

**From:** [NSW Government](#)  
**To:** [Flood Inquiry](#)  
**Subject:** Floods Inquiry  
**Date:** Wednesday, 18 May 2022 4:13:17 PM

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## Your details

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<b>First name</b>	Chris
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## Submission details

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<b>I am making this submission as</b>	Other
<b>Submission type</b>	I am submitting on behalf of my organisation
<b>Organisation making the submission (if applicable)</b>	Nambucca Valley Council
<b>Your position in the organisation (if applicable)</b>	General Manager
<b>Consent to make submission public</b>	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**

The Nambucca Valley Council area experienced a 1 in 50 flood event in February 2022, the second such event in the space of 12 months. Millions of dollars have been claimed through both State and Federal Government Disaster relief grant programs. The major flooding and consistent rain events have caused damage across the entire valley with dozens of land slips and road failures. Council's submission outlines key points that refer to the ability of council to respond to flooding events as they happen and would enhance the Nambucca Valley Council's capacity to be better equipped to deal with future events and restore road networks in a timely manner. A request is also made to review the resources required by council to make grant applications. A long term strategy is also proposed in the identification of suitable areas for potential land swaps with flood prone lands.

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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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**1.1 Causes and contributing factors**

Above average rain fall consistently within a short duration.  
Development being permitted on the flood plain over decades by consecutive Councils and State Governments.

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**1.2 Preparation and planning**

Relocation of Emergency Operation Centre  
The State should assist Council to identify a suitable location for the Nambucca Emergency Management Operation Centre (NEOC). The current NEOC is flood prone, and as a result during the last 2 flood events the NEOC was established at the new Macksville Hospital. This resulted in a number of issues including the lack of Wi-Fi connectivity, significant Covid constraints, and a clash with Hospital operations.

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**1.3 Response to floods**

Flood Gauges  
Council currently has seven flood cameras throughout the Nambucca valley. The cameras

are useful in the assessment of water inundation over roads and bridges but don't provide accurate data on the flood levels. Council is seeking to augment the cameras with interconnected flood gauges. The establishment of interconnected flood gauges across the Nambucca River catchment would improve the warnings for downstream communities and the response time for evacuations should they be required. The gauges will also augment Council's existing camera network. The cameras and gauges allow Council to process information quickly and allocate resources in an efficient manner.

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**1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery**

The offer of funding for 2 x Flood Recovery Officers, is appreciated but a waste of money in our circumstances. The council would prefer to have funding redirected towards 2 x Project Managers/Engineers/Tradespeople or people with technical backgrounds to assist with rebuilding vital infrastructure. This has a much bigger impact on the well being of our residents.

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**1.5 Recovery from floods**

Grant Application Process  
Post the flooding events Council was required to provide an extraordinary amount of detail to lodge claims for damages. Whilst Council appreciates the support it receives through both State and Federal Government, it is an extra burden on Council to resource the claim applications when limited resources could be better utilized assessing damage and preparing rectification programs. Council requests the disaster recovery grant application process be reviewed, with the outcome being less onerous on council staff and provision of dedicated persons from Resilience NSW to make application on council's behalf.

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**1.6 Any other matters**

Future Strategy - Land Swaps  
Consider proposals for a survey of flood affected areas with potential for land swaps between flood prone properties and state owned land, crown land or the State purchase of suitable

property. This has been done previously with very good outcomes for the residents. In 2011 the Queensland Government, (through the Queensland Reconstruction Authority) undertook the process of relocating the town of Grantham following a series of devastating floods. Details of the entire project can be found at Case study: Rebuilding Grantham together in 2011 | Queensland Reconstruction Authority ([gra.qld.gov.au](http://gra.qld.gov.au))

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## **Supporting documents or images**

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