

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, 18 May 2022 7:20:10 AM

Your details

Title Ms

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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 On Sunday 27/2/22 it had rained for some days quite heavily. We were aware of a very large slow moving cell over QLD days before. It was my 16 year old son that said to me "mum if this keeps going the way it is it is going to be very bad in this area" that was 4 days before that horrific Sunday/Monday morning. Taking precautions as we live in South Lismore right on

the river, my 80 year old neighbour myself, 2 teenage sons and 2 dogs all moved to our good friends house 3 doors down....their floor level is 13.7m so we felt very safe with our flood plan especially because we had no reason to panic....we secured our homes thinking the very worse it may be like 2017. We kept a close eye on warnings etcno panic....we got a message at about 10pm saying it might top the levy still ok no panic...it was a very dark night but being on the river we could see it was not at very worrying levels. I got woken up by one of my sons at 5am with him saying 'mum the water is very high wake up". I said to him oh don't worry we had no warnings....the power was out by this stage so it was pitch black. We had a touch so I went to see how high the river was. Shock and horror as I saw the water raging just a metre under the 13.7m floor level. I knew our houses were gone. The feeling when you know you have lost EVERYTHING including birds was one of the most terrible things...then it was get in survival mode. The water was coming up so fast and it was raging with force. I called 000 it took ages to get through. I had limited battery on my phone as we all did so contacted good friends to keep trying to get onto SES or 000 to rescue us. I honestly didn't know if we were going to survive...the water was coming in and rolling around the house so fast...and i knew there would be big loss of life...it was terrifying...we got rescued by 2 guys in a tinny...don't know who they were but they were amazing. They had also rescued a man a couple of houses down that had been on the roof of the house that was almost under completely screaming help since 6am ...after a very dangerous and heroic rescue of us all it then was what can only be discribed as the most horrific experience....it was so dangerous there was raging water flowing so fast with debri everywhere, snakes and wildlife swimming trying to get onto anything dry. It was freezing. We couldn't recognise anything ...it was all underwater...we had to duck under

powerlines. we finally after more than an hour reached the ses on Bangalow Rd. We were then transported to the evac centre at the Uni.

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

We knew the risks living in South Lismore and had a flood plan. No one could plan for what happened to us all. There could have been river mitigation done. There is never any clearing of drain (if there are drains) This should have been done years before....of course it would be very expensive so never done.

1.2 Preparation and planning

We followed our flood plan. We got no warnings. When I looked at my phone at 5am there was a message saying Evacuate now this is a life threatening flood. To late. We went to bed at 12 midnight thinking we were safe.

1.3 Response to floods

The only reason there weren't so many more deaths and I mean thousands is because of the locals and civilians that risked their lives saving us all. I saw one SES boat who was cutting someone out of a roof....one SES boat.....

1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery

Once we were picked up and taken to the Uni they were great trying to do what they could. We were lucky we had friends that picked us and took care of us as we were in shock and freezing and terrified as thousands of others were I will never forget that evac centre....the whole thing felt like we were in a horror film. The volunteers were great but had so many to cope with.

1.5 Recovery from floods

When we could finally get back to what was left of our home it was horrific. Driving through Lismore it looked like a war zone....my house was completely destroyed but still standing the water came up to the roof. Mud and destruction. Friends came and helped for days, groups of volunteers from all over the place (people we had never seen before) came and offered to

help. They were all amazing. We had no official help at all from any service. I know this to be true for everyone I know. We all did it ourselves all the beautiful people of this area. I don't want to winge but we had no help from when we had no warnings and whole cleanup they were all volunteers everyone

1.6 Any other matters

So now what....I was lucky I had some insurance which is still a struggle to get anything..but lucky. Most aren't and have no insurance. Our houses are now worth nothing. But none of us can move anywhere else no one can afford to. Plus this is our home my kids don't want to be displaced somewhere else they have moved to much in their young lives. Like many we had worked hard and loved our little house it felt like home. Now it is just a ruin. Some people have had to move back into the poor little destroyed houses as they have no other choice. We feel we have all been treated like this is a 3rd world country.....we all do...still the streets are full of dangerous rubbish and broken glass and filthy mud. At the very least we all need help to make our homes more flood resistant like replace with flood proof materials etc. We all feel defeated and don't think we will get any help ...why would we....I know lots of people that can't live here anymore. This town is on its knees. I truly hope this flood inquiry can make a difference please! In such a beautiful place with the most beautiful and humble people we deserve to be treated better. I think those that want to relocate should have that option and or at the very least please help by supporting the homes with better materials or lifting (although that didn't really help). Also I have had about 8 different people changing their address to my broken little house. I have handed them into the authorities (centrelink were good, police didn't want to know about it as they were to busy with other stuff)...ok that sums it up. Thank you,

Supporting documents or images
