to continue to be considered under the SERM Act to be Council's responsibility to provide. Alternatively, these facilities should be provided by a centralized State Government agency such as Resilience NSW, and not be Councils responsibility to provide.
- Ownership/recognition of RFS/SES assets – Councils have no authority to control them. They should not be accounted for in Councils finances and should be entirely funded and accounted for by the State Government.
- Emergency Services Levy should be able to be separated out on rates notices and directly passed on without being constrained by the rate capping process to ensure greater transparency.
- Live traffic, ability to put all roads on this platform, local roads included – one source of truth across the state.
- Total weather stations and flood gauges. Need more of them centrally managed with live data available to the public and all agencies. Suggest BOM/SES/RFS in partnership would be appropriate authorities for this.

Any questions please don't hesitate to contact Council on 02 6740 2100.

Yours faithfully



Jeremy Bartlett
DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

Contact:
Reference:
jb:tm