

**INQUIRY INTO RESPONSE TO MAJOR FLOODING
ACROSS NEW SOUTH WALES IN 2022**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 12 May 2022

Partially
Confidential

We own farms (about 330ha) in the East Coraki / Buckendoon area near the Richmond River. These farms were inundated under significant amounts of water through both floods in March 2022. The extended period of time our crops spent under water resulted in the loss of all crops - 40ha of sugar cane, 100ha of rice and 30,000 young macadamia trees. We will have to replant everything. Attached pictures of the flood water covering the property and what the property looks like post the flood.

Whilst we appreciate the farms are located in a high flood risk area, the slow pace at which water drained off the farms was longer than typical and prolonged the period of inundation. This was a significant contributor to the extent of damage to crops on our farms.

In this context, we would like to ensure all options are being explored to optimize and expedite the drainage of flood waters from farms in the areas. If initiatives could be put in place to do this, and the period of inundation shortened this will have a significant improvement in crop losses from future flood events - making a significant difference to farmers in the area.

Specific initiatives we would like to see explored / investigated include:

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1. M1 Motorway. Ensuring the new M1 motorway did not impede or slow water draining from the farms. The pace at which flood waters receded was slower than prior floods, and I am not sure if the new M1 contributed to this. If it did, exploring ways to mitigate this in the future to facilitate improved drainage
2. Tuckombil Canal. The structure in place continues to significantly slow the rate at which waters drains in the area. Alternative structures need to be explored to facilitate an opening and closing mechanism to allow maximum flow of water during peak flood periods and facilitate a more rapid reduction in inundation. This is an easy fix and can have a material difference.
3. New canal connecting the Richmond River to the ocean. I would like to see an exploration into the merits of considering construction of a new canal to connect the Richmond River to the ocean. This canal can be constructed to be used in peak flood periods. For example, considering such a canal near Goat Island, where there is a natural point where the gap between the Richmond River is closest to the ocean. This would dramatically shorten the distance water would need to travel to exit the river (by about 30km) and assist in increasing the rate at which water can exit the river and therefore farm fields
4. Farm drain sluice gates and farm drains. Farm sluice gates are effective when river levels are at lower levels, however are limiting water existing fields during flood events. Farmers should be authorized to raise sluice gates once flood waters have peaked to help assist water more rapidly draining from farm fields. Once river levels return to normal, farmer should be required to lower the sluice gates. This could help improve water flows off the property.



