



# Lismore Flood Evacuation Plan



## Planning Guide & Template

This evacuation guide and template has been developed by Resilient Lismore. It is designed to support organisations and businesses located in and around the Lismore CBD (North Lismore, South Lismore, East Lismore and the CBD) towards a well-developed evacuation plan for floods and cyclones.

Please refer to our website at <https://resilientlismore.org.au/services/lismore-evacuation-guide> for:

- The most recent version of this Guide
- An example of a completed template
- Examples of supporting documents
- Links to resources referenced in this Guide

We welcome your feedback and any suggestions you have that will improve this Guide. You can contact Resilient Lismore at [hello@resilientlismore.org.au](mailto:hello@resilientlismore.org.au)

The template has two sections:

1. Standard information for all services
2. Blank templates for individual 'organisation and business plans

The template reflects the four-step emergency management cycle, which highlights the cyclical and ongoing nature of emergency management and disaster preparedness.



## 1. PREVENT

### ACTIONS TO TAKE BEFORE ANY EVENT

- Flood ready premises fit out
- Evacuation Plan regularly reviewed and kept up to date
- Leadership, Chain-of-command and Evacuation Team (staff and volunteers) identified
- Develop a Road Closures and Local Impacts Table (see website for example) for your Evacuation Team
- Annual team Evacuation Plan awareness workshop
- Review new staff induction to include evacuation information
- Budget allocation for evacuation
- Collaboration plans with neighbours in place
- Contact lists kept up to date: staff, other organisations/stakeholders, emergency services, volunteers
- Communication systems in place for Evacuation Team and for Staff
  - mobile phone apps (eg. WhatsApp)
  - Client / customer notification system in place (e.g. Email, Text Message Systems)
- Save copies of important documents online, in the cloud.
- Source and pack a waterproof Critical Evacuation Box (keys, documents, backup drives, etc). Ensure key staff / Evacuation Team members know its location. (see website for suggested packing list)
- Evacuation equipment and supplies (eg. Plastic tubs, empty sandbags, waterproof bags) purchased and location/s known to key staff / Evacuation Team
- Property Flood Certificate sourced through Council ([waterride.net/flooddata/lismore/](http://waterride.net/flooddata/lismore/))
- Run an Evacuation Exercise to establish the time, people, and equipment you need
- Evacuation start trigger determined based on time required to pack - this could be the approach of a significant weather system and not an official Emergency Warning
- Evacuation Packing & Transport Plan developed identifying who packs what (see website for example)
- Develop an organisation specific evacuation webpage or online portal for larger orgs / businesses
- Undertake Organisation / Business Continuity Planning and implement any identified improvements

## 2. PREPARE / STANDBY

### ACTIONS TO TAKE AS SIGNIFICANT WEATHER APPROACHES

- Leadership / chains of command / evacuation team notified and on standby
  - Monitor weather updates from the BOM and information from the SES
  - Review Contact Lists for currency
  - Communicate with any relevant stakeholders
  - Share your evacuation plan with your Evacuation Team
  - Petrol in all vehicles
  - Withdraw cash
  - Equipment (phones / back up batteries) charged
  - Alternative power supply arranged if necessary (e.g. for fridges)
  - Transport organised and / or booked (trucks, forklifts etc.)
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## 3. RESPOND / ACTIVATE EVACUATION PLAN

### ACTIONS TO TAKE AS SIGNIFICANT WEATHER APPROACHES

Larger organisations or businesses or those with high stock levels may need to activate their evacuation plan before the SES issues an Emergency Warning.

SES may issue an Emergency Warning based on expected weather conditions, not just river heights; this happened during Cyclone Alfred in 2025.

- Activate your plan when your trigger arrives.
  - Follow your evacuation plan to pack up and leave premises
  - Follow NSW SES advice and leave before the time advised when an Emergency Warning is issued.
  - Activate check-in protocols with staff
  - Monitor weather updates and SES advice
  - Alert clients / customers / suppliers regarding disruption / continuity of service information
  - Withdraw cash
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## 4. RECOVER

- Return to premises when NSW SES advise that it is safe to do so.
- Cleanup / restore premises.
- Assess and deliver staff, client or customer support
- Review evacuation with everyone who participated
- Amend/improve Evacuation Plan as required

## Standard information for organisations and businesses in the Lismore Flood Zone.

Before, during, and after a flood or a cyclone, it is important to remain calm and to follow the instructions of local authorities and emergency services.

### Local impacts and Road Cut Offs.

Designated evacuation leaders should keep the Evacuation Team informed of local impacts, likely road closures, and safe exit routes so that everyone can stay safe as you enact your plan.

You can find a range of excellent information about flood impacts in Lismore here:

<https://www.ses.nsw.gov.au/local-information/lismore>

This includes specific Flood Guides for four areas in Lismore:

- The CBD
- North Lismore
- South Lismore
- East Lismore and Girards Hill.

Each guide identifies the expected local consequences of river heights measured at the Wilsons River Rowing Club Gauge. These Guides are useful for predicting when specific roads are likely to be cut and understanding local impacts.

The image below is an example from the East Lismore Flood Guide:


| Height at gauge  | Expected consequence   |
|------------------|--|
| 14.37m           | <b>2022 record flood.</b><br>Catastrophic flooding across CBD and surrounding suburbs.   |
| 12.20m           | 1954 flood peak –extensive flooding, major residential and commercial losses.  |
| 11.60m<br>11.00m | Floods comparable to 1974 (12.15m) and 2017 (11.59m); widespread flooding.   |
| 10.85m<br>10.60m | <b>CBD levee overtopped</b> –water spreads rapidly, flooding CBD streets and businesses and evacuation routes are cut.                 |
| 9.70m            | <b>Major Flood Level.</b><br>Extensive isolation. Low-lying homes start to flood and increased risk to property.                       |
| 7.20m            | <b>Moderate Flood Level.</b>   |
| 6.00m            | Many roads are flooded. Dawson Street cut near Lismore Centra Tourist Park.  |
| 5.70m            | Many roads are flooded. Junction Street (Southern end of Keen Street in CBD Lismore) may be cut by back-up water from Gas Works Creek. |

Using these Guides, alongside the Local Knowledge of your team, organisations can develop a table showing local impacts and when specific roads are expected to be cut off, that you can refer to during your evacuation (see example on website).

The Local Knowledge of your team should be included in your table, particularly for people who live outside of Lismore who know when their local creeks and causeways will cut their local roads which will inform when they need to leave to go home.

## Australian Warning System (AWS)


The Australian Warning System (AWS) is a national approach to help everyone easily identify the type of hazard and warning level. You may not always receive an official warning. If you notice the natural signs like rushing or pooling water, and heavy or prolonged rainfall – don't wait, leave low-lying areas if it is safe to do so.



### Advice

There is a heightened level of threat.  
Stay up to date as the situation changes.

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 **Action Statements**    ■ Stay informed    ■ Reduced threat - Return with caution  
                                 ■ Monitor conditions



### Watch and Act

Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family.

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 **Action Statements**    ■ Do not enter floodwater    ■ Prepare to isolate  
                                 ■ Prepare to evacuate    ■ Avoid the area



### Emergency Warning

You may be in danger and need to take action immediately.

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 **Action Statements**    ■ Evacuate now / Evacuate before (time)    ■ Shelter now  
                                 ■ Move to higher ground

# IMPORTANT APPS, PHONE NUMBERS AND WEBSITES

We recommend including these two pages as attachments to your evacuation plan.

## Mobile Applications (Apps)

Ensure that everyone has these applications on their mobile telephones.

### Hazards Near Me

Download the Hazards Near Me NSW App and Set your Watch Zones to receive notifications for new incidents and when information changes.

### BOM

Monitor weather predictions, rainfall and river heights and

### Live Traffic NSW

Monitor Live Traffic for Road Closure

### Emergency Plus

A useful app that identifies your exact location and also has key emergency phone numbers linked.

## Emergency contacts

Make sure that all staff have these numbers in their mobile phones.






|                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Police – Fire – Ambulance       | 000       |
| SES (State Emergency Service)   | 132 500   |
| Poisons Information Line        | 13 11 26  |
| Lismore City Council            | 6625 0500 |
| Lismore Base Hospital           | 6624 0200 |
| Essential Energy (power outage) | 132 080   |

## Information, Updates and Alerts

Ensure that all staff have these websites bookmarked on their laptops and phones.

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Road closure information  |  | <a href="http://www.livetraffic.com.au">www.livetraffic.com.au</a>  |
| Lismore City Council's Disaster Dashboard   |  | <a href="http://disaster.lismore.nsw.gov.au/dashboard/overview">disaster.lismore.nsw.gov.au/dashboard/overview</a>  |
| Lismore City Council's Flood Monitoring Cameras (Coffee Camp, Wyrallah Road and Boatharbour Road) |  | <a href="https://www.lismore.nsw.gov.au/Community/Natural-hazards-and-emergency-information/Flood-information-for-Lismore1/Flood-monitoring-cameras">https://www.lismore.nsw.gov.au/Community/Natural-hazards-and-emergency-information/Flood-information-for-Lismore1/Flood-monitoring-cameras</a> |

## Information, Updates and Alerts

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Lismore City Council's Levee Overtopping Display</b>    |  | <a href="https://www.lismore.nsw.gov.au/Community/Natural-hazards-and-emergency-information/Flood-information-for-Lismore1/Lismore-Urban-Levee">https://www.lismore.nsw.gov.au/Community/Natural-hazards-and-emergency-information/Flood-information-for-Lismore1/Lismore-Urban-Levee</a> |
| <b>Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) weather warning updates</b> |  | <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/nsw">www.bom.gov.au/nsw</a>  |
| <b>ABC Radio North Coast - FM 94.5</b>                     |  | <a href="http://abc.net.au/listen/live/northcoast">abc.net.au/listen/live/northcoast</a>  |
| <b>NSW SES warnings</b>                                    |  | Website: <a href="http://ses.nsw.gov.au/">ses.nsw.gov.au/</a><br>Facebook: @NSWSES   |

## BOM information – source of truth

Check the BOM site regularly for weather updates and warnings. Real-time graphs like the Latest River Heights for Wilsons River at Lismore are very useful. Hourly and 24-hour rainfall bulletins are also useful to watch closely.

In Lismore the River heights at the Wilsons River at Lismore (Rowing Club) Gauge at each level of flooding are:

**MINOR** 4.2 – 7.2m

**MODERATE** 7.2 – 9.7m

**MAJOR** 9.7m and above

**The LEVEE CAN OVERTOP** anywhere between 10.2 and 10.95

These can be found on the BOM NSW Rain and River Data page.

**Go to NSW Rain and River Data:** [https://www.bom.gov.au/nsw/fllood/rain\\_river.shtml](https://www.bom.gov.au/nsw/fllood/rain_river.shtml)

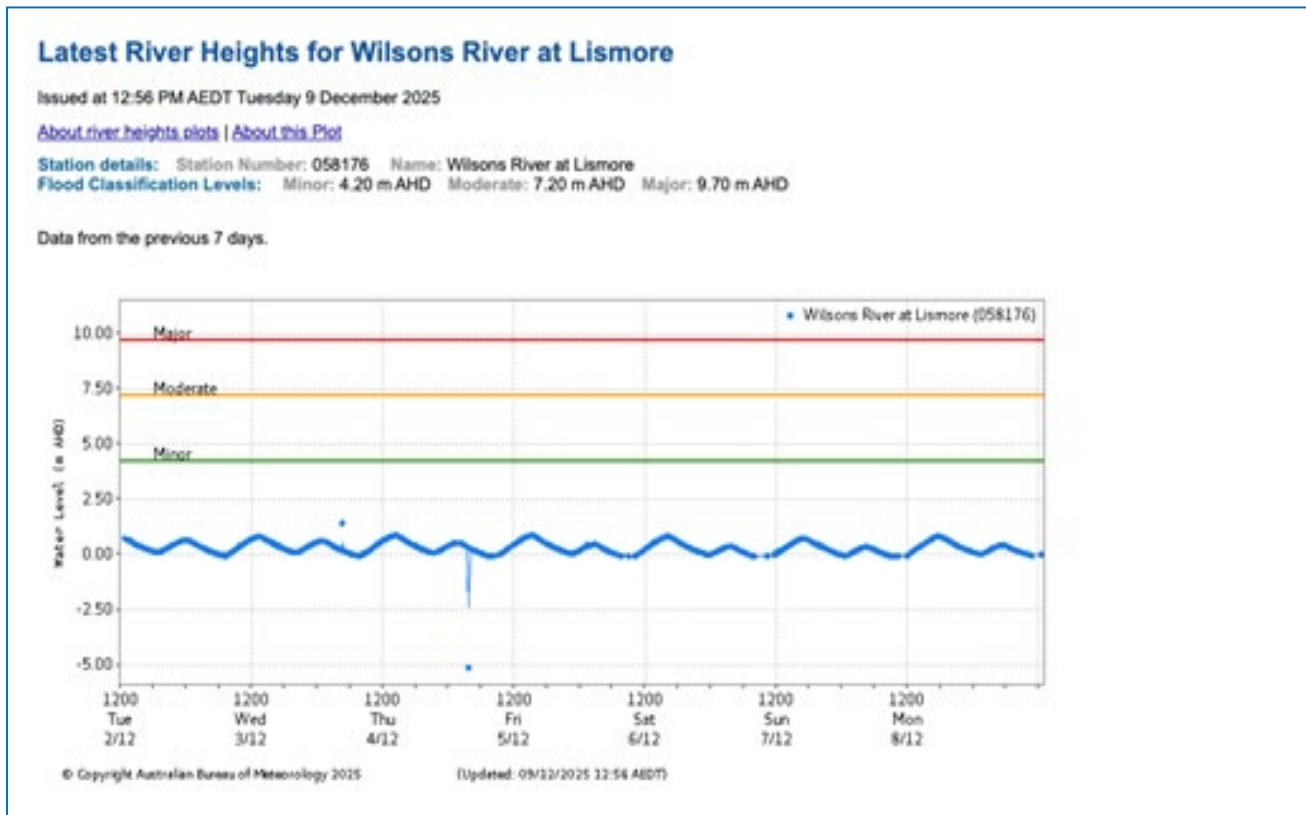
**At the bottom of the page are the hourly and 24-hour Rainfall Bulletins.** Click on Tweed, Brunswick, Richmond Wilsons, Clarence. You will see our catchment about halfway down the page.

**To see the River Heights at the Rowing Club Gauge:** click on Tweed, Brunswick, Richmond Wilsons, Clarence and then click on the Wilsons River at Lismore Plot.

|  |           |             |       |     |         |                   |  |
|--|-----------|-------------|-------|-----|---------|-------------------|--|
| Browns Creek at Browns Ck Pump Station (Lismore) | Automatic | 07.01AM Tue | 4.76  | LGH | steady  |                   | <a href="#">Plot</a>   <a href="#">Table</a> |
| Browns Creek at Lismore (Dawson St)              | Automatic | 07.07AM Tue | 1.92  | LGH | steady  |                   | <a href="#">Plot</a>   <a href="#">Table</a> |
| <b>Wilsons River at Lismore</b>                  | Automatic | 08.14AM Tue | -0.11 | AHD | falling | Below Flood Level | <a href="#">Plot</a>   <a href="#">Table</a> |
| Wilsons River at East Gundurimba                 | Automatic |             |       | LGH |         |                   | <a href="#">Plot</a>   <a href="#">Table</a> |
| Wilsons River at Turukurimba                     | Automatic | 07.56AM Tue | 0.62  | LGH | falling |                   | <a href="#">Plot</a>   <a href="#">Table</a> |

You will see a live graph like this.

During a flood the blue line will rise which will show that the river is rising.



#### Remember: Gauges can fail.

**You should also use other available sources of information to monitor and stay informed of flood impacts.**

- Lismore Council Flood Monitoring Cameras
- Lismore Council Levee Overtopping Display
- Local Knowledge