

SALLY QUINNELL: You spoke very briefly, Mr Woods, about the lack of information about this situation being fixed. I just want to find out—and feel free to take this and give us a reply later—about the ongoing stress and trauma that's causing people in the community that, at any moment, it feels like this could happen again, and that leads into, as you said, looking forward to future incidences. I'd just like some reflections on that when you get a chance.

1. Most of the community are either elderly and/or vulnerable people. The impact the impact the Oct 2024 power outage had on our Menindee community was as I experienced it one of confusion, mis messaging and no apparent offer of support.
2. The mental health of the community is very difficult to sum up in general terms and would be better measured by the NSW Menindee Health Service staff and medical professionals.
3. I know people were getting help from neighbours and other community members in getting support re food and the ability to prepare meals.
4. Each time the power came back on we were told to minimise our use of electricity to ensure the integrity of the one gas turbine. No information was given at the time about what the plan was going to be in relation to restoring a reliable and secure power source in the coming days.
5. People had purchased a fortnight worth of food the day or so prior to the outage, when the power went out it was only a matter of time before food safety was a critical element for consideration, however this was not identified or addressed at the time. People did not and do not have the financial ability to purchase food to replace the spoiled items.
6. The RFS captain in Menindee is contacted every time an incident occurs, with the power outages his phone calls from distressed community members wanting to know what was going on had skyrocketed, historically this was not the case. This clearly shows that other the RFS in Menindee no other government agency was in a position to manage these incidents and that other agencies had not been prepared for such a situation.
7. As a result of the stress and trauma caused by the power outages and his efforts in addressing the subsequent shortfalls of agencies, the RFS Captain has had to take a step back and relinquish his role.
8. I hope the above responses answer the question you had put to me on the day during the hearing.

Kind regards,

Rob Woods

25th March 2025