

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Thursday, 19 May 2022 11:21:45 PM

Your details

Title	Dr
First name	Teresa
Last name	Marchant
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	Mum, the water's at the top of the stairs. That's what I woke up to at 5.30am on Monday 28th Feb. My 28 year old daughter, her 2 year old child and myself had decided to see out the flood upstairs in my house because upstairs doesn't flood.
-------------------	--

We ended up being rescued off the verandah

roof 3 hours later by two locals in a tinny. By this time there was 4 of us. We helped an older neighbour swim from her verandah to ours using a string of Xmas lights as a rope, thrown to her with a shoe tied on the end to weight it.

My daughter and I had privately decided if the worst came to the worst we would write his Dads phone number on my grandson's arm, and hope that he at least would be rescued, even if we didn't make it.

We waited in the unrelenting rain while the baby cried. He eventually fell asleep in my daughters lap, while we huddled under a makeshift shelter I fashioned from a door and two plastic trestles floating on the verandah. Each time I climbed back down the ladder to try and improve our situation the water was higher, with more heavy objects floating in it.

The shipping container floating in front of our house made it more difficult for our rescuers. As the neighbour and I scrambled around the front of the roof to reach the boat, we discovered a dry spot sheltered by the roof's eaves. That's where we will shelter next time. Except there won't be a next time. We will evacuate at the first warning, or sooner, given how unreliable the alerts, warnings and evacuation orders have been. Never again.

Terms of Reference (optional)

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#)

1.2 Preparation and planning

We worked hard on our preparation and planning. My daughter busted a gut to get everything upstairs and out of flood. I even rushed around on Sunday buying a generator to help us see out the expected power outage.

In future I will put a permanent ladder on the wall to access the verandah roof. Put a big tradies

tool box on the verandah roof with rain coats, life jackets, torches, a shelter such as a small beach tent, and possibly an inflatable boat.

1.3 Response to floods

All my life I have seen the SES signs call in an emergency. It was a shock to call the SES for the first time in 61 years to be told we can't help you.

1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery

The non government, non organisation, informal, unofficial local community response far exceeded any formal response in terms of speed, usefulness and compassion. Facebook was literally a life saver. Formal organisations such as governments, the SES etc could learn a lot from holistic, bottom up, local, networked ways of organising and communicating. Helping Hands is THE example. You could learn a lot from them and they should be recognised and awarded. No red tape in their organisation.

1.5 Recovery from floods

It is now nearly 3 months since the first flood. No idea about whether we will get help to relocate ourselves or our house out of the flood zone. No word, I believe, on if, how or when the funds from the LCC appeal will be distributed.

I have been accommodated in 5 different govt supplied places since the flood. I am exhausted and can't follow the health routines needed to support my treatment for terminal cancer.

Not good enough.

We should receive more help with asbestos removal. A free service for 10m2 is not enough.

1.6 Any other matters

The GPs in town, together with govt need to find a way to keep going despite not having access to their building, phone system and their IT server. Telehealth, cloud technology and decentralised phones (aka mobile phones) could all be used to make it possible for me to consult with my GP shortly after the flood. They appear to be operating on old school technology and

outdated ideas about the infrastructure needed to practice.

There needs to be a large emergency supply of the drug Targin.

The rapid response to set up Head to Health and making facilities available for counsellors should be commended.

Arriving at the SCU evacuation centre was like descending into hell. As soon as I heard GSAC was opening I begged a lift and got there as soon as possible. GSAC should be the FIRST option for an evacuation centre. It is infinitely better set up for helping evacuees. It is more accessible, it doesn't have water features that transform into raging torrents that re-traumatise flood survivors, it is closer to shops, chemist and other supplies, there is more space, there are plenty of clean showers with hot water, the main sleeping area has good sound suppressing acoustics which made it more peaceful, there is a decent area at the end of the building for smokers, away from windows, passers by etc, it has a kitchen, and many other features that were used to provide the support and services we needed. The LCC manager of the evacuation centre is to be highly commended for his work. He was available, affable competent and hard working...I came across him cleaning the toilets at 3am one morning. He made the centre work extremely well. Thank you.

Supporting documents or images
