

**From:** [NSW Government](#)  
**To:** [Flood Inquiry](#)  
**Subject:** Floods Inquiry  
**Date:** Friday, 20 May 2022 1:11:02 PM



## Your details

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<b>Title</b>	Ms
<b>First name</b>	Tina
<b>Last name</b>	van Eyk

**Email**

**Postcode** 2477

## Submission details

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<b>I am making this submission as</b>	A resident in a flood-affected area
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<b>Submission type</b>	I am making a personal submission
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<b>Consent to make submission public</b>	I give my consent for this submission to be made public
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## Share your experience or tell your story

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<b>Your story</b>	On the 25 February I took photos at the Wardell jetty of the water coming downstream from Lismore and surrounds. I have always loved taking photos from the jetty and from the bridge of the beautiful river and landscape. On the 28 February, the day before the floods hit Wardell, in the late afternoon my husband and I drove to Broadwater, Woodburn, and surrounding areas
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to see what was happening. Roads close to the river were already covered in water. Drains were full. We were shocked. We drove to our friends home at East Wardell to check in to see how they were going, and to let them know that they had a place to go should they need, anytime of the day or night. Our friends knocked on our door before 4am that morning with two cars and a caravan, and all the belongings they quickly thought to bring. Our Flood family of four then stayed with us for 19 days where we were able to support them with a place to live during this surreal time.

Three quarters of Wardell was impacted by the floods. When you look at an aerial photo of Wardell, our town has four quadrants cut by the river and road. Where we live north-west of the river is uphill from the main village – the one quarter that was dry. We all could not believe what was happening to affect so many people, so much land, and animals. On 1 March around 4:30am we started our several walks a day around Wardell village to see what was happening with the water rising. An Evacuation centre was quickly established at the Recreation club and many neighbours took in friends both old and new. A couple of days later when many locals had to leave to go to the Southern Cross University (SCU) and Alstonville Evacuation centres, we saw so many locals, including members of the Rural Fire Service (RFS) and the Wardell Progress Association (WPA) continue to help locals. Locals helping locals from day 1. Many were flood affected themselves. Donations and coordinated help was based at the kids care centre near the Church.

We also helped folks with donations, cooking food, checking in on people, and supporting our Flood family. We walked the streets night and day watching the water rise. We were all grateful to see the flood waters start to recede on 3

March.

When Ballina was hit with the flooding coming downstream from Wardell, telecommunications in both Wardell and Ballina were limited. At Wardell I could still access the Bureau of Meteorology website to look at the rising water levels at Burns Point Ferry for my family to let them know how high the water was. I was able to relay to my family, now all located at Cumbalum estate, the water levels every 30 minutes or so via SMS as they did not have internet service.

Our family who are located on farms were extremely affected. One day a cousin and I communicating via text organised for the RFS to transport by boat some water and food to my uncle and aunt's house where another cousin and his family were also now located. Another day, twenty of our family gutted another uncle and aunt's place. Floors to ceilings gutted to let the air flow through to dry out the house structure. Farmlands destroyed.

After much cleaning and help from their family and friends and from people who came to help folks devastated by the floods including the Army, our Flood family were able to move back into their caravan on their property. Throughout that devastating time, we all talked about and could see how long the road to recovery would be. It is still such a long road for so many.

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### **Terms of Reference (optional)**

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

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### **Supporting documents or images**

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#### **Attach files**

- [Wardell from bridge.jpg](#)
- [Wardell near bridge.jpg](#)
- [Wardell pub.jpg](#)







