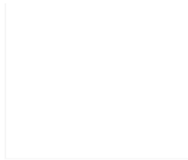


From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, 29 June 2022 3:06:06 PM



Your details

Title	Mr
First name	Pete
Last name	Martin
Email	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	2478

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

Your story	This relates to the 2nd Ballina Flood on March 30th, which in my case at Tamar Street Ballina resulted from rain water volumes exceeding drain capacities. Even though the river levels were high which reduced drain flows, due to lower drain "water head" pressure, in my case, flooding was more severe due to a blocked drain at the southern end of Owen Street where it
-------------------	--

should have discharged into the River. Owen street has 2 drain outlets entering the Richmond River. One of these (Drain 2) has been blocked with river beach sand for several years. The other outlet (Drain 1) does not extend far enough across the beach to prevent it also becoming blocked when it is not raining. (In dry weather with no water flowing in the drain, it will block completely within a couple of weeks). Fortunately Drain 1 outlet was flowing well on March 30, however Drain 2 was completely blocked and buried with beach sand. Owen Street needs both drains fully functioning in order to cope with high rainfall events. If rain falls at more than 20mm per hour, Drain 1 capacity is exceeded and water starts to back up into the street gutters and flood low lying properties.

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

Land management conflict appears to be a source of the drain maintenance problem. Many years ago Ballina Council maintained the drains by removing any sand build up. This regular maintenance of the drains stopped when Council was told the river bank land was the responsibility of the State Govt., and Council did not have the right to remove sand off the beach, so sand removal ceased.

Council has had to apply for a State Govt. permit each time they need to access the beach (although I understand a longer term permit may now be available) to clean the drains, and all sand removed HAS TO REMAIN on the beach. This sand is now stacked no further from the pipe discharge than the reach of the Backhoe digging the sand, and very quickly is washed back over the pipe discharge with the effect of the wind and tides.

Council needs to have unrestricted rights to manage their storm water discharges and to remove from the beach any excavated material.

1.2 Preparation and planning

To stop the pipes blocking up, they need to be extended out past the sloping beach area where they would not be subject to burial by the moving beach sand. Council has previously advised the the pipes would then be a "tripping" safety hazard, however extending the pipes would also result in a much wider beach behind the pipes, with much safer pedestrian access along the beach.

Pipes would remain unblocked and flooding from high rainfall events would be alleviated.

1.6 Any other matters

There is also no regular schedule for checking for blocked pipes. Council instead relies mainly on notification from effected community members.

A regular schedule of inspection for proper drain operations would also lead to drain discharges being maintained in a fully functioning condition at all times.

Supporting documents or images

Attach files

- [Owen Street Drain 1 discharge at Richmond River.jpg](#)
-

