

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Tuesday, 5 April 2022 8:50:56 AM

Your details

Title Ms

First name Victoria

Last name Pitel

Email [REDACTED]

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 Two days prior to 28 Feb 2022 we were watching weather and preparing along with my community for flooding
We moved all belongings to higher level and parked vehicle on higher ground
We were watching SES warnings and predictions-water was not expected to exceed the 2017 flood
We compared water levels with our floor level

and continued to monitor

The SES came down our street suggesting evacuation but as predictions were that if the 2017 flood we decided to stay with our animals and sit it out

As the evening progressed conflicting reports began filtering through

We went to bed at 1pm, setting our alarms for 3am

Around 3am I was woken by a loud noise under our house, I jumped up and ran to the window

My son jumped up and we were horrified to see how high and how fast the water was coming in I saw the lights going off on my car across the road and broke down

Very quickly we knew we were in trouble

We began lifting our belongings up off the floor and lower shelving and cupboards

Within hours we were standing on a bed in ankle deep water calling SES

SES advised us to climb into our roof cavity

We put our cat into the ceiling cavity and waded through water waste deep to our deck and climbed onto our roof

We were trapped on our roof for 7hours

I called SES and the Police multiple times for rescue and in particular for my elderly neighbour who was trapped inside her house with water reaching her shoulders

We were all eventually rescued by civilians in their boats. By the time they came for us water was up to our gutters and we literally stepped off our roof and into the boat

We were taken to our main bridge on the south side and dropped off and told to walk across and another boat would take us to higher ground

I felt confused and disoriented as we traveled through water covering our neighbourhood and town

It was incomprehensible to see so much water rushing over our very high bridge

We were eventually transported by bus up the hill to and evacuation centre

I was in shock to see so many community

members assisting us and organising people to safety
I didn't see any SES or Police
It's been over 5 weeks, with a second flood which was not as high as the 2017 flood
We've been displaced, lost everything and have little idea of how to move forward
Our community has been absolutely amazing and I'm overwhelmed by the kindness and generosity in f others
We have been donated basic items and clothes to assist us in our recovery and take things a day at a time
Our home was damaged and it's taking weeks and months to get gas and electricity up and running
We're still in shock and very traumatised
I no longer feel safe at home and question my ability to live here

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	Lack of clear precise and correct information from SES
1.2 Preparation and planning	Our town prepared as best as they could with the inflammation given
1.3 Response to floods	Response was diabolical SES gave incorrect information and did not have the resources to respond to such an event. After my initial call to SES at about 5am I was no longer able to get through Police took my calls and at the time I had no idea that they were doing just that, taking and logging calls only-they too had no way home f assisting
1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery	I'm unsure of this question as I'm still in recovery

1.5 Recovery from floods Still in recovery

1.6 Any other matters I am aware that SES are volunteers within our community solely depending on government funding
As weather events become more volatile I think SES should become a permanently funded organisation with the ability to move onto areas in need

Supporting documents or images

Attach files

- [C273533C-7247-44DA-A8B7-7078732B225F.jpeg](#)
 - [8D4C60B4-C4DE-433D-B878-7E3C62BF5F6F.jpeg](#)
 - [C9BD363F-8C69-4D70-B70F-E655F04FEB55.jpeg](#)
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