

**From:** [NSW Government](#)  
**To:** [Flood Inquiry](#)  
**Subject:** Floods Inquiry  
**Date:** Tuesday, 17 May 2022 7:05:07 AM

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## Your details

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**Title** Mrs

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**First name** Margaret

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**Last name** Dwight

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**Email**

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**Postcode** 2478

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## Submission details

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**I am making this submission as** A resident in a flood-affected area

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**Submission type** I am making a personal submission

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

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## Share your experience or tell your story

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**Your story** I live alone on Canal Rd Ballina where it had never flooded previously. My home was impacted and I had to evacuate. I was rung by a friend at 3am by a friend saying we had a flood alert. When I checked I had a text message but like many I use the Do Not Disturb function on my phone and I dont have a land line.

The message was very simple and provided no local information like where to get sandbags or what time SES opened to get them.

I evacuated out initially to Cherry St Sports and then to Skennars Head School.

A couple of things I noted. At Cherry St everyone registered on arrival but didn't advise if leaving.

We were told at midnight (just as everyone had settled for the night) that we were being evacuated to Skennars Head. We then waited for 3 hrs for this to happen with no information as to what the delay was.

On arriving at Skennars Head they weren't ready and though the volunteers were wonderful they had no organisational process. No one registered. We were shown to various rooms but details taken of who went where. If anyone was trying to find someone they wouldn't know where they were.

The biggest issue for me was the total lack of information from an official source. We had limited phone access, no internet, no tv or radio, no official updates. No info on what was happening, no advice on what to do when we went back or what if any assistance would be available and how to access it.

This continued over the next few weeks

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

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#)

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### **1.2 Preparation and planning**

The preparation and planning was very poor. SES advertising prior talked about having a flood plan but little information as to what should be in it.

For example - where to get sandbags. Little point at sending a message at 3am saying prepare for flooding without advising of who to contact for advice or assistance. As an older person who has only lived in the area for 3 years this was badly needed.

Only having face book/ internet information is

useless if you dont normally use these type of sites.

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**1.3 Response to floods**

Again total lack of information. I was evacuated to Skennars Head, no radio, no TV, no phone network, no internet and no official updates as to what was occurring. VERY stressful

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**1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery**

No advice on returning home on what or what not to do. Almost all information received in the first weeks were from local community notice boards

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**Supporting documents or images**

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