

**Submission
No 15**

**INQUIRY INTO NSW GOVERNMENT'S USE AND
MANAGEMENT OF CONSULTING SERVICES**

Name: Sally Newham

Date Received: 17 July 2023

New South Wales Legislative Council: PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKS COMMITTEE

SUBMISSION: NSW GOVERNMENT'S USE AND MANAGEMENT OF CONSULTING SERVICES

The Director, Public Accountability and Works Committee,

Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Thank you for the opportunity to make a personal submission to this inquiry. I am not entirely sure how inquiries of this nature work, so I hope you'll bear with me. My submission is not one loaded with evidence or academic analysis, but it is a plea for inquiry into the activities of consultancies in the context I am living in – post-disaster Lismore, Nth NSW.

I started a community group called Reclaim Our Recovery in August last year when I started to see what was happening to my place and community as 'disaster money' started to roll in. Previously earnest and fierce community advocates seemed to suddenly be silenced as they became recipients of funding, and the overall atmosphere has been one of silence and non-transparency as the newly formed government corporation NRRC set itself up in our traumatised town.

16 months later and many, many people are still living in broken shells of homes. The community is bewildered and divided, as some amongst us have profited from the disaster, while others are in financial and psychological ruin.

My submission is a request. Please inquire into the role consultancies have played in our disaster recovery playing out so very terribly for those hit hardest. Please inquire into the lack of transparency that has shrouded the NRRC from its inception and the role consultancies have played in this. Please inquire into the accountability consultancies should bear for the collective and individual psychological and physical suffering so many in our community are struggling with.

I hope that this submission is not inappropriate, and that my request for inquiry into consultancies active in the post-disaster situation in the Northern Rivers is warranted and possible. We cannot afford to wait for this to unfold, we need to nip it in the bud now. The social fabric of our entire region is fraying, perhaps beyond repair.

Thank you, yours sincerely,

Sally Newham

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