



# Community experiences of the 2022 eastern Australia floods (January-July 2022)

**NHRA Forum – Wednesday 3 May 2023**

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**HAZELNUT SWIRL\***

Whole roasted hazelnut in a whirl of milk chocolate



**SURPRISE PARCEL<sup>Δ</sup>**

A white chocolate truffle wrapped in milk chocolate



**APPLE CRUNCH<sup>Δ</sup>**

Apple flavour white chocolate truffle with cinnamon crunch

*Specially crafted to celebrate 100 years of delicious Milk Tray moments*



**ORANGE TRUFFLE<sup>Δ</sup>**

Milk chocolate truffle with an orange twist



**STRAWBERRY TEMPTATION**

Delicious real strawberry fondant covered in milk chocolate

*Cadbury*

**Milk Tray**



**SALTED CARAMEL CHARM<sup>Δ</sup>**

Chewy caramel with a touch of salt enrobed in smooth milk chocolate



**PERFECT PRALINE\*<sup>Δ</sup>**

Hazelnut praline encased in a milk chocolate gem



**CARAMEL SOFTY**

Milk chocolate matched with its caramel sweetheart



**FUDGE DUET<sup>Δ</sup>**

Vanilla flavour fudge covered with milk chocolate



**TRUFFLE HEART<sup>Δ</sup>**

Smooth chocolate truffle, locked in a milk chocolate heart

Overview





# Methodology

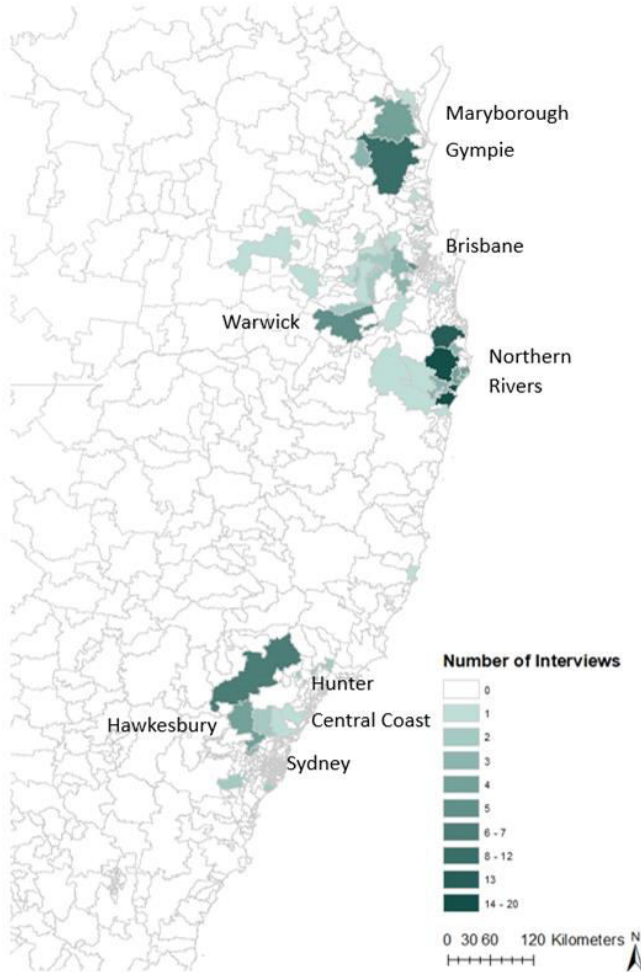
Mixed Methods

Interviews

Online survey



# Interviews



## → Recruitment

- Recruitment survey
- Social media

## → Interviews

- 192 interviews
- 92 QLD / 100 NSW
- 15 Aug – 27 Oct '22

## → Analysis

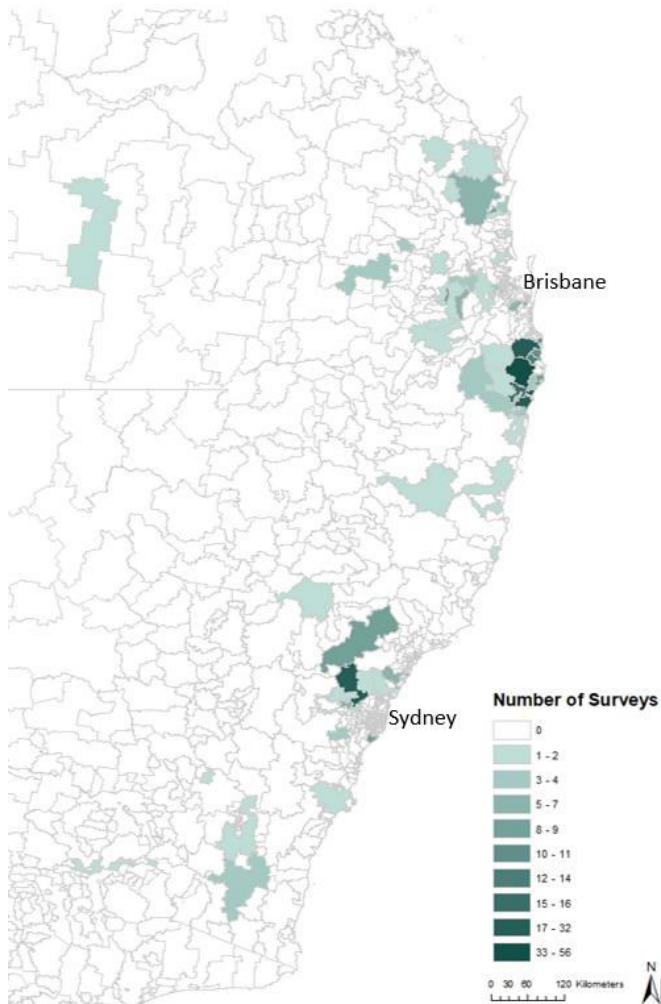
- Thematic coding (NVivo)

## Interview guide

- Prior experience of flooding and perception of risk
- Information and warnings
- Preparedness and response
- Evacuation and sheltering
- Vulnerability and resilience
- Community champions
- Expectations
- Compounding and cascading disasters
- Recovery
- Adaptation
- The future
- What was learned/lessons for others



# Survey



## → Recruitment

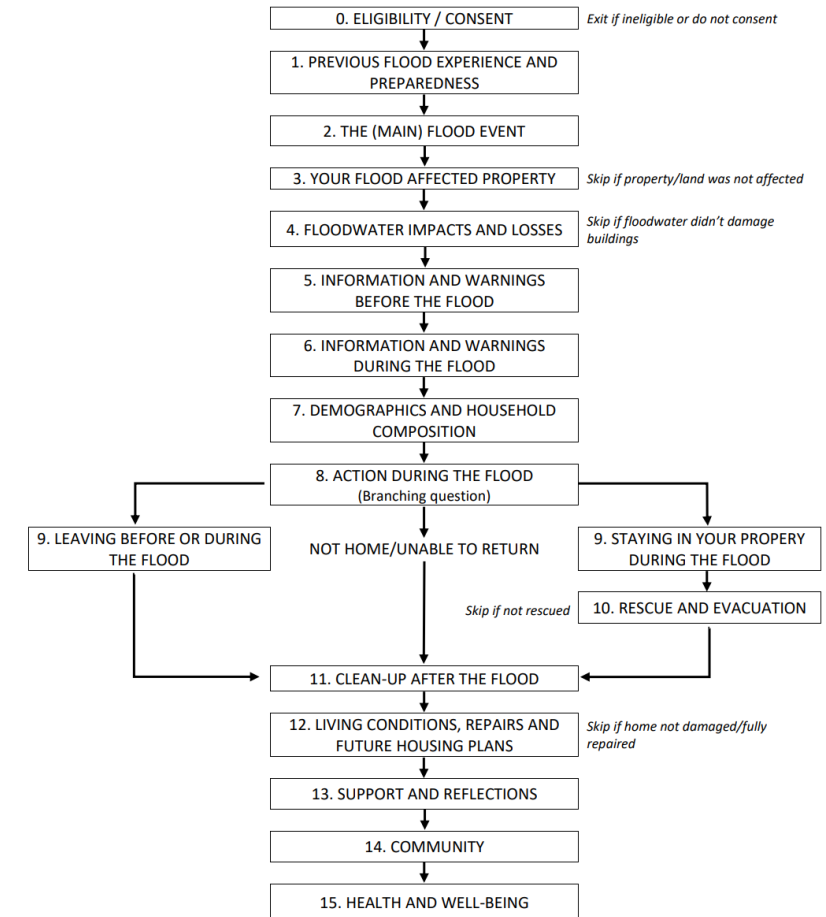
- Recruitment survey
- Social media
- Word of mouth
- Phone recruitment

## → Online survey

- 430 responses
- 24 Nov '22 – 17 Feb '22

## → Analysis

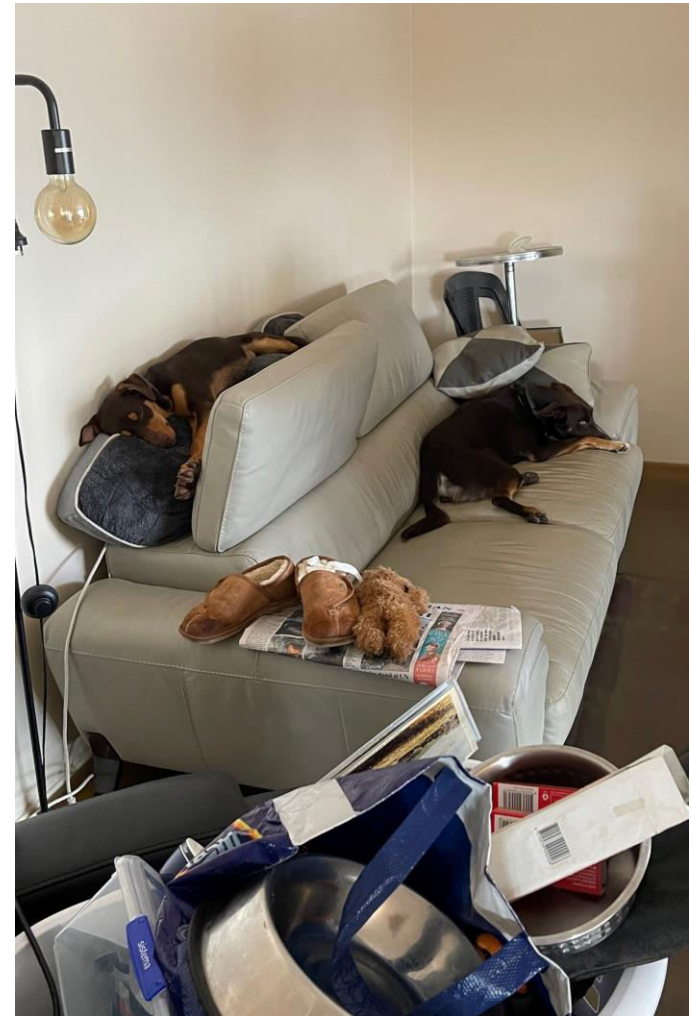
- Descriptive, bivariate (SPSS)





# Main report

- Cross-cutting themes (5)
- Themes emerging from interviews (13)
- Content areas from survey (5)
- Challenge areas (4)



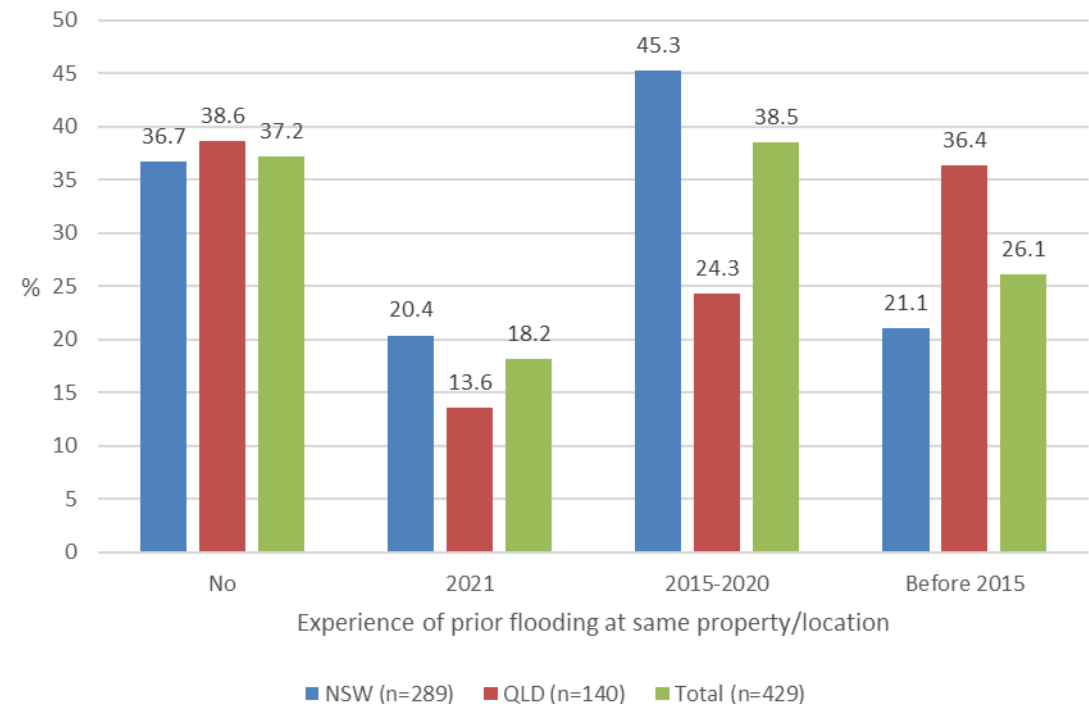
*Lisa Bennett – Northern Rivers*



# Cross-cutting themes

- Severity
- Scale
- Timelines
- Compounding, concurrent disasters and climate change
- Vulnerability context

Have you experienced floods previously at this same property/location? (multiple responses permitted)



*.. they moved in about six to eight months before the floods and I was speaking with her, and she said when she went to insure her home that the insurance company looked up the location and said, "Oh, it'll never flood there", so she didn't take the flood insurance.*



# Cross-cutting themes

- Severity
- Scale
- Timelines
- **Compounding, concurrent disasters and climate change**
- Vulnerability context

*“Between Covid and this... and I don’t think you can separate the two because we’re already so far behind the 8-ball when this happened to us. You know, we literally went from “Yeah, we’re going to get freedom” to... we actually stepped even further back than COVID, because being isolated and stuck was one thing, and not going to town and whatever, and uncertainty, then adding this other whammy on... where you just can’t see what your future’s even going to hold for you.”*







*At the moment this town is full of people in these caravans.*

*Nearly every house or even second house has a rented caravan on it, at ground level. So, if there's another flood, even a small flood, all of those caravans are going to flood.*

*I don't know what the answer is, I don't know what we're going to do. I don't know if this is going to be an ongoing issue, if it's just a particular La Niña issue, is it climate change, is it... what?*

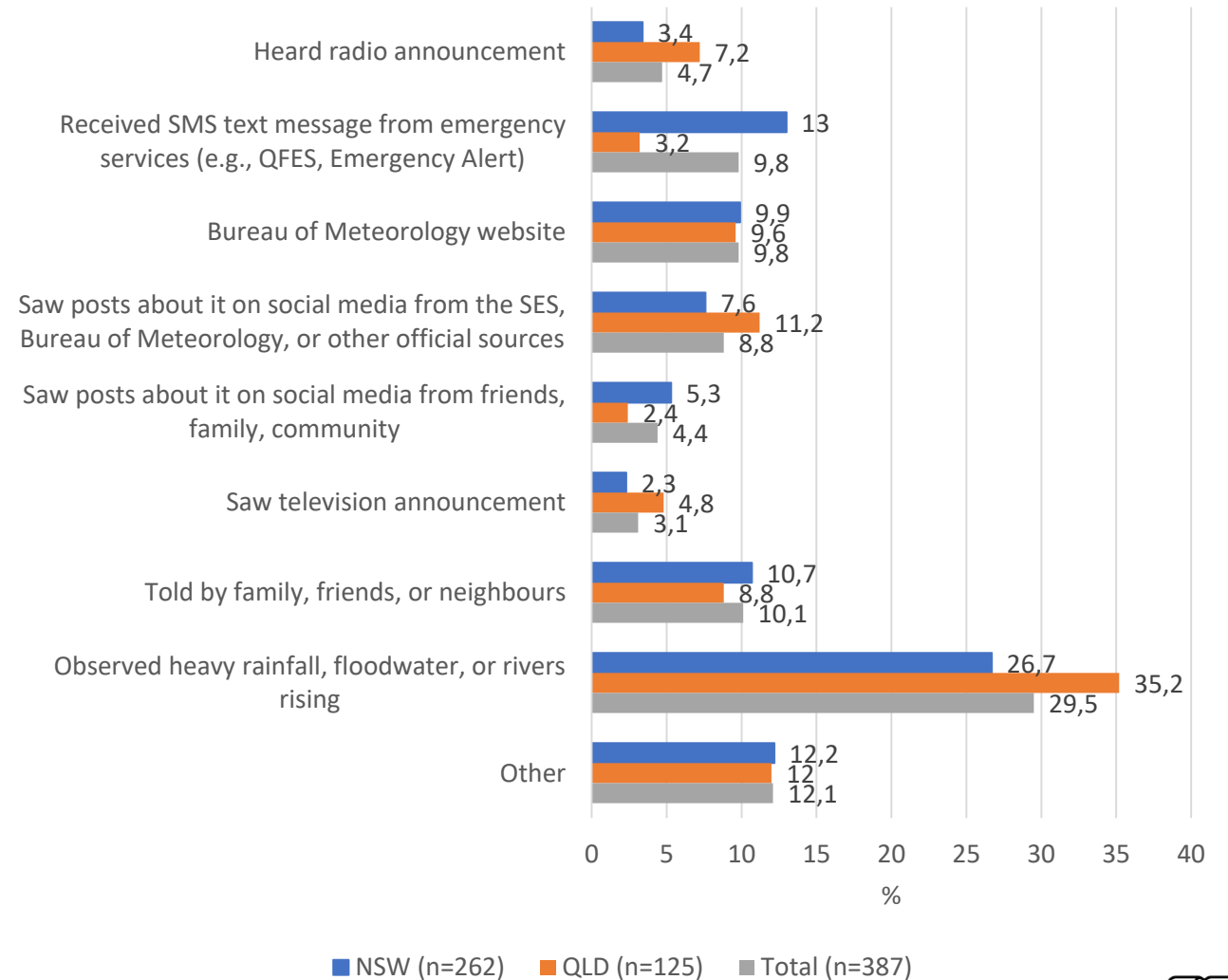
*I don't know, but for me personally, there's no guarantee that it's not going to happen again, therefore it's not worth me spending my limited resources fixing something that it then becomes vulnerable, because I don't have the money to fix it a second time.*



# Cross-cutting themes

- Severity
- Scale
- Timelines
- Compounding, concurrent disasters and climate change
- Vulnerability context

How did you first find out that your town or suburb was likely to experience flooding? (single response)



# Themes emerging from interviews

- Flood data
- Localised perspective
- Dashboards
- Information expectations
- Forgotten people and forgotten places
- Community responders
- Clean-up
- Insurance
- Bureaucracy
- Temporary housing
- Disaster opportunism
- Recovery fatigue
- Infrastructure, planning, and maintenance in sensemaking



*Jonathan Beniston - Hunter*





# Content areas from the survey



*Supplied with permission - Oxley*

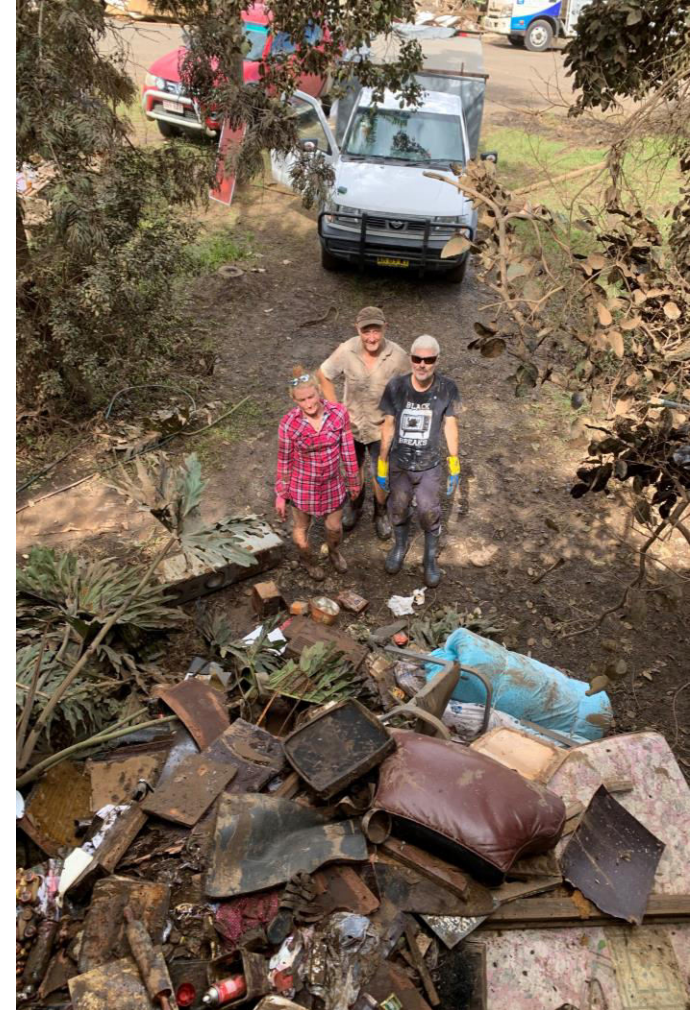
- Preparedness
- Information, warnings, and trust
- Sheltering and rescue
- Housing – modification, reconstruction, and adaptation
- Sources of support and recovery



# Findings – needs/challenges

Found across themes/data types

→ Community and connectedness are important



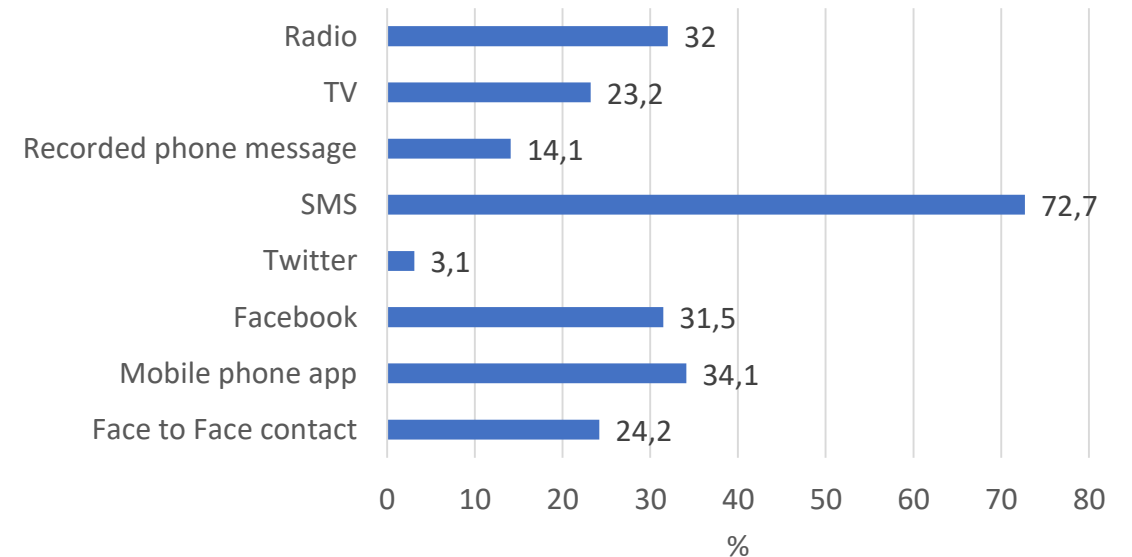
*Marion Conrow – Northern Rivers*



# Findings – needs/challenges

- Communication – information, actions, consequences
- Official ‘presence’ required soon after flooding - perceived support

Preferred methods for receiving future flood warnings  
(multiple responses permitted)





# Findings – needs/challenges

- Greater integration and inclusion of communities
- Increased flexibility in approaches
- Enhance agency

*And the insurer was on our back because they didn't want to pay us the accommodation. But on the other side of the coin, we kept saying to them, "If you do some initial work to that house, allow us to do some initial work to the house, we can move back quickly." All we wanted was the new hot water service; we wanted some electrical work done...*

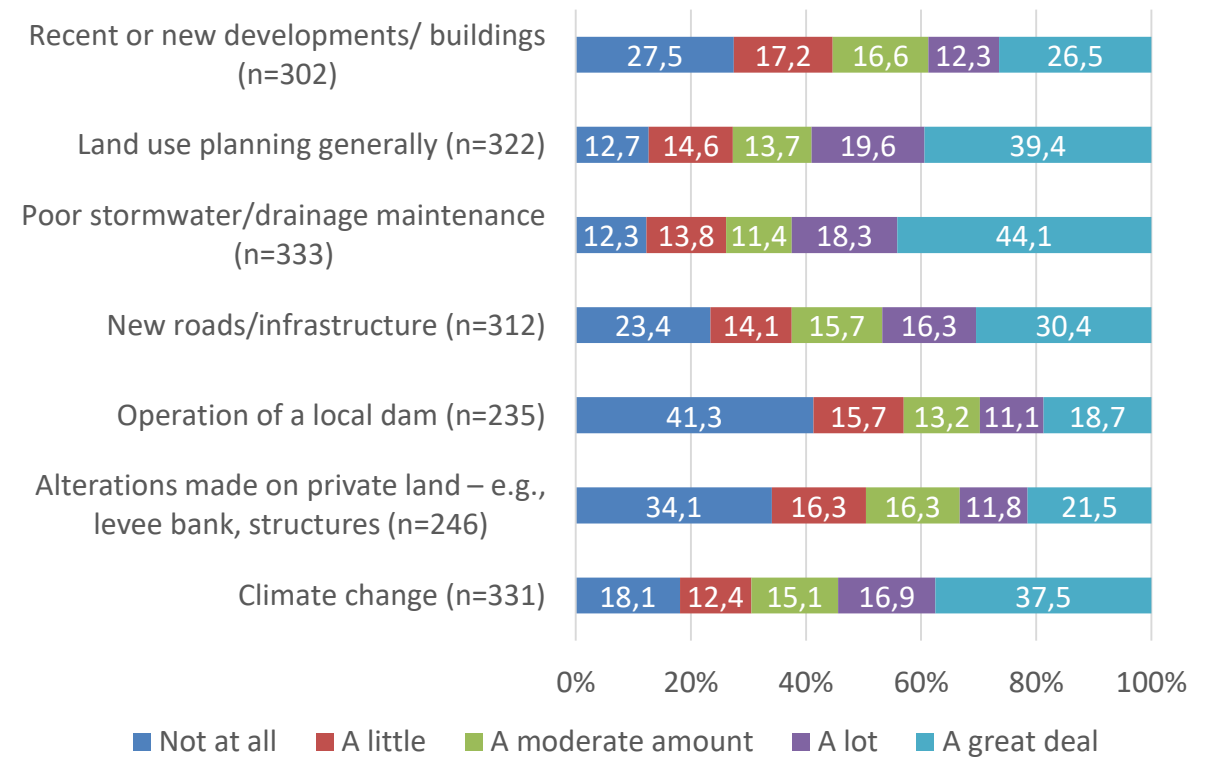
*... when I first got the emergency accommodation, it was from week-to-week ...and then every time we had to move, I had to put everything in my car and check out at 10:00 and check in at the next place wasn't until 2:00 and so I couldn't work that day, and then one of my kids had to not work that day so we could do it together because not everything fitted in the car; we'd have to take stuff to people's places and leave it. It was like we'd be homeless for that period because really... you don't think about it but the first time it happened... It's like you just don't even believe it's a thing but it is a horrible thing...*



# Findings – needs/challenges

- Improve resourcing (especially local councils)
- Remove the burden from flood-impacted people

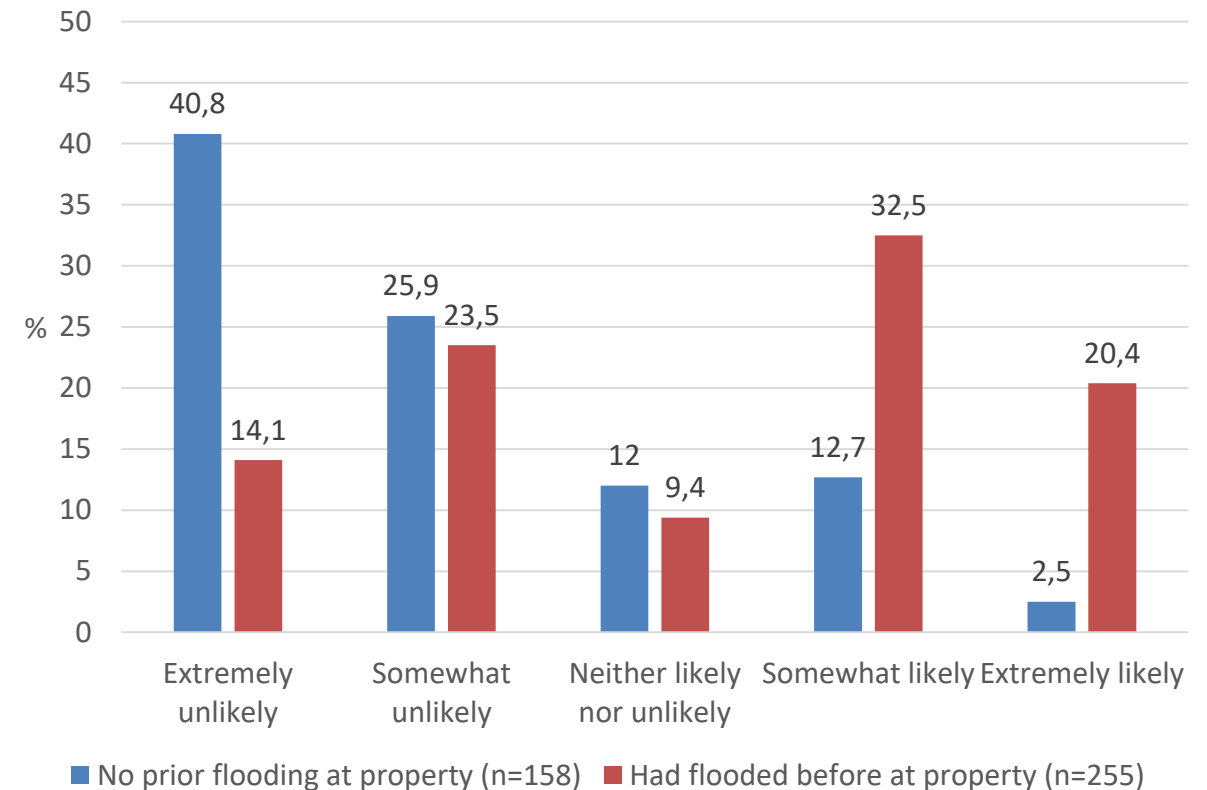
How much do you feel the following contributed to the flooding?  
(N/A responses removed)



# Findings – needs/challenges

- Improve preparedness -use recent experiences in engagement
- The need for transformative adaptation – building better, land use planning, addressing climate change

Perceived likelihood of flooding affecting property, prior to the flood/s in 2022.





# Sheltering

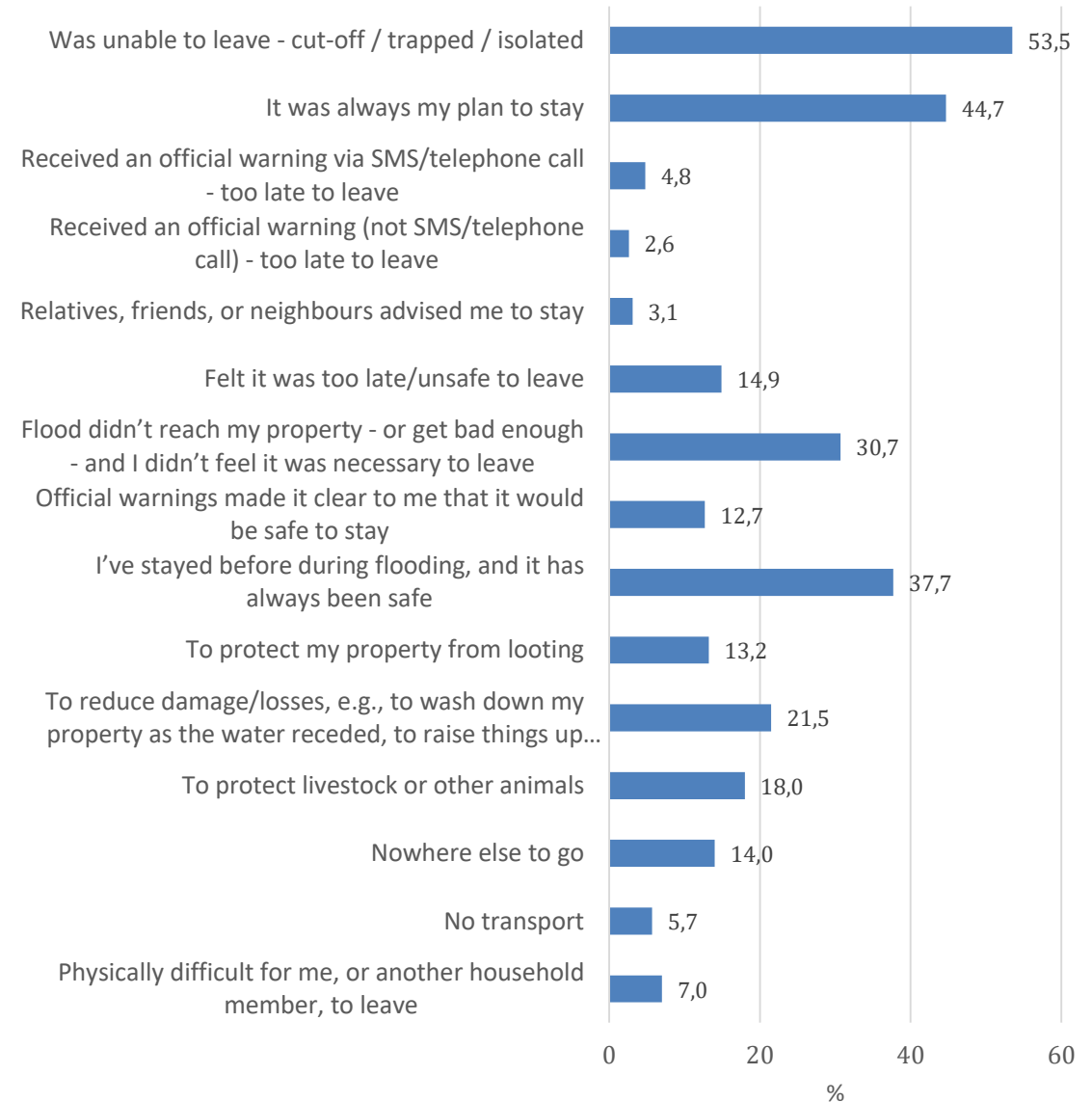
## → Actions during flood

- 8.8% not home
- 29.8% left
- 61.4% stayed/sheltered

## → Of those who stayed

- 19.8% required rescue

Reasons respondents stayed during the flood (n=228)  
(Multiple responses permitted)



# Thank you

→ Further queries:

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- Kat Haynes [kat.Haynes@naturalhazards.com.au](mailto:kat.Haynes@naturalhazards.com.au)

→ Main Report – Project website

- [www.naturalhazards.com/floods2022](http://www.naturalhazards.com/floods2022)



Research Team (l-r): Fiona Miller, Barbara Ryan, Harriet Narwal, Kim Johnston, Anne Lane, Mel Taylor, Dipika Dabas.

Missing: Madeleine Miller, Helga Simons.

