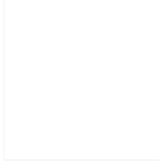


From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Thursday, 14 April 2022 6:35:16 PM



Your details

Title	Mr
First name	Philip
Last name	Kennedy B.Eng(Civil) MIE.Aust retied MACS(Snr) retired, retired Register Builder
Email	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	3810

Submission details

I am making this submission as	Other
Submission type	I am making a personal submission
Your position in the organisation (if applicable)	Civil Engineer and retired Registered Builder and World leading Software Developer
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	Kennedy B.Eng(Civil) MIE.Aust retied MACS(Snr) retired, retired Register Builder I have been warning the government that we
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should stop building on river flood plains for years.

After the German floods I warned the Victorian government that drains needed to be revised because of the likely affects of Global warming causing more tropical like rains here.

I was already raising issues with the VBC, NCC, DWELP about water proofing garages which are attached to homes or lined with plaster and MDF skirtings. I warned about the need to provide a path for water which is spilled from gutters and house storm drains to leave the property without having to pass through the house or garage.

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

We should not build in places that have previously flooded, rural towns are mostly built in the river flood plain, because it was easy to gather water when the early settlers started living there. This is NOT a sensible place to build a modern house, it WILL flood! Many of these towns have historic flood markers on the bridges near by that are clearly high enough to flood the towns.

While we were in drought Germany(1 in 500years), England, Europe, all had record floods, they were having a La Nina while we were having an El Nino, you do not need to be very clever to work out that the coming El Nina event for us was likely to do the same. It also seems to me that we can expect more tropical type weather in Temperate regions as Global Warming continues.

We do not know what a 1 in 100 year flood is as we only have 200years of flood history, also it represents a 1% chance of flooding in any given year. Once a flood occurs it is very likely to reoccur in the next couple of months and the next couple of years.

There are limited possibilities for moving towns and roads, we cannot do it all and preserve

forests and slope stability etc...

1.2 Preparation and planning

Stop building and rebuilding in places that have previously flooded. You can guarantee that those areas WILL flood again in the next few years and repeatedly in the longer term. People will not be able to get insurance there anyway and if they do it will be too expensive. In 2018 I wrote to Barnaby Joyce during the drought suggesting that we build flood retarding basins to help protect towns in flood plains and to try to catch some of that water for use in dry years. But this is not enough, flood mitigation generally does not work (i.e. levies do not work). Opening up constricted water ways or providing alternative paths for water to escape could be useful also but again is only going to be a partial answer. Do not waste money rebuilding or in high insurance fees, bite the bullet and start moving towns and people away from flood areas, this also is not straight forward, houses built on hills are subject to strong winds, bush fires and landslip (which they will add to if trees are lost). We need to build (and farm) much more cleverly. We need forests if you want water and wildlife and a healthy environment, we need connected forests to help animals migrate as weather changes, we need farmland, we need water. Rivers and creeks should be wooded and connected to allow animals to survive. Slopes need to be stable we need trees on the slopes and we need to capture the runoff from houses and towns (ALL OF IT) and deposit it safely (gently) in creeks and rivers. We should not expect to fix all problems in one hit but we need to set a long term target to move to.

You cannot save people during a flood, feed them after the flood, move them out etc... if the roads/trains are cut by floods and local airfields are under water, these need to be above flood water (flood causeways are NOT sensible in 2022). Critical roads need to be above the flood level, we cannot have floods blocking semi trailers moving food between states and major town centres.

You cannot help victims if the hospitals, doctors, local council, hardware, supermarkets... are flooded out.

People living in isolation or places that are likely to be cut off may have to have a boat of some kind ready for a flood emergency, though as we saw many boats were also washed away and lost during the floods.

1.3 Response to floods

We should know where we see floods and may see future floods by now, having zodiacs and the like should be an expected tool for rescue.

Having the ability to get the Military ready when a significant rain event is expected (even if its not a flood would help). In the USA they have a 24 hours response force for urgent issues, 4 days to get helicopters is a non functional response. You cannot hear people trapped in roofs from a helicopter.

In flood prone areas, it should be possible to provide steps and a roof hatch to houses to allow people to get out of a flooded house on to the top of the roof, like the ones they use in Sweden for a house that is snowed in.

Food and water need to be available at any emergency, water is the first supply that should be available, followed by shelter/warmth/cooling, medical treatment and food.

Communications HAS TO WORK EVEN IN AN EMERGENCY and the NBN's destruction of our reliable home phone system is criminal. Our home phones used to be supplied with power from the exchange, they worked in flood but not in bushfires. Phone towers need to be high and dry with their own power (for a month or two) and ideally safe from bushfires.

1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery

Some houses can be moved.

Some building can be raised, though 16meteres is not going to happen.

Farms for sheep and cattle can cope with some flooding as long as hay/equipment/feed/sheds are stored above the flood level.

Crops cannot survive, but grazing land should be able to recover quickly as long as the stock can

be moved temporarily to high ground and can get feed/water if we provide the means in the area to do so.

Caravan parks are nice beside rivers, but there needs to be a way to move them ALL in an emergency, unfortunately flash floods occur too quickly and have already flooded the area usually before they know they need to move. They do provide an opportunity for displaced people to live after a flood though they are likely to flood again soon after.

1.6 Any other matters

We need to go back to councils providing building inspectors, they MUST NOT be employed by builders or individuals. People who work at the council know the history of the area, they have access to the local city engineers, they are independent from the builder, unless the builder has taken control of the council which has been stopped, or the builder is paying off the mayor which is illegal. The builders are not building houses properly!

I believe the problem with building inspectors arose through a council being sued for a building problem which their inspector overlooked which nearly bankrupted the council:

1/ That should have been covered by the insurance company for the council

2/ The councils liability should be limited to an amount that is sensible for it to pay

VCAT can solve some of the old problems builders had with individual inspectors being ridiculous which was a common problem. Failed buildings at that time was NOT a problem, it is a problem now!

Bush fire preparation needs more water available in remote areas for fire fighting, some of that can be emergency drinking water close to evacuation centres accessible by flood and fire victims.

Supporting documents or images
