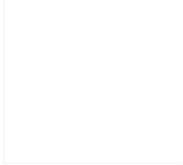


From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, 4 May 2022 7:04:22 PM



Your details

<hr/>	
Title	Ms
First name	Rachael
Last name	O'Mara
Email	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	2300

Submission details

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I am making this submission as	A member of the general public
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

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Your story	As a strategic and operational professional in the international aid development and humanitarian sector, it has been heart breaking to see the litany of errors the Australian Government has made in the preparedness, response, and recovery to this Australian humanitarian disaster. I would recommend the Australian Government look to the international humanitarian sector

(including DFAT AHP) as a model of effective coordination, planning and response, across all levels.

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

Lack of action on climate change. Lack of effective early warning system. Lack of coordination of key agencies on the ground prior to flooding. Lack of funds to disaster preparedness to areas that are deemed high risk to natural disasters. Political and partisan decision making related to funds allocation, ignoring others areas that also experienced actual need and vulnerabilities. Lack of effective preparedness planning, lack of emergency planning. Confusion of delegated responsibilities between State and Federal Govt agencies. Lack of central coordination body on the ground to coordinate various bodies.

1.2 Preparation and planning

What the hell is the National Resilience and Recovery Agency doing? Not much at all it seems. Shame on them. Not allocating flood preparedness funds that were needed in Lismore (shame on them). Not using the money in the Fund to prepare communities for the scale of the disasters that are coming. Allocating funds in the response based on partisan lines is shameful. They need to realise there is a humanitarian mandate that requires us to provide relief to those most in need and vulnerable. Where are the preparedness plans that are owned by the communities, that support those most vulnerable, including those living with a disability?

1.3 Response to floods

Lack of sense of urgency from Govt. In a humanitarian disaster - critical decision making needs to be made immediately to save lives. Where was the Defence force? Funds were allocated based on partisan decision making

(shame) - support to Lismore, but not to Richmond or Murwillumbah? The Prime Minister did not meet with survivors (shame). It seemed BOM data was not as accurate as it needs to be. SES volunteers were over stretched. Big focus on Lismore - but what about all the other areas?

1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery

Where is the housing for people? Where are the accessible toilets for people with a disability (not a portaloos)? Where is the income support? where is the social protection safety net? Where is the inclusive response and recovery plan? Where is the centralised locally owned and run coordination body? Why isn't the Federal Government co-funding the recovery? why were there housing pods, but without power and water for weeks?

1.5 Recovery from floods

Need a central coordination body on the ground for each region. Like UNOCHA in international humanitarian settings. Need establishment of a cluster system. Need to prioritise humanitarian funds based on vulnerability and need (not partisan decision making). Need to pre-identify key agencies on the ground to respond immediately. e.g. DFAT have pre-selected key ANGOs via the Australian Humanitarian Partnership - so that funds and support can be distributed immediately. Efficiency and effectiveness and swift action is required - it is life saving, for the short term and longer term. People shouldn't go through bureaucratic nightmare to receive any payments - evidence to support claims are unreasonable. need better system to support people's claims processing. Due to lack of reform - there are now are backlog of issues to address - e.g. moving Lismore, lack of affordable housing, lack of social protection safety net, need to address climate change, and well as disaster risk reduction efforts, climate adaptations that need to be invested in.

1.6 Any other matters

We need to make sure that people don't end up long term homeless, without income, or other supports. It seems once a disaster strikes you

like this - you can be left in the hopeless pile, left to fend for yourself over the long term, while you suffer PTSD, and lack of effective govt response or investment over the longer term. We need to get the preparedness, response, and recovery right - as this is the new normal, and we can't afford the devastation to continue.

Supporting documents or images
