

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, 13 April 2022 9:50:54 AM

Your details

Title Miss

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Email

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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 I moved to Camden in 2016. Within weeks, flooding was predicted. I knew no one at that time and my family were 2 hours drive away and dealing with their own flooding issues and emergency work in the Narrabeen area. It was extremely stressful particularly coming from 7 years of high stress situations. I had hoped to relax and recover in Camden - even though I am

now a little better, I am still trying to recover 6 years later.

The first flood in March 2022 was a shock as I had spoken to many experienced locals and had been assured the water would never rise so far to damage my property as mitigation had been done further up the river. Clearly that has been proven incorrect.

The water rose half way up my garage and to within inches of my house. My back yard looked like a brown swimming pool (see photo).

I finally unpacked everything in the house only to be hit with the second flood. I was unable to do much so I just walked out when ordered to by the SES. No flooding occurred and the water in the garage receded so I had no idea how far it had gotten as the level marks were still there from the first flood. More cleaning was required.

With the third flood in April 2022 I thought I had moved everything up high enough but the flood water rose much higher this time. I lost another level of shelved goods in my garage, hot water system broke and there was way more mud over everything than the last time.

I was not offered any help from any official body. If I knew who to contact I would have but ended up dealing with the clean up myself. However, 2 days after the water receded the SES came around to take pictures of the damage. I was shocked and said, "you're too late, I've cleaned most of it up". It was so insulting. They weren't even there to offer help, just to take pictures. I explained what I thought they should be doing ie helping residents clean up. They asked what I needed and they would try to sort it out. I said, I have no idea what I need but by then I had done most of the clean up through trial and error.

I really felt I had done my due diligence but after

the March 2022 floods I realised I really had no idea what it was like to have my property inundated with flood water. The mud was another shocking issue, really it was all so horrendous. The first flood was shocking, I did what I could with all the flood affected goods and my property, then collapsed in a heap for over a week. No official checked on me. I don't understand why officials aren't going door to door to check what people need and then getting it for them and then following up to ensure each and every resident is ok and has what they need.

I truly believe that so much could be done better, more efficiently and so much stress could be avoided.

For example: when someone buys a property in a flood zone council could send them a Flood file including pictures of their property in flood, how to prepare and contact numbers.

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

Developments on flood plains and in flood ways and flood flows need to be removed.
Buildings, fences, anything that hinders a flood plain should never allowed.
Fences and bridges on flood plains need to be collapsable so the water can flow. Also so animals or people stuck in flood water can be saved easily and without injury from unseen fencing or objects. Anything in a flood flow or on a flood plain needs to be thought through for any possibility. Buildings in flood plains can affect residents's property on the edges of flood plains and further afield.

1.2 Preparation

Prior to or after floods or perhaps when people

and planning

move into their homes, inspections of properties could be offered by an authority to help identify how residents can prepare their property. I have called SES, out of emergency times, to ask for their help with this but they suggested I ask neighbours.

1.3 Response to floods

When advising residents of prepare for evacuation orders, make sure the person knows what's going on in that street/area. First flood March 2022 SES turned up in their brand new uniform but had no idea where the water was rising and didn't even offer to find out, just told me I needed to prepare to evacuate. Flood water can come from 2 areas on my property. He had the hide to say, he doesn't know the area and had just been told to tell me to evacuate - I was so shocked and disappointed, even the so called authorities/emergency workers don't know what's going on!

1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery

The day water recedes and residents are back at properties cleaning up, authorities/volunteers/someone should be door knocking to see what help is needed. I could have saved a lot of pain and frustration if 2 men had turned up to help lug all the damaged goods from the back of my property to the front for council pick up. I could have used lots of advice on how to clean the mud off, whether things were worth keeping etc.

Ensure authorities follow up on residents they have helped. The onerous appears to be on the affected person, perhaps that needs to be changed to authorities coming forward and asking what each resident needs.

1.5 Recovery from floods

Offer property inspections so residents can ask how better they can prepare.
Ensure people are offering help in person ie authorities or volunteers should be walking the affected streets and asking if anyone needs help. I had no idea what I needed and it would have been very helpful for someone to suggest things.

1.6 Any other matters

Sand bags should be dropped on Street corners so residents can easily access them or perhaps a council truck could drive around all the streets affected by flood offering them to residents. Every time I tried to get some they had run out or I had to drive in traffic over the one bridge in and out of Camden. I didn't see the one facebook page Council posted about sand bags.

Please have the Macarthur Bridge widened dramatically so the township can be evacuated safely.

Ask electricity companies not to turn off power unless it's absolutely necessary. First flood it was turned off "just in case" but then not turned back on for 3 days. The process was a nightmare and customer service people didn't know what was going on either.

When there is a disaster people need clear, concise and confident information and help. We live in Australia, with the right leaders in each department and social media, we surely should be able to organise things easily, quickly and effectively. Change what needs to be changed, employ the right people at the top so it trickles all the way down. Just do it.

Supporting documents or images

Attach files

- [March 2022 Flood 2.jpg](#)
 - [March 2022 Flood 3.jpg](#)
 - [March 2022 Flood 4.jpg](#)
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