

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
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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

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 of flooding
CLIMATE CHANGE

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has highlighted major changes in climate patterns; and we are experiencing these changes as increasingly tropical patterns of rainfall with increased intensity and quantity of falls. This combined with the wet period (La Niña) to provide a set of rainfall events where a major flood was superimposed on a minor flood event. The consequent catastrophic flood reaching 14.9 metres at my home in North Lismore - 2.3 m higher than any flood in recorded history.

GEOGRAPHY

Lismore is flood prone due in large part to the geography of the area as the city was built at the confluence of two significant creeks; the Wilsons and Leicester creeks. These two creeks gather run off from a large network of often steep tributaries and funnel them into a bottle neck at Lismore where the water rose on the evening of the catastrophic flood at an astonishing rate.

THE PACIFIC MOTORWAY

The construction of the Pacific Motorway (M1) below Broadwater significantly impacts the discharge of flood water from the Richmond River - which hinders the discharge of flood waters from the Wilsons River and consequently Lismore. The backing up of flood water in the February/March 2022 flood should not be underestimated.

LEVEE CONSTRUCTION

Although the levee was in no way responsible for the catastrophic flooding, it was responsible for increasing the initial speed of flooding in North and South Lismore, the delay of discharge of the flooding and for significant damage to property on the eastern or protected side of the levee - notably the Richmond Hotel. Furthermore the prevalent myth that the levee protects the CBD from flooding has undermined the preparedness of the flood cultured city.

CONTRACTION OF NSW GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Although government policy is not directly responsible for the 2022 catastrophic floods it did play a significant role in undermining the preparedness of the community.

Inadequately maintained and in significant disrepair the measuring devices on the Leicester and Wilsons creeks and their tributaries meant that the warnings that reached Lismore were five hours out. We were informed that the River would reach 12.5 metres by 9 am - it went past this height at 4 am.

It seems amazing to me in a time of computer based calculations that government predictions should be so fundamentally flawed.

1.3 Response to floods

Recommendations

Replace and maintain 2022 flood marker signs on major street corners and electricity poles in every street. Place a roadside flood height marker on each house indicating when the property begins to flood.

Provide high level signage (ie >16m AHD) indicating location, depth, route; and ensure vegetation along the river banks adjacent to Lismore to allow vessels to pass into, and across, the Wilson's River.

Install and maintain a new system of intelligent flood gauges through out the catchment to provide reliable predictive data to all stake holders.

Rebuild and retrofit housing within 16.55m flooding limit be 'flood tolerant' particularly as regards building materials and the tying down of housing to stop floating. ie L claps to concrete pads, rod securing of levels and metal tape connections between roof and upper floor. Lift housing where practicable to over 16.55 m level.

Buy back structurally unsafe housing at pre-flood prices.

Provide for land swaps that include assistance

with house moving .

No mandatory evacuation, forced relocation, or unnecessary dislocation of flood-affected residents particularly to under and ill prepared evacuation centres. Instead increased funding of community based resource centres focused on community based rescue

Require and provision all residences in the flood zone to install a permanent means of accessing the roof cavity

Require and provision all residences in the flood zone to install a way of accessing the external roof from within the roof cavity.

Prohibit the use of Gyprock, or other plaster-board building products, in areas below 16.55 metres.

Prohibit the use of absorbent insulation materials, in internal cavity walls in properties below 16.55metres.

Discontinue requirement for dual cladding of internal walls and encourage single surface cladding of internal walls and covered external walls;

Assisting food-affected residents with the financial costs of recovering from the catastrophic floods, with fast tracked grants, fee waivers and by increasing funding for house raising, land swaps and housing moving.

Remove any limits on the numbers of flood-affected houses which can be approved for flood protection measures.

Provide rebates for all residents in severely affected flood regions like North And South Lismore for purchase a roofed boat that is attached to their residence.

improving the navigability of floodwaters, to allow 'safer' rescues and resupply of flood-bound residents, by removing barriers to flooded city navigation like removing defunct railway infrastructure, removing permanently all hazards to navigation from within those designated corridors eg street signs, advertising structures, median strip fences

Reforestation to increase the rainfall retention

capacity of the catchment and reduce the volume and rate of run-off.

Supporting documents or images
