

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Sunday, 8 May 2022 1:31:04 PM

Your details

Title	Mrs
First name	Sonja
Last name	Cottam
Email	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	2480

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	We have lived in our south lismore house for 21 years, we live south lismore it has a heart beat like no other area in lismore. The day before flooding we were aware of possible floods and having lived through floods hear we were confident with our knowledge, we knew our floor level, knew our house was raised 20cm above any officially recorded flood (1954), on the day
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before/of we were very proactive keeping up with BOM and river data info, first predictions to lunch time were 10.5, not even on our land, then later 11.6 yep 2017, dealable, we spent 3 hours lifting d wry thing up past 2017 levels. We prepared for another 2017, maybe even a 1954 flood (still below our floor). Night came at 10pm they changed prediction to 12.something. Bugger! But okay not in our house. We had the SES Evacuation order (formally only a warning) we packed a bag and then realised it was pouring, it was dangerous to try to drive out and water was already above 9m which means we are already trapped, we listened to reports, saying topping the levee at 6am but riding through the morning, where we are probable flooding at midday through the afternoon. We had time I wrote a to do list to do in the morning (get a ladder, turn off power, turn off hot water, solar panels) My husband went to bed, I could not sleep, midnight the toilets started to bubble (never happened in any other flood), fear set in, this was going too fast, watched the water hit our land and it was riding 1 full step every 8 minutes. We have no time! New prediction was 13 something (1954 levels), we packed up lower items in house, electronics, and put them in the back room that was higher. The water was 3 steps off coming inside it was still riding fast , we rang SES who said they were putting us on the evac list, but they were not starting until daylight. We were told that after being put on the list they would give us a reference number to write down in case we had to contact them again, the phone then hung up, no reference number. We thought we were okay, just had to get to daylight. Water was inside, we took the dogs to the back verandah as it was still dry, it started going under and being a slippery surface we had to go back inside, wanted to be near the front window be able to get help. One boat was nearby, lots of neighbours screamed out to it, the loudly said "don't worry we will be right back" 3 hours later no boats came up our

street, nothing, my daughter (out of flood) was trying to ring for help but couldn't get on to anyone. We could hear neighbours screaming desperately, one family banging on their tin as they were in the roof with no way out. Our dogs were panicking they were going to die on our bed and kept trying to come to us, we were getting cold, trying to keep them safe, the water kept coming up at speed. I had a roll of electrical tape marking the wall to try to see if it was slowing. We were trying to find a way out, I would not have been able to get on the roof (wide eaves) we had no support to get in the manhole (was flooded before we could get the ladder), my hubby was going to swim to another roof but I told him no as there was undercurrent and I felt swimming would be the last thing we tried. I told my hubby the dogs would have to die and when I started shaking from cold I said goodbye to my husband. I was ready to just step out the window as a few minutes dying would be quicker.

At around 1:30 pm after being in the water all day we heard a boat and started yelling, he came to us, I neatly told him to go across the tias as our whole street was still at home. But my hubby said no, we have to go now! The boat took our dogs. The boat then helped another family nearby but was already overloaded. Getting to land we passed so many houses with people's faces pressed to windows, people calling out for help, it was heartbreaking. We were taken out to past the traffic lights dropped off and the boat went straight back in. (It was someone's private fishing boat), landing we just stood cold shaking, we were in shock, sometimes tied the dogs collars with rope. We started walking, my daughter lived in east lismore, the dogs were shaking from cold we walked, (daughter was going to get us but I needed to walk) by the time we got to my daughters house we were warmer and had a shower and dry off.

We were told the next day our names did not

even get put on the SES evac list as the systems were in meltdown.

As a long term local of south lismore, we go floods, floods are a part of life, but this was not normal! All BOM intonation was incredibly wrong, if predictions were higher abc our evac order not come at 10-11pm we would have left. We were assured safe from the information reported. I was shocked to find out later there were only 2 SES boats! And that they turned away private boaters throughout the morning. Government's response was horrible! Thousands homeless overnight and it was local people who got in and helped, even now all our support is from everyday people. We can't get any grants as we are in the hands of insurance, we are homeless, insurance can't provide accommodation that does not exist. We are in limbo! We are told 18 months minimum and yet get no assistance. Still on hold, living in our cement garage we were told not to clean, because there is no where to go.

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	Inaccurate predictions and warnings Evac warning changed to an order when it was too late to leave (plus raining heavily and dark, we would have been stuck in our car and even climbing on its roof we would probably be dead. SES and triple zero meltdown No assistance after getting out, being in shock, cold shaking and left on the road
1.2 Preparation and planning	Better warning systems, (accurate warnings)
1.3 Response to floods	Assistance immediately, medical, counselling HOUSING!!!!
1.4 Transition from incident	? What is being done Already forgotten

**response to
recovery**

1.5 Recovery from floods Ask me in 2 plus years as now it's 8 weeks and it's still day zero I, don't even know what the future looks like

1.6 Any other matters Buy out? Land swap? We NEED to know as people are putting money into rebuilding now, don't let us waste energy (mental, financial) tell us now what options we have.

Supporting documents or images
