### Your details

Title	Mrs
First name	Kathryne
Last name	Ward
Email	
Postcode	2472

### **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

Flood inquiry submission
"This is your opportunity to tell your story,
whether by making a submission online or
attending a local session in person. Every
submission will make a meaningful contribution
to this important work to understand how we can
better prepare for flooding, recover from this

disaster and plan for the future," Mr Perrottet said.

Kathryne Ward River St Broadwater, NSW, 2472 19/04/22

"- the causes of and factors contributing to the frequency, intensity, timing and location of floods;"

Natural Causes:

- typical rainy season in the Northern Rivers area of NSW

- La Nina ocean weather pattern
- an upper level disturbance forming
- a lot of moisture already in the ground

- the old Pacific Hwy, 28/2/22

Man-made Causes:

Global warming from irresponsible use of the earth's resources including burning of fossil fuels for energy production particularly for heating, transporting and construction, or use of fossil fuels in products such as agriculture fertiliser or plastics growth of less plants, lowering amounts of photosynthesis and carbon storage release of carbon held in soils with various agricultural practices release of methane in irresponsible waste management.

This is leading to increased greenhouse gases, mostly CO2, in the atmosphere which is increasing our global temperatures and causing higher rates of evaporation, more frequent and intense weather events such as flooding, while melting polar glaciers and increasing sea levels and ocean and rainfall acidification. The record breaking height of the recent flood in the Richmond Valley Catchment in the Northern Rivers region of NSW and the increase in frequency of major flooding, i.e. a 1 in 100 flood just 5 years ago in Lismore, would indicate that human induced climate change is at least part of the cause of this recent flooding event/events.

In the town I live in called Broadwater we have no measuring pole with flood height above AHD as significant flooding has not occurred since 1954 I think (I refer to "A Short History of Broadwater" produced by the CWA). We therefore took photos to keep record. The recent flood went to the top of our kids bus stop and over the top of the nearby street sign, Simmons St. (please see photos)

The morning of the flood 1st March 2022

2nd of March 2022

#### Another man made cause

the new pacific highway at Broadwater at the southern end does not allow flood waters to go under it and acts like a dam wall or levee. Between Broadwater and Woodburn this seems to be a particular problem.

The levee in Lismore is another structure which may protect half the town Lismore to some degree but worsens it for those on the wrong side of it.

Another man made problem arising from the flood

to make the flood's impact worse there is significant chemical contamination to deal with in Broadwater. A 60,000L diesel fuel tank was not tied up at the Sugar Mill, it floated around the village and down a street before expelling its contents. Also a sump oil collection container was not sealed and it washed downstream all over the village and its businesses. There appears to be irresponsible management of fuels and chemicals by nearby industry. I hear fuel leaks may also have occurred from the two fuel stations. Other chemicals also went astray. (please see photos) " - preparation and planning by agencies and the community for floods in NSW;
- responses to floods, particularly measures to protect life, property and the environment;
- the transition from incident response to recovery;

In regards to preparation we did receive an sms the evening before for Broadwater to evacuate. but we are on a hill and so decided to stay. Others on the flats took their cars to higher ground but stayed in their homes as they had pets or wanted to lift things in their house as waters rose. Most simply didn't expect it to get so high as there was no prediction for our town. People were left to guess for themselves based on river height readings at Lismore, Woodburn & Ballina. Other preparation may be the messages on the radio we got on not driving through floodwater.

Here in Broadwater we found the response to the flood by government paid services was negligible. The towns SES building was under water and the SES volunteers houses were also under water. Roads were cut and phone communication was minimal. We were helped apparently by having our electricity cut off which meant water stopped coming out of our taps around day 3 as well and our sewage system stopped working. Listening to the radio it seemed like no-one knew or cared what was happening to our town and ones near it. On the second of March a Police Helicopter was flying over us, this was of some comfort.

The community did the rescuing and the sorting of people into accomodation either to up here on

the hill at Broadwater or off to Evans Head. The network of people helping people and using and sharing what they had got us through the initial disaster without any loss of human life. It was recommended to us that we invite someone in for a cup tea if we had accommodation or food or such to help them with. We did this and thus turned out with 7 guests, 4 dogs, 2 cats, 2 birds , a rat and at one stage about 8 chickens.

We happened to be fairly well equipped with a studio room and a half completed cabin/granny flat for guest accomodation. We also had some useful camping equipment including a solar panel and battery set-up and a petrol generator but when it had to be shared around our guests and also neighbours at times things got a lot less than great and we had to go without. I would have liked to have two of everything, one to keep and one to share for what turned out to be 10 days without power. A couple of little butane cookers were also very handy.

We also benefitted greatly from a helicopter drop off from non govt sources around day 3 (see photo) when our water was out and our freezers were empty or reduced in capacity.

Someone told us we could collect water from a tap near the water reservoir on the hill. This was a relief. We had some tank water, about 15 000 Litres, but have not been drinking it and were unsure of its quality. (The first thing I bought when i could was a bench top water filter so I could feel safe enough drinking our tank water).

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payments and the army, as well as charity organisations and local people from nearby towns wanting to help, was wonderful I thought. I hope the help can last long enough to get people functioning well enough again and set up to work toward less of this sort of thing happening in the future.

"The Inquiry will consider and, if thought fit, make recommendations on a range of matters, including:

- the safety of emergency services and community first responders;"

I'de like to make the following suggestions locate an SES base up near the water reservoir in Broadwater. Perhaps have a satellite phone for emergencies, a large battery store for emergency recharging of phones some flood height measuring poles put in place in Broadwater and Wardell try to have at least some local SES people living on higher ground some basic training for the community on flooding and rescuing and dangers to be aware of would be good. Things like electrical danger in floodwater, flood water hygiene, first aid for cuts, the emergence of large leeches, snakes etc. training on how to help stock, wildlife and pets during and after flooding. We had 70 cows in our yard at one stage and they did significant damage and ate a lot. I wonder how these creatures could have been managed better? Disposal of dead animals and wildlife could also be taught.

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Thanks for this opportunity to respond, Kind regards, Kate

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

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its <u>Terms of Reference</u>

### Supporting documents or images

Attach files

Flood Enquiry Submission.docx

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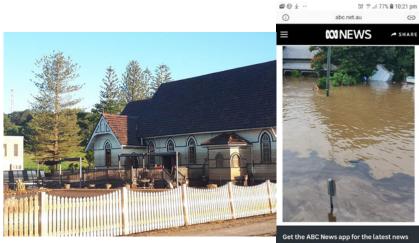


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