

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, 27 April 2022 12:06:48 AM

Your details

Title Mrs

First name Tracie

Last name Howarth

Email

Postcode 2472

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 On Monday 28th February our home was being inundated with water. We rang the SES from 8pm and was told our request for evacuation would be queued and they would ring when on the way. We rang several times and even had my family from the gold coast and sunshine coast ring as well, both receiving the aane message.

As the waters continued to rise we then tried to flag down boats that were driving past. We were told they would come back for us.

Another phone call to the SES with no answer. It was midnight.

We finally had a tinny with 2 men pull up to our 2nd storey bedroom window and took us to the bottom of the hill for the woodburn evacuation centre.

We found out that the next day when we finally received a call from the SES to find out if we still needed assistance that they do not rescue people after dark due to insufficient torches in their boats.

The next few days are a blur being transferred from woodburn to a new place to stay in evans head.

The government offered disaster payments which we applied for but had to wait 2 weeks to get. Apparently there was a glitch in their system that was holding it up.

This did not help in anyway when we were trying to get food or clothes with no money for the first couple weeks.

Our car was flooded and we were told by the rental car people that we qualified for a car but had to get to ballina to pick it up. We were in evsns with no money and no car and told to get to ballina. The roads our of evans were flooded as was the highway to ballina. Not much help there at all.

More funding was offered by the government in the form of disaster allowance if you had lost work. My husband is a truck driver and his truck was flooded. He had limited income for the 1st 2 weeks then nothing fir the next month. We applied for the allowance and then heard nothing. We rang to enquire only to be told they were working through the applications. Also no help at all when no money is coming in.

We applied for the disaster grant hoping we would get some assistance to help us rebuild. It is now 9 weeks after being evacuated from our home and have heard nothing about this grant.

All in all it has been extremely traumatic for us only to be made worse from lack of communication and help from the very agencies purporting to be offering all this help. We have felt extremely vulnerable and lost and the only help we have really received is from the community around us.

In times of trauma and devastation it is extremely demoralising to have politicians come to stickybeak and offer assistance that we will either never see or have to wait weeks for. It is ok for them as they go back to their million dollar houses and huge paychecks and then quickly forget about their people that need help. They put up so much red tape that we cannot get through it or give up trying and all the fraudsters seem to get our allowances instead.

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

The building of the new M1 was a contributing factor to the severity of flood experienced in woodburn. The water entered our house from the rear. The Richmond River is at the front of our house. All the rain we experienced at the beginning pooled behind us and because of the highway had nowhere else to go but back into the houses.

1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery

The government provided no assistance in recovery at all just a lot of red tape.

1.5 Recovery from floods

There is no recovery from the floods as majority of people do not have flood insurance due to the exorbitant cost asked by insurance companies. We have to foot the bill if repairing our homes ourselves which is easily over \$150000 per house.

Supporting documents or images