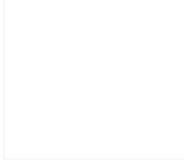


From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, 4 May 2022 7:11:46 PM



Your details

Title	Mrs
First name	Kylie
Last name	Gartside
Email	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	2480

Submission details

I am making this submission as	A member of the general public
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	<p>Hello.</p> <p>I have chosen to direct this submission to the enquiry as a member of the public as I am both a local resident and business owner (x2) and multiple options are not available in the preceding form options.</p> <p>My situation.</p>
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One business is located at Wyrallah road, in a premises with a floor height of 11.74m. This was enough height to protect the property from all preceding floods including 1974 and 1954. We had prepped the property and lifted everything onto benches giving ourselves an extra metre of height about 74 levels which according to predictions was more than ample. The flood Of 2022 went to the ceiling of the property destroying all stock, furniture, tools and equipment.

Additionally it trapped us on our residential property and other business being a horse agistment farm between Lismore and Coraki for more than 10 days without power and with limited communications. It destroyed fences and roading, feed and hay. Thankfully I have higher ground to move 14 horses to. 10 of these horses belong to others to whom we contract our agistment services to. These clients were justifiably distressed about the welfare of their animals. Communication was patchy and there were whole blocks of days where I could not communicate to them or them to me. Our hill of Ruthven (bounded by flood reserve road, coraki road) was literally an island with no way in our out. Multiple property owners banded together to share food, fuel etc. We did some crazy MacGyver s t to keep people fed and alive, generators (for those who had them) running and everyone's heads above water. We had to do an emergency boat trip to secure medication for a neighbour to renew heart medication. This entailed launching our 5+ metre ocean going boat onto Coraki road with 2.6m of water over it (day 4) and following power lines to the wyrallah bridge where friends met us with supplies and meds via an emergency script from goonellabah chemist.

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

Causes and contributing factors to the Flood = Climate warming.
Causes and contributing factor to loss of life, level of damage and psychological trauma = Lack of real time data to and from the BOM to enable people to make informed choices.

1.2 Preparation and planning

1. Lack of coordinated planned response to a disaster that we could have foreseen. The rain was relentless in Queensland before it crossed the border. Had we had real time up stream creek monitoring we would have known that this was not a minor/moderate flood before it was dark and people were in bed. The anecdotal evidence was pointing towards unprecedented water was heading our way. It's sad when facebook is more informed than the BOM.
2. SES. Because we didn't know how severe it was until it was happening many volunteers couldn't get to sheds/branches as they were already cut off.
3. State run Health and Emergency Services need a coordinated one system approach.

1.3 Response to floods

Response was lacking in every aspect, community was left to work it out with no blueprint and an absolute communication vacuum.

1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery

I can't believe that weeks later there was a still no real lead agency. We were still making it up as we went and inventing systems to manage recovery. Or if there was a lead agency it was not obvious to people on the ground who that was. That in itself compounds trauma as it makes people doubt that any level of Govt has a handle on the situation. Army here and there (great men and women), RFS (my hubby is a member) hosing out houses, Council and contractors but NO ONE

BODY/ORGANISATION/DEPT gave daily public updates about what was being addressed, by who and how.

1.5 Recovery from floods

Travelling representatives to go door to door to assess and assist people to access relief funding. Go in as a team of 2 or 3 to cover Financial Support/Health/Education . Help with identifying extra services needed by families including mental and physical health/support services etc. Would have the added bonus of reducing fraud.

Assign caseworkers to follow up on every resident in the impact zones for next 3 plus years.

Support and funding must continue past initial year or two as it will take years for recovery.

1.6 Any other matters

SUGGESTIONS

Real time camera feeds on all access roads so people can see what's happening on routes into and out of town. Similar to Bar Cam, Surf Cam and Traffic Cam. Battery powered and independent transmission of timed and dated live video feed.

Re 1.4. We need a system like the daily press conferences we had during COVID with the Premier up front (or mayor or recovery chair or SOMEONE) to guide and inform. Covered on ABC local radio and with a live feed on FB , ensuring hearing impaired people have a option to receive.

ALL of this relies on a sound and robust power and communication system with backup battery power.

All houses in the impact zone must be equipped with ladders (like NY fire escapes) and hatches in rooves. along with EPIRBs. National emergency response agencies need to be able to pivot and focus resources on responding to these emergencies in real time... not weeks later.

It has exposed dramatic flaws in our emergency response....god help us if there is a terrorist attack or similar. I now have no faith in the Departments Federal, State and local to whom these responsibilities fall...where were they? Who are they?

Warning systems like sirens etc need to WORK and be tested and functional

Supporting documents or images
