



Post Disaster Survey of Residents in North Queensland Following Monsoonal Floods in January and February 2025

**The Social Impacts and Preparedness Experiences of
Households Which Experienced the Monsoonal Floods in
Townsville and surrounding locations in 2025**

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Executive Summary

- **Event Overview:** The 2025 Queensland heavy rainfall and floods were caused by tropical lows and Cyclone Alfred, resulting in widespread devastation, including infrastructure damage, power outages, damage to residences and properties and evacuations.
- **Rainfall and Impact:** BoM and TCC report 2,420 mms of rain for Townsville during the wet season between November 2024 and April 2025. Ingham had similar high rainfall but much more severe river flooding.
- **The Ross River Dam** reached 164% capacity, necessitating water releases which caused downstream flooding.
- **Economic and Human Costs:** The floods caused over \$1.2 billion AUD in damage, two fatalities from flooding, and 31 deaths from a melioidosis outbreak.
- **Survey Purpose:** The Centre for Disaster Studies conducted an online survey to assess the social impacts, preparedness, and flood and evacuation experiences of affected households.
- **Respondent Demographics:** The survey recruited 233 participants, skewed toward older, highly educated, and predominantly female respondents. Their comments suggest that they were reporting on behalf of their households.
- **Preparedness Levels:** 70% of respondents felt adequately prepared, with 71% having disaster kits and 72% holding insurance, though 29% lacked kits and 23% were uninsured.
- **Primary Information Sources:** Facebook was the most accessed source (25%), followed by government websites (18%) and local disaster dashboards (17%).
- **Trust in Official Sources:** The Bureau of Meteorology and local government dashboards were rated highly for accuracy, usefulness, and trustworthiness.
- **Misinformation Concerns:** Social media, particularly Facebook, was both a valuable resource and a source of misinformation, including exaggerated forecasts and outdated flood photos.
- **Evacuation Experiences:** 86% of respondents did not evacuate. Most of those who did evacuate their homes stayed with friends or family. Pet-friendly evacuation centres were identified as a critical need.
- **Communication Shortcomings:** Issues included unclear evacuation instructions, a perception of outdated flood zone maps, and inconsistent messaging from authorities and institutions.
- **Respondents' recommendations for Improvement:** Suggestions included clearer evacuation routes, timely updates, centralized information sources, and better coordination among agencies.
- **Flood Zone Confusion:** Respondents highlighted confusion over pink and black flood zones, calling for improved mapping and clearer instructions.
- **Post-Event Support:** Respondents emphasized the need for better cleanup assistance, mental health resources, and education for new residents on disaster preparedness.
- **Key Takeaway:** The survey underscores the importance of accurate information, effective communication, and coordinated efforts to build resilience and improve disaster management in North Queensland.

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The Monsoonal Weather Event and Meteorological Conditions

The 2025 Queensland floods were a series of severe weather events that impacted northeast Queensland from late January to April 2025, causing widespread flooding and devastation. The disasters resulted in two fatalities from flooding, 31 deaths from a melioidosis outbreak primarily in Cairns and Townsville, and extensive evacuations in coastal regions. By mid-April, the flooding was estimated to have cost the Queensland economy over \$1.2 billion AUD.

Meteorology

The floods were caused by two tropical lows and a third system in the Coral Sea, producing rainfall totals comparable to cyclonic conditions. Rainfall reached up to 300 mm in 24 hours in some areas, with isolated totals exceeding 600 mm. By 2nd February, some regions had recorded over 1,000 mm of precipitation. Major flood warnings were issued for several rivers, and high tides of up to 4 meters were forecast.

A second burst of heavy rainfall and flooding was brought to North Queensland later in February through the emergence of Tropical Cyclone Alfred. It formed north-east of Cooktown on 21 February, tracked eastward then turned southward and continued to strengthen to a peak intensity of category 4 on 27 February, before weakening to category 1 and crossing south-east Queensland on 8th March. Alfred brought damaging wind gusts, heavy rainfall with subsequent flooding and severe coastal erosion of beaches in south-east Queensland and northeastern New South Wales. During its initial development off North Queensland the cyclone generated further heavy falls of rain and riverine flooding.

Impacts

Flooding severely affected the Hinchinbrook Shire, Townsville, and surrounding areas. Townsville Airport closed briefly due to severe weather. The Ross River Dam reached 164% capacity. The Bruce Highway was cut where the Ollera Creek Bridge collapsed, disrupting supplies and access. Cardwell and Ingham experienced extensive flooding, power outages, and road closures. Ingham saw the Herbert River rise to historic levels, and two fatalities occurred in the area. Palm Island suffered a complete power outage due to a landslide.

On 19th March, North Queensland experienced additional flooding, with Toolakea for example recording 293 mm of rain. Overall, more than 8,000 homes lost power, and transport disruptions led to goods shortages, including produce in Cairns, Innisfail, and Ingham.

Evacuation orders were issued for low-lying areas, including six suburbs in Townsville, although many residents chose to stay in their homes. The State Emergency Service conducted multiple rescues, including rooftop evacuations in Cardwell. Disaster declarations were made for Townsville, Hinchinbrook, and Innisfail. Ergon Energy shut down power in flood-prone areas, and the Insurance Council of Australia declared the floods a "significant event."

The Australian Government activated hardship assistance, offering emergency payments and grants for affected households.

Research Method of Online Household Surveys

Centre for Disaster Studies survey instruments have been employed extensively in communities throughout Queensland and elsewhere in Australia, for almost 30 years. Each survey is modified slightly in relation to the place, time, event and specific issues that had already been identified by media and response organisations, but the primary instrument is quite standardised.

A qualitative questionnaire approach was used:

- a) Semi-structured online survey with householders, individuals and residents in affected communities. These usually take 15 to 30 minutes. Most questions are factual, very short answer, avoid accounts of stressful situations, or require a selection from suggested responses. The only personal questions are factual and straightforward based on census characteristics;
- b) Observations of locations by researchers. Disaster impacts for specific places are collected from emergency management and local government organisations to provide context to the residents' responses. This is on-going during the time of the surveys.

Apart from using the results of surveys to analyse community experience of warnings, preparation and awareness, the researchers of the CDS have also contributed to methodological analysis of post disaster studies – for example:

Cottrell, A. and King, D. 2010. Social assessment as a complementary tool to hazard risk assessment and disaster planning. *The Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies*.

Gurtner, Y., Cottrell, A. and King, D. 2008 PRE and RAPID. Community Hazard Recovery Needs and Capacity Assessment. Unpublished Report. Department of Communities & James Cook University Research Project.

Following JCU Human Ethics approval (H9365) the electronic survey was distributed predominantly via local community based social media groups on Facebook. Consistent with previous CDS research, the questions covered the following themes:

- Household Preparedness (kits, plans, insurance)
- Event impacts and evacuations
- Sources of event information, and perceived credibility (and misinformation)
- Basic demographic data

Initially, a brief introduction, overview, and link to the survey were sent to relevant online group administrator/s requesting permission to post and distribute. The approved social media post encouraged community members and respondents to share the link to anyone that may have been impacted by either event. Established contacts from the local council community disaster recovery committees were additionally approached via email to promote the survey throughout their networks. Paper-based versions of the survey were available on request. As the intent was to accurately capture and document lived experiences of events, the surveys were closed in late March 2025. The survey instrument and explanation are reproduced in the appendix.

This document is presented as a basic research report detailing basic raw data. Further analysis of findings and comparisons with previous surveys and events will be submitted to scholarly journals.

Results

The online survey was delivered through Survey Monkey which produced results of responses in an excel database. Each question has been downloaded as a simple table showing the numbers of each response. These have also been displayed as percentages of the number of responses to each question. For clarity each percentage has been rounded to the nearest whole number, (or percents of less than 1 shown as a decimal). Consequently, the totals in each percentage column may add to 99 to 101, but equalled 100 before rounding. An initial 233 people started the survey and responded to most of the questions, including the 13 who answered that they were not impacted by floods (and were advised not to continue with the survey), but they may have ticked no in the sense of direct damage. All of the population in North Queensland was affected in some way by the remorseless rain. Responses to most of the questions were made by the majority of the people who started the survey.

Tables have been constructed directly from the excel spreadsheet of raw survey data, while bar graphs have been copied and pasted from the survey monkey analysis. The bar graphs from survey monkey calculate responses as a percentage of the number of respondents. The tables calculate percentages of all responses. In many questions people were invited to select more than one response. Consequently the totals vary quite significantly from one table to another, but one is able to consider from the graphs the proportion of people who selected each choice, while the tables focus on the proportion of each platform or response that was selected. Word Clouds were constructed from a free internet word cloud generator Word It Out at <https://worditout.com/word-cloud/create> This enabled greater flexibility and word numbers in comparison to the word cloud figures in survey monkey.

A summary of survey questions is included in the appendix. The question, as worded in the survey, is included in the column heading of each table. Open ended responses to some of the questions are listed as written by respondents in the appendix. Responses in the appendix are exactly as they were written in the survey. Some analysis of key words and concepts has been summarised from open ended responses, and Word Clouds are used to illustrate key words. Tables and graphs are grouped into clusters of response sections. These are Disaster Preparation, Residential Location of Respondents, Sources and ratings of Information and Communication, Shortcomings and Areas for Improvement, Evacuation, and Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

Disaster Preparation

The high proportion of people who felt prepared for these floods is synonymous with households who had a disaster kit. Nineteen people responded other to the question about being adequately prepared for disaster. Their detailed responses in appendix table A1 provide insights into their thoughts, but do not suggest a common theme other than some ambivalence. The flood events were quite remorseless and drawn out – an extended very heavy wet season, rather than the immediacy of events like cyclones. As the majority of respondents to this survey were women, Cottrell and Anderson-Berry's research on Women and the Wet Season in Northern Australia (2002) is an illustration of wet season preparation as a household strategy carried out by women annually across the north of Australia. The level of preparation and disaster kit reported here fits into the strategies identified by Cottrell and Anderson-Berry.

Table 1. Disaster Preparation

Do you feel that you/your household was adequately prepared for a disaster before the flood event happened?	Number	Percent
Yes	162	70
No	52	22
Other	19	8
Total	233	100
See appendix table A1 for open ended responses to this question		
Did you/your household have a disaster kit prepared before the event (minimum 3 days food, water and supplies)?		
No	67	29
Yes	166	71
Total	233	100
Did you/your household have household and/or contents insurance before the event?		
Yes	168	72
No	53	23
Other	11	5
Total	232	100

It is positive that 72% of households are covered by insurance, but the 23% who are not, are a cause for concern. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are skewed towards older and highly educated residents, among whom it may be reasonable to expect higher levels of insurance cover than among the bulk of the population. Insurance aids recovery, with a lack of insurance increasing the vulnerability, and reducing the resilience, of a significant proportion of households. This issue extends to a lack of disaster kit and a perception of unreadiness for this series of flood events. Table 1 thus indicates a lack of resilience among many of the people who responded to this survey.

Residential Location of Respondents

Table 2 lists all residential locations of people who responded to the survey. Comparison between experiences in the 2019 monsoonal floods (Gurtner and King 2025) and the 2025 wet season floods is examined in the scholarly literature (in preparation) and therefore details of comparison or contrast are avoided in this basic research report. However, table 2 in both reports provides a strong contrast between the two flood events. The 2019 monsoonal flood was especially concentrated in low lying suburbs adjacent to and downstream of the Ross River. Primary flooding of these suburbs was a consequence of necessary release of water from the Ross dam, which spilled out onto the flood plain downstream. While water was released from the dam during 2025, consequent flooding downstream was not an issue as it had been in 2019.

The question on location of the respondent at the time of impact asked people to record - in what town, suburb and postcode do you live? Most people did as instructed, and listed all three locations, but many recorded only the postcode, and a few simply indicated the city (distant locations such as Adelaide involved people who were in North Queensland at the time of the floods). Table 2 lists the suburb as the primary location of respondents, or the postcode where that was the only location stated.

Table 2. Place of Residence of Households impacted by the Floods

Location	Number	Location	Number
4807	3	Hyde Park	2
4810	4	Idalia	5
4811	2	Ingham	12
4812	7	Jerona	1
4814	4	Kelso	8
4816	1	Kirwan	8
4817	4	Kuranda	1
4818	2	Lucinda	1
4820	4	Macknade	1
4850	1	Magnetic Island	1
4859	1	Majors Creek	2
Adelaide	1	Mount Louisa	8
Aitkenvale	5	Mount Low	2
Alice River	2	Mount Surround	1
Alligator Creek	5	Mundingburra	4
Annandale	5	Mutarnee	1
Ayr	1	Nelly Bay	2
Beach Holm	1	North Ward	3
Belgian Gardens	3	Oak Valley	2
Black River	1	Oonoonba	4
Bluewater Creek/Park	7	Pallarenda	2
Bohle Plains	2	Palm Cove	1
Braemeadows	1	Palm Island	1
Burdell	7	Pimlico	2
Bushland Beach	5	Railway Estate	2
Charters Towers	2	Rasmussen	3
Condon	1	Rosslea	4
Cosgrove	2	Shaw	2
Cranbrook	5	South Townsville	4
Deeragun	4	Taylors Beach	2
Douglas	4	Toonpan	1
Forrest Beach	2	Townsville	2
Garbutt	2	Townsville City	2
Gulliver	4	Vincent	2
Heatley	5	West End	2
Hermit Park	10	Woodstock	1
Home Hill	2	Wulguru	4
Horseshoe Bay	2	Yabulu	1
Total		231 (1 missing and 1 inaccurately listed)	

The initial question in the survey asked people if they had been impacted – Question 1 were you or your household impacted in any way by the major flood event in North Queensland during late January/February 2025? As we left the survey open until the end of March, responses encompassed the later heavy rainfall events as well. The wording of the question - impacted in any way – was intended to capture experiences of flood, rain damage, mould, loss of power, loss or restricted access, shortage of goods, and a range of restrictions on activities and livelihoods. The suburbs or postcodes identified by respondents and listed in table 2 show no dominant concentration of places of impact in contrast to the 2019 flood. There is some concentration of responses from Ingham and its surrounding

suburbs and communities in Hinchinbrook Shire, where the floods were most severe, but loss of power and a later period of impact reduced the potential to recruit more respondents from Ingham.

Sources and Ratings of Information and Communication

As with other online surveys administered during the last decade the major focus of the survey was on sources of information and modes of communication, as these contribute towards individual and household education and awareness of disaster risk reduction. Education and awareness drive preparedness and build resilience to hazards and disaster.

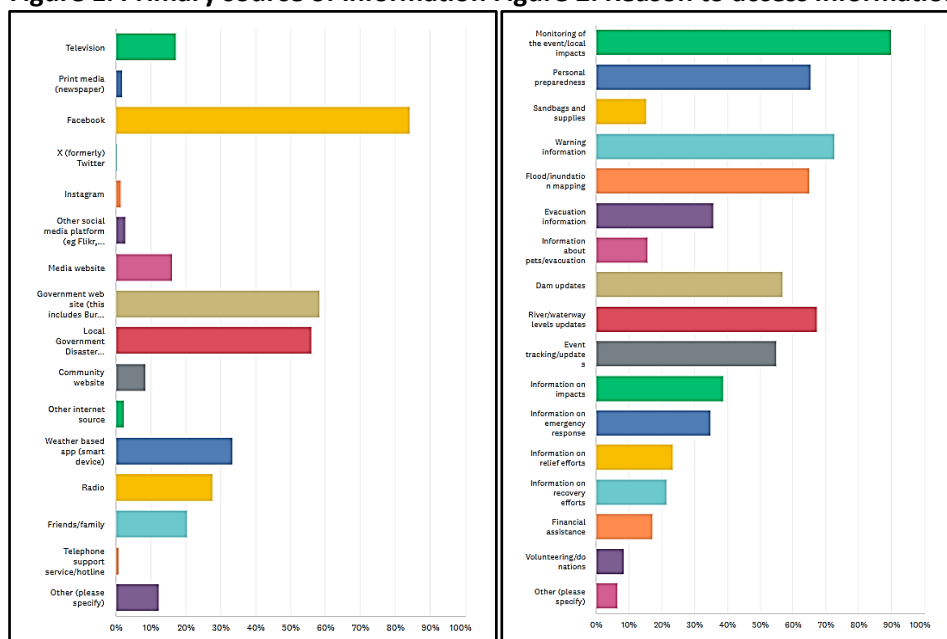
Table 3. Primary Source of Information

What was your primary source of information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)	Number	Percent of all responses
Facebook	176	25
Government web site (this includes Bureau of Meteorology)	122	18
Local Government Disaster Management Dashboard	117	17
Weather based app (smart device)	70	10
Radio	58	8
Friends/family	43	6
Television	36	5
Media website	34	5
Community website	18	3
Other social media platform (eg Flickr, YouTube, blogs)	6	1
Other internet source	5	1
Print media (newspaper)	4	1
Instagram	3	0.4
Telephone support service/hotline	2	0.3
X (formerly Twitter)	1	0.1
Total	695	100

Table 3, which is supplemented by figure 1, indicates the primary sources of information for preparedness, and response actions. Respondents were invited to select more than one option. Not all of the initial 233 people who started the survey, responded to most of the subsequent questions. The number of respondents was generally around 208 or 209. The bar graphs (derived from Survey Monkey analysis) indicate percentages of respondents who selected each choice in the questionnaire while the tables indicate each response as a percentage of the overall number of items selected, where people could choose more than one item.

Three platforms are dominant: Facebook, a Government web site (this includes Bureau of Meteorology) and Townsville City Council Local Government Disaster Management Dashboard. As people were especially recruited through facebook groups, it is inevitable that this platform should be selected by almost three quarters of respondents. The next group of information sources comprised a weather based app, Radio, Friends and family, Television, and media app, forming 34% of all sources accessed, compared to 60% for Facebook, Dashboard and Bom site. As these sources dominate we can infer that when people commented on shortcomings, failures and improvements that may be made for future events (open ended questions towards the end of the survey) their responses were primarily influenced by these information platforms.

Figure 1. Primary source of information Figure 2. Reason to access information



Note: Percentages are calculated as a percent of all respondents.

Figure 2 and table 4 indicate the reasons people gave for accessing information about the floods. The same group of respondents answered this question as in table 3, but selected a far greater number of reasons, with most people choosing 6 or 7 options. Given that about 208 people responded the vast majority of them were concerned with the top 7 reasons: monitoring of the event and local impacts, warning information, river/waterway levels updates, personal preparedness, flood/inundation mapping, dam updates and event tracking/updates.

Table 4. Reason for Accessing Information

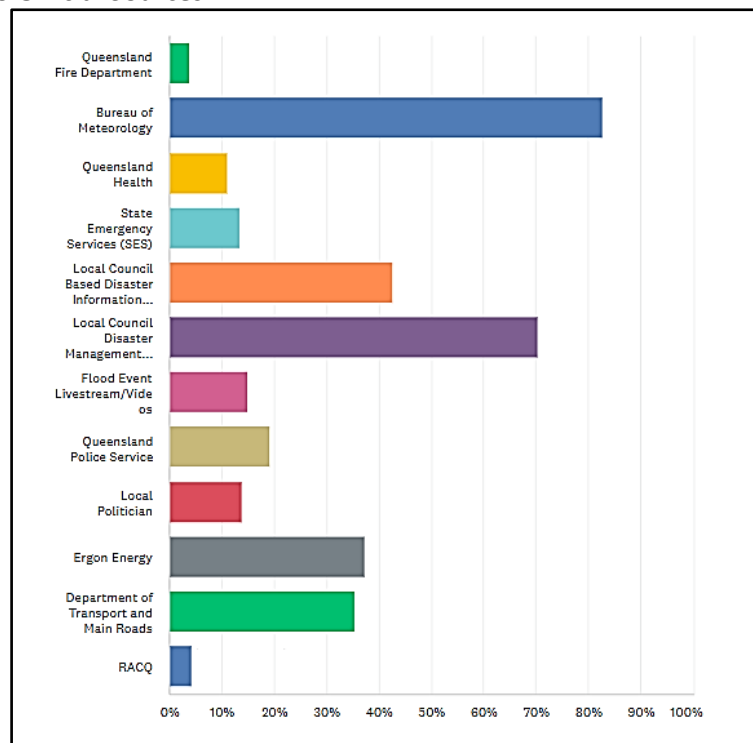
Please indicate the main reason you accessed information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)	Number	Percent of responses
Monitoring of the event/local impacts	188	13
Warning information	152	11
River/waterway levels updates	141	10
Personal preparedness	137	10
Flood/inundation mapping	136	10
Dam updates	119	8
Event tracking/updates	115	8
Information on impacts	81	6
Evacuation information	75	5
Information on emergency response	73	5
Information on relief efforts	49	3
Information on recovery efforts	45	3
Financial assistance	36	3
Information about pets/evacuation	33	2
Sandbags and supplies	32	2
Volunteering/donations	18	1
Total	1430	100

Table 5. Official Sources used to Access Information

Please indicate any official source/group you accessed to prepare or obtain information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)	Number	Percent of responses
Bureau of Meteorology	173	23
Local Council Disaster Management Dashboard	147	20
Local Council Based Disaster Information Group	89	12
Ergon Energy	78	10
Department of Transport and Main Roads	74	10
Queensland Police Service	40	5
Flood Event Livestream/Videos	31	4
Local Politician	29	4
State Emergency Services (SES)	28	4
Queensland Health	23	3
Other	22	3
RACQ	9	1
Queensland Fire Department	8	1
Total	751	100

Table 5 and figure 3 focus on official sources of information and are an extension of the primary source of information, outlined above. The Bureau of Meteorology and Townsville City Council disaster management dashboard along with its related Council disaster information group comprise over half of access to official sources.

Figure 3. Access to Official Sources



Note: Percentages are calculated as a percent of all respondents.

Bureau of Meteorology and the Townsville City Council sources of information dominate the responses in table 6 where people were asked to rate official sources generically. Table 5 indicates that the

208/209 respondents clearly accessed a number of official sources – average of 3.6 per respondent. The ratings of the official sources are therefore most likely to be concerned primarily with the dominant sources of information – BoM and Council.

Table 6. Ratings of Official Sources

How would you rate the information provided by these official sources?	Accurate	%	Up-to-date	%	Useful	%	Trustworthy	%
Completely	25	12	26	12	39	19	37	18
Very	89	43	63	30	94	45	90	43
Moderately	60	29	78	37	42	20	40	19
Somewhat	28	13	29	14	25	12	27	13
Not at all	5	2	13	6	8	4	12	6
N/A	1	0.5	0	0	0	0	2	1
Total	208	100	209	100	208	100	208	100

Four categories of ratings were presented to respondents. Although there is some relationship and overlap between them - for example accurate can be assumed to influence the idea of usefulness – each category is otherwise mutually exclusive as far as the ratings are concerned. The ratings of official sources within each of the four categories, are on a 5 point scale from completely through very, moderately and somewhat to not at all. A small number of respondents chose not applicable or gave no response, while still answering some of the questions. At this stage of the survey 89% of the initial 233 respondents answered most questions. It is assumed that the other 11% lost interest in the survey, or did not feel that a specific question was relevant to their experience. The first question in the survey asked people ‘Were you or your household impacted in any way by the major flood event in North Queensland during late January/February 2025’: 220 people indicated yes and were asked to complete the survey; only 13 people responded no and were instructed not to continue with the survey although some may have chosen to continue, presumably because their response implied some kind of impact.

Table 7. Access to Bureau of Meteorology Information Sources

Please indicate if you accessed weather based information generated by the Bureau of Meteorology regarding this event	Number	Percent
Bureau of Meteorology website	170	34
Bureau of Meteorology facebook page	65	13
Bureau of Meteorology severe weather warnings	120	24
Bureau of Meteorology rainfall tracking maps	100	20
Bureau of Meteorology live streams/videos	28	6
None	15	3
Total	498	100

Table 7 and the following ratings question focus closer on the Bureau of Meteorology information sources. The Bureau of Meteorology was a significant partner with the Centre for Disaster Studies in sponsoring post disaster surveys from the mid 1990s onwards. The Bureau was interested in feedback concerning its hazard messaging, and frequently responded to that feedback in its development of information platforms and language. It is also significant that the Bureau of Meteorology has always been a major source of information to households, and remains a primary source. However, when citing the BoM as a source of hazard information there are a number of products or webpages that people use. The main ones are identified in table 7, and are then generically rated in table 8.

Table 8. Ratings of Bureau of Meteorology Information Sources

Please rate the information generated by the Bureau of Meteorology	Accurate	%	Up-to-date	%	Useful	%	Trustworthy	%
Completely	29	14	33	16	38	18	41	20
Very	87	42	80	38	93	45	92	44
Moderately	52	25	54	26	42	20	38	18
Somewhat	29	14	28	13	23	11	23	11
Not at all	9	4	11	5	9	4	10	5
N/A	3	1	3	1	3	1	4	2
Total	209	100	209	100	208		208	

Table 6 in rating all official sources and table 8 rating just the BoM are inevitably similar, given the significant overlap of the BoM sources of information. The responses are similar in each table. Each of the 4 categories indicate similar ratings where completely and very (accurate, up to date, useful and trustworthy) are half to two thirds of all responses. Only up to date falls slightly lower, but still 42 to 54% in each table. The difference in selection of completely or very – accurate etc – may often represent a personality difference on the part of respondents, rather than a qualitative evaluation. Some people never tick the outer, more extreme, option. Thus it makes more sense to group the two positive responses, and the negatives of somewhat or not at all – accurate etc. The negatives are insignificant, but around 17 to 26% of respondents rated these sources of information as moderately – accurate etc. This ambivalent, or less impressed rating, suggests that improvements may need to be considered.

Table 8a. Ratings of information from other weather focused source/groups

Please rate the information from other weather focused source/groups you may have accessed	Accurate	%	Up-to-date	%	Useful	%	Trustworthy	%
Completely	17	8	39	19	35	17	34	16
Very	87	42	91	44	92	44	66	32
Moderately	60	29	36	17	37	17	59	28
Somewhat	14	7	13	6	14	7	19	9
Not at all	3	1	2	1	2	1	3	1
N/A	27	13	28	13	28	13	28	13
Total	208	100	209	100	208	100	209	100

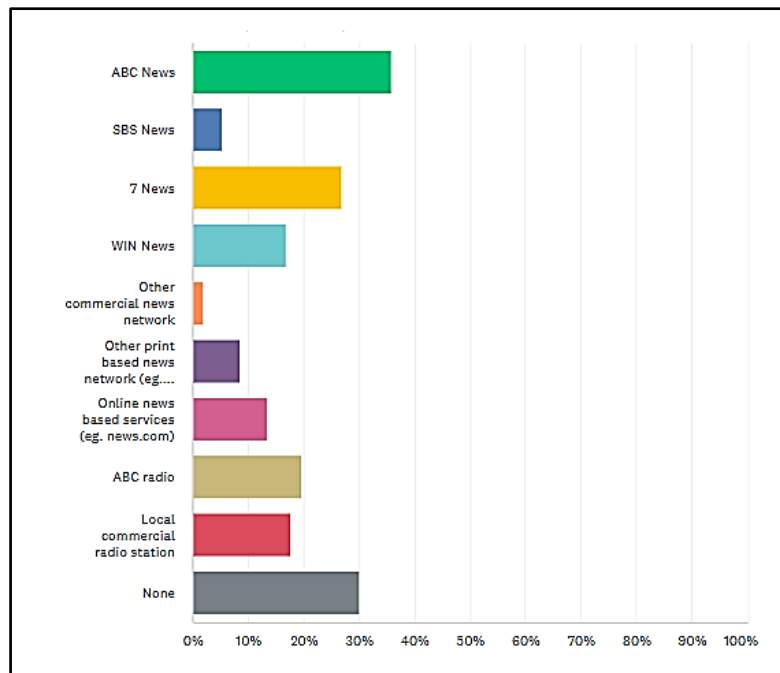
Note: the other weather focused sources were not required to be listed, so this rating is more a subset of the BoM ratings.

Table 9 and figure 4 illustrate access to all news media outlets. The popularity of ABC may in part reflect the older demographic of most of the respondents. People could select more than one option, as in previous questions about official sources and all sources. The number of selections, 368, is significantly less than access to official sources of information. Ratings, shown in table 10, are also lower, with around a third rating selected as completely and very. The lowest ratings are higher, as are moderate ratings. People were less impressed with media information than official sources.

Table 9. Access to News Media Outlets

Please indicate any news media outlet source/group you accessed to prepare or obtain information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)	Number	% of Responses
ABC News	75	20
None	63	17
7 News	56	15
ABC radio	41	11
Local commercial radio station	37	10
WIN News	35	10
Online news based services (eg. news.com)	28	8
Other print based news network (eg. Local newspaper, The Australian, Guardian, Reuters etc)	18	5
SBS News	11	3
Other commercial news network	4	1
Total Responses	368	100

Figure 4. Access to News Media Outlets



Note: Percentages are calculated as a percent of all respondents.

Table 10. Ratings of News Media Sources of Information

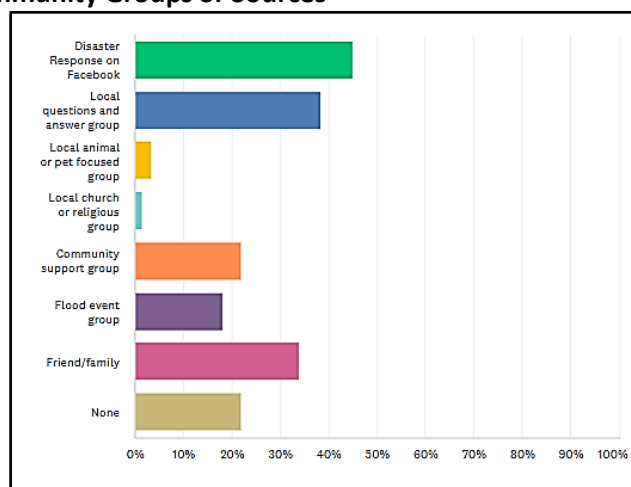
Please rate the information from the news media outlet source/groups	Accurate	%	Up-to-date	%	Useful	%	Trustworthy	%
Completely	12	6	12	6	12	6	17	8
Very	63	30	54	26	62	30	59	28
Moderately	53	25	50	24	43	21	44	21
Somewhat	20	10	30	14	23	11	22	11
Not at all	9	4	10	5	18	9	14	7
N/A	52	25	52	25	51	24	53	25
Total	209	100	208	100	209	100	209	100

Community based sources of information have potential to inform local situations and to give reassurance or community support. Facebook, local question and answer group and family and friends comprise 64% of responses, but are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The flood event group is an interesting emergent community entity (identified also in the 2019 flood), but we did not gather any more detailed information on the organisation and access to this group.

Table 11. Access to Community Based Sources of Information

Please indicate any community based forum source/group you accessed to prepare or obtain information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)	Number	Percent
Disaster Response on Facebook	94	24
Local question and answer group	80	
Friend/family	71	
Community support group	46	
None	46	
Flood event group	38	
Local animal or pet focused group	7	
Local church or religious group	3	
Total	385	

Figure 5. Access to Community Groups or Sources



Note: Percentages are calculated as a percent of all respondents.

Table 12. Ratings of Community Based Sources of Information

Please rate the information from community based forum sources/groups	Accurate	%	Up-to-date	%	Useful	%	Trustworthy	%
Completely	21	10	32	15	27	13	20	10
Very	57	27	71	34	63	30	49	24
Moderately	52	25	36	17	42	20	50	24
Somewhat	26	12	18	9	23	11	31	15
Not at all	4	2	4	2	6	3	9	4
N/A	49	23	48	23	48	23	49	24
Total	209	100	209	100	208	100	208	100

The open ended responses were extensively edited to reduce case, title, spelling and spacing variations, including the compression of multi word entities into a single word chain. The numbers of citations of groups and sources are listed in table 15.

Table 15. Compilation of Open Ended Responses to the Most Useful Sources of Information

See appendix table A4 for full list and details of responses.

Which group/source did you find most useful/valuable?	Number of times cited
Facebook	76
Local – in context of community, facebook, management etc.	40
Wally's Weather etc.	34
Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)	32
Townsville Disaster Dashboard etc.	13
Everything Townsville	12
Weather IQ	11
Family & friends	6
Higgins storm chasing	5
Townsville Disaster Management	5
ABC	4
Everything Ingham	3
Total Most common sources (includes some overlap)	241
Total Number of Items named	272

There were also a number of descriptive words such as 'local', and generalised nouns like 'all, aware and answers', which cropped up in various contexts but were important pointers to peoples' needs. Otherwise, Word Clouds often ignore common words like 'to' or 'is' etc. The intention in both the word cloud and the table, was to isolate the most commonly occurring key words that related to sources of information. Once words, phrases and titles had been standardised between responses, the generation of the word cloud selected from over 100 most commonly occurring words. Facebook stands out because many respondents were recruited through facebook groups, but local as a descriptive term, Wally's Weather and BoM are also commonly repeated sources.

Table 15 takes 12 of the most commonly occurring sources of information. Many responses were long and detailed and referred to multiple combinations of sources without actually answering the question as to which was the most useful. The sources that are cited in these response are included in the Word Cloud but as some indicated multiple sources of information without saying what was the most useful, these are not listed in table 15 in the single row entities. The 12 most cited sources (or qualifiers such as local) comprise 87% of the total number of useful items that were named.

Shortcomings and Areas for Improvement

As described above for figure 6 and table 15 which compiled open ended responses, the same method was used to sort and summarise inaccurate, misleading or conflicting information, and the subsequent word cloud figure 7 illustrating comments on aspects of information, warnings or evacuations that could be improved. As many as 62% of the respondents felt that information was in various ways inaccurate, conflicting or misleading.

Table 16. Inaccurate, Conflicting or Misleading Information

Did you come across any inaccurate, conflicting or misleading information regarding the flood event?	Number	Percent
Yes	129	62
No	80	38
Total	209	100

Table A5 in the appendix lists full details of open ended responses.

Figure 7. Word Cloud of Inaccurate, Conflicting or Misleading Information



The word cloud highlights exaggeration, scare mongering, confused, false and misleading information as well as quite a few references to moronic behaviour and communication. Facebook was also attacked for communicating inaccurate, conflicting or misleading information, as well as its previous identification as a useful source of information. Facebook does both – it is good and bad. There are a number of terms and words that relate to water, flooding, channels, and opening being in reference to flood gates, as well as evacuation centres. Following from this question and responses, survey respondents were asked to comment on aspects of information, warnings or evacuations that could be improved.

The misleading aspects were concentrated into a broad range of dominant issues, with ideas for improvement equally varied and specific. These responses are summarised in figure 8 and table 17.

Figure 8. Word Cloud of Comments on Aspects of Information, Warnings or Evacuations that Could be Improved

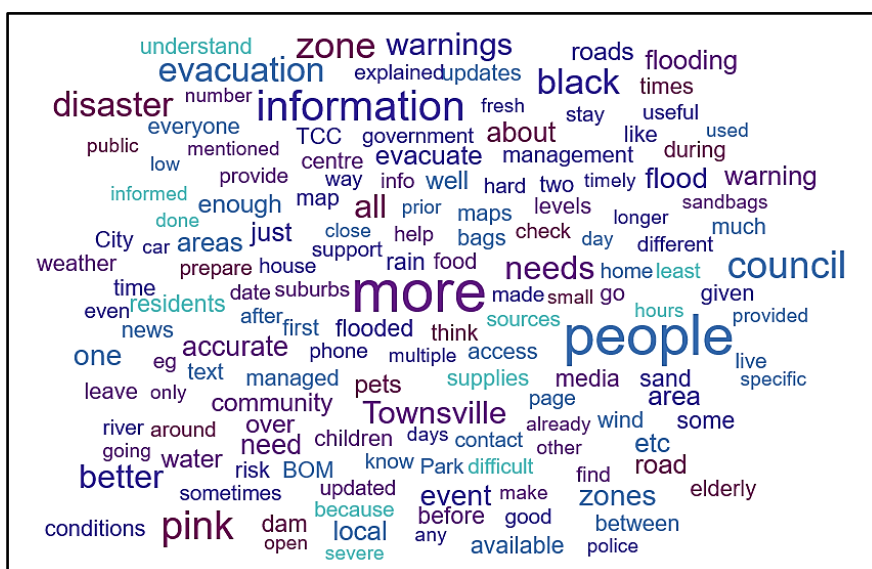


Table 17. Word Counts of Comments on Aspects of Information, Warnings or Evacuations that Could be Improved

Count of Specific terms in open ended responses	Number of times cited in responses
Warnings & Emergency (often cited as more or earlier)	55
People and residents (mostly actions & needs)	50
Flood (referring to maps or levels or flooding experience)	49
More (evacuation centres, information, timeliness etc.)	44
Zone (flood zones)	35
Evacuation or evacuate	34
Council (mostly Townsville – also Hinchinbrook)	28
Disaster and Risk (groups, dashboard, management etc)	28
Information	26
Pink (flood zone)	24
Black (flood zone)	21
Maps	17
Better (information, management, maps etc)	17
Better (communication, information & maps)	17
Updates	13
Areas (locations and zones)	11
Communication (better or lack)	11
Local (information, community etc)	11
Prepare/d	11
Messages	10
Pets	9
Roads (closures and flooding)	9
Community	9
House/s	9
Text (mobile texts)	8
Schools (closure & notification)	5

Respondents' ideas on areas that could be improved are a particularly important contribution to understanding the 2025 floods and extreme rainfall events. A summary of ideas for improvements to warnings, information, and evacuations based on the open ended responses to aspects of information, warnings or evacuations that people believe could be improved, is listed below. This is a summary of what people wrote on the questionnaire form. It summarises the range of their ideas and observations. This summary is not necessarily a recommendation of the authors of this report, although there are many sound ideas and lessons that could be incorporated into future emergency management planning. Primarily this is a summary of what was written by the majority of the respondents to this survey.

- Clearer Evacuation Instructions: Provide specific guidance on when to evacuate, including flood levels or water reaching certain landmarks (e.g., driveway).
- Evacuation Route Clarity: provide defined evacuation routes and update them as conditions change.
- Improved Flood Zone Maps: ensure maps (e.g., pink and black zones) are high-resolution, easy to read, and accessible, with clear explanations of the zones' risks.
- Pet-Friendly Evacuation Centres: open evacuation centres that accommodate pets earlier to reduce stress for pet owners.
- Timely and Accurate updates: increase the frequency and accuracy of updates on road closures, flood levels, and evacuation centre capacity.
- Centralised Information Source: establish a single, reliable government source for accurate and timely disaster information to avoid conflicting advice.
- Better Coordination Among Authorities: improve communication between council, police, SES, and other agencies to ensure consistent messaging.
- Better Use of Communication Channels: utilise TV, radio, SMS, and social media effectively, ensuring updates are consistent across all platforms.
- Targeted Warnings: tailor warnings to specific regions and age groups, avoiding overly broad or alarmist messages.
- Pre-Event Preparation: provide sandbags and other supplies well before the event starts, especially for vulnerable groups like the elderly.
- Education for New Residents: create a disaster preparedness kit or guide for newcomers, summarising key actions and contact numbers.
- Live Updates on Conditions: offer live streams or real-time updates on river conditions, major bridges, and affected streets.
- Improved Messaging for Pink Zones: include clear instructions for pink zones alongside black zone warnings to reduce confusion.
- Mental Health Support: communicate feasible mental health strategies.
- Post-Event Support in recovery: offer better post-event cleanup assistance, such as hard rubbish and green waste collection.

Note on Open Ended Statements

Full unedited open responses to each of the sections on useful sources, of information, inaccurate and misleading information and areas for improvement are contained in the appendix as Table A4 Open Ended Responses to the Most Useful Sources of Information, Table A5 Open ended responses of details of Inaccurate, Conflicting or Misleading Information, and Table A6 Open ended Comments on Aspects of Information, Warnings or Evacuations that Could be Improved. Open ended statements in confidential surveys are a direct statement of the experiences, observations (and sometimes prejudices and gripes) of members of the public. There are criticisms in many of these written statements, but no slander, defamation, misogyny, racism or personal attack was identified in these comments. It is not possible to identify an individual from any of these statements, thereby maintaining confidentiality. Typing errors etc have not been corrected in these appendices, unless a

typing or spelling error made interpretation impossible. There are some factual errors and misunderstanding in some statements, but it is possible that an error of knowledge or understanding highlights a communication shortcoming (for example the belief that there is no evacuation centre on Magnetic Island). Importantly it is our belief that people made these statements out of a desire that their voices should be heard. We therefore present the responses and comments verbatim as an insight into the thoughts and experiences of this set of respondents to a public survey.

Table 18. Overall Level of Trust in Information

Please indicate your overall level of trust in the information provided regarding the flood event	Number of responses	Percent
Completely trustworthy	17	8
A great deal	97	46
Moderately	73	35
Not much at all	15	7
Not at all	7	3
Total	209	100

Table 18 summarises the overall level of trust that people had in the information that was provided. Given the unpredictable nature and severity of this wet season and its floods information providers were challenged to keep up with the changing, unfolding situation. However, the question did not address accuracy or timeliness of information, but asked people to reflect on their level of trust in the information. The uncertainty of the event is inevitably reflected in the low proportion finding information completely trustworthy. Overall the level of trust is positive, with the summary of the open ended responses providing sensible improvements that may improve trust in the future.

Evacuation

Evacuation from flood waters was not such a major issue in Townsville as had been the case in the 2019 monsoonal floods. In Ingham and Hinchinbrook Shire flood waters from nearby rivers, especially the Herbert, were much more severe, with 2 people losing their lives in floodwaters. As stated in the introduction, over the 2 months of very heavy rain events from January to March, evacuation orders were issued for low-lying areas, including six suburbs in Townsville, although many residents chose to stay in their homes. The State Emergency Service conducted multiple rescues, including rooftop evacuations in Cardwell. Ingham and communities in Hinchinbrook Shire experienced evacuations of a few hundred people at different times in the flood crisis, but it seems that most people stayed within the region and the majority remained in their homes, especially as significant numbers of houses are high set, and surrounding flooded rivers cut off the town and shire. However, most responses to the survey are from Townsville residents, so their experiences dominate the following summary tables.

Table 19. Evacuation Plan

Did you/your household have a disaster evacuation plan before the event?	Number	Percent
No	138	59
Yes	95	41
Total	233	100

Table 19 records responses to questions asked early in the questionnaire concerning disaster preparation, which are reported in table 1. Most people did not have an evacuation plan, but as table 20 indicates, most, 62% were not in a flood inundation zone. Although only 12% were unsure if they were in a flood zone, it is still worrying, as respondents to this survey were generally older and better educated than the majority of the population. It may be surmised that the situation of flood zone uncertainty across the city may be much higher than indicated here.

Table 20. Location in Flood Zone

Is your home located in a previously identified flood inundation zone?	Number of Responses	Percent
No	127	62
Yes	52	25
Unsure	25	12
Total	204	100

Figure 9 indicates that over three quarters of respondents did not receive advice to evacuate, most probably because they were not, as shown in table 20 resident in a flood zone. Table 21 records the range of advice information, where people selected more than one option in a minority of cases.

Table 21. Evacuation Advice

Did you receive advice to evacuate your home/location (you may select more than one option)?	Number	Percent
No	158	63
Door knock by emergency services/military	16	6
Text message	33	13
General warning via media	29	12
Advised by friends/family	6	2
Self evacuated before any notifications	8	3
Total	250	100

Figure 10 and table 22 show that 86% of respondents did not evacuate. The range of other advice and responses mostly concern those households that did evacuate. Numbers are very small. The other response in table 22 is detailed fully in written comments, copied into table 23.

Figure 9. Advice to Evacuate

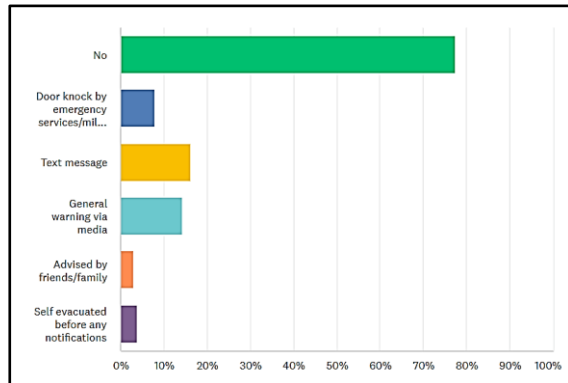
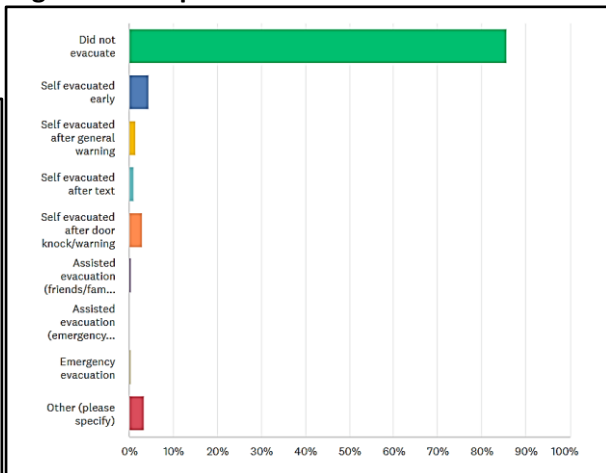


Figure 10. Response to Evacuation advice



Note: Percentages are calculated as a percent of all respondents.

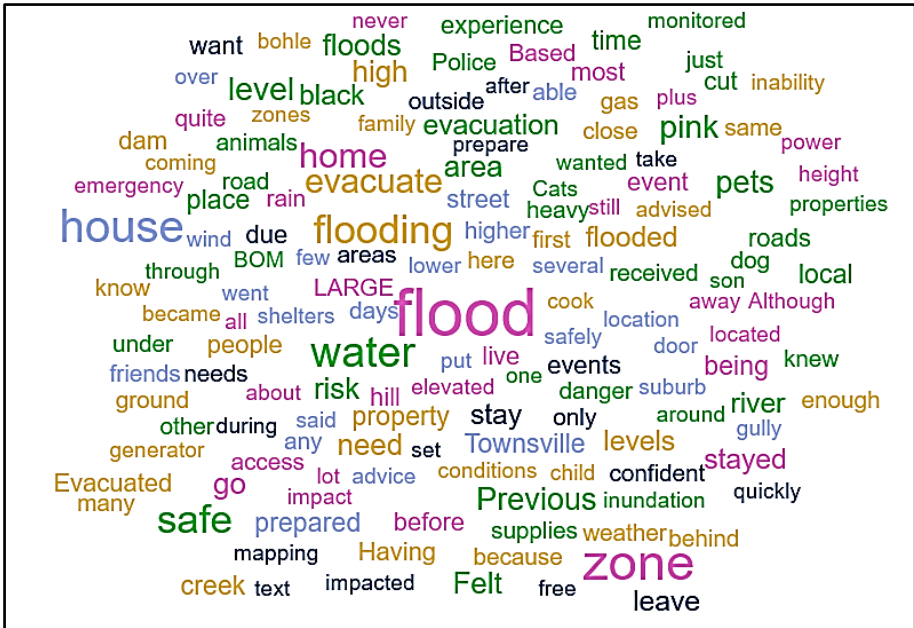
Table 22. Evacuation Action by Households

Did you evacuate your home/location?	Number of Responses	Percent
Did not evacuate	175	86
Self evacuated after door knock/warning	6	3
Self evacuated early	9	4
Self evacuated after text	2	1
Self evacuated after general warning	3	1
Assisted evacuation (friends/family)	1	0.5
Emergency evacuation	1	0.5
Assisted evacuation (emergency services/support)	0	0
Other (specified in table below)	7	3
Total	203	100

Table 23. Open Ended Responses to evacuation Action

Did you evacuate your home/location? Other Response.
Evacuated but were not given a warning or notification to evacuate. Only received a warning labelled 'too late to evacuate' after we had chosen to leave.
No, warning came too late to do anything
Self evacuated
We weren't asked to evacuate
We helped people evacuate their home after inundation. There were no warnings for them
The text came through once it was too late to evacuate, the roads were already flooded and access anywhere cut off. The sea attended in boats to rescue those who were in imminent danger but if those warnings were received earlier they may not have had to put their lives at risk
Was already away from home when flooding started.

want bohle floods experience time
high Police Based just

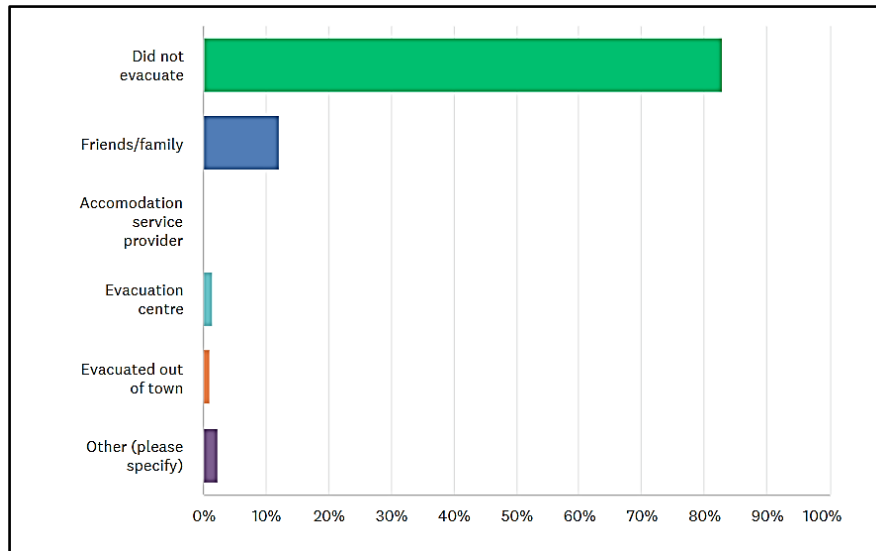


The word cloud in figure 11 includes words relating to experiences that influenced the majority of respondents in staying home and not evacuating as well as the small numbers of people who did evacuate. Dominant words like flood, flooding, water and house refer to both a threat or a lack of a threat. There are many terms that suggest past experiences and knowledge, some that identify evacuation issues including pets, and there is some identification of family and friends.

Where did you go?	Number of Responses	Percent of respondents
Did not evacuate	169	83
Friends/family	25	12
Other	5	2
Evacuation centre	3	1
Accommodation service provider	0	0
Evacuated out of town	2	1
Total	204	100

If you/your household evacuated - where did you go?	Number of Responses	Percent of respondents
Did not evacuate	169	83
Friends/family	25	12
Other	5	2
Evacuation centre	3	1
Accommodation service provider	0	0
Evacuated out of town	2	1
Total	204	100

Figure 12. Destination of Evacuees



Note: Percentages are calculated as a percent of all respondents.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The final questions in the survey asked for basic demographic characteristics. These are recorded in tables 25 to 27 and supplemented in figures 13 and 14. The characteristics of the respondents are skewed towards female, older ages, and tertiary qualified. Figures from the 2021 census are placed alongside the survey categories for comparison. We use these responses as indicators from the population. The results of the survey cannot be extrapolated to be representative of the whole Townsville region population, which is gender balanced, younger and much less qualified than this survey sample. However, it is possible to suggest that preparation and experiences amongst the mass of the city population may have been worse, or more vulnerable than this experienced, well educated survey sample.

Table 25. Gender of Respondents

Are you male or female?	Gender	Percent
Female	174	85
Male	27	13
Other	3	1
Total	204	100

Table 26. Age Group of Respondents and 2021 Census Comparison

What is your age?	Number in Age Group	Percent	2021 Census TCC LGA
18-20	1	0.5	4.3
21-29 (ABS Census 20-29)	16	8	15.4
30-39	43	21	13.8
40-49	55	27	12.6
50-59	50	25	12.4
60 or older	37	18	19.9
Prefer not to say	2	1	
Total	204	100	

Note: TCC LGA – Townsville City Council Local Government Area

Table 27. Educational Attainment of Respondents

What is the highest level of education you have completed?	Number	Percent	2021 Census TCC LGA
Primary/elementary school/not attend school	0	0	6.6 <year 9
High school (up to grade 10)	14	7	12.8
Graduated high school (year 12 or equivalent)	20	10	16.8
Vocational certificate or diploma	43	21	29.2
Undergraduate/ Bachelors Degree	61	30	18.1
Post Graduate Qualification	59	29	
Prefer not to say	7	3	
Total	204	100	

Figure 13. Age group

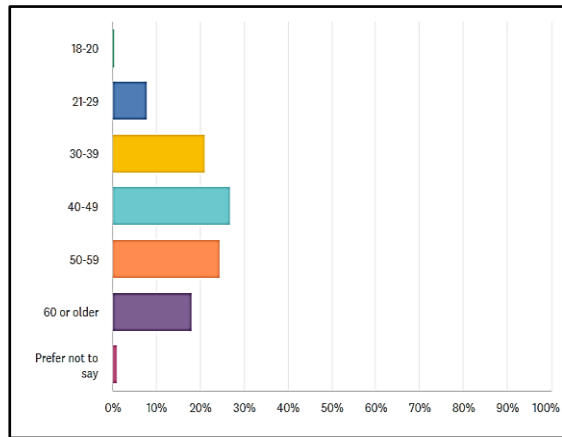
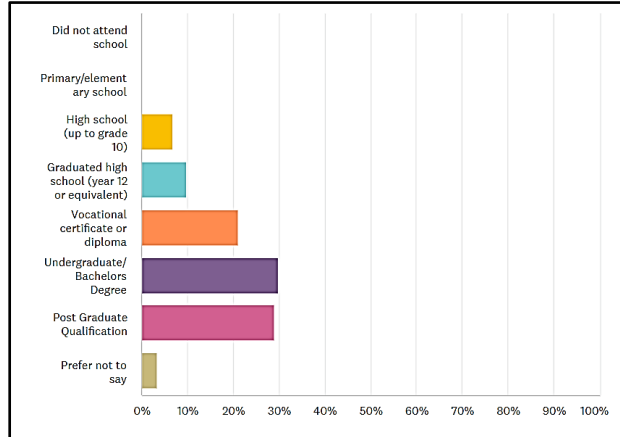


Figure 14. Educational Attainment



Note: Percentages are calculated as a percent of all respondents.

Summary

The 2025 Queensland floods were a devastating weather event that severely impacted North Queensland, particularly Townsville and surrounding areas. The Ross River Dam reached 164% capacity, necessitating water releases. Evacuation orders were issued for low-lying areas, but many residents chose to stay in their homes.

The Centre for Disaster Studies survey, distributed via social media and local networks, focused on disaster preparation, sources of information, evacuation experiences, and demographic characteristics. The survey revealed that 70% of respondents felt adequately prepared, with 71% having disaster kits and 72% holding insurance. However, 29% lacked disaster kits, and 23% were uninsured, highlighting vulnerabilities among certain groups. The extended nature of the flood event, spanning three months, challenged disaster preparedness strategies.

Facebook emerged as the primary source of information during the floods, followed by government websites and local disaster dashboards. Respondents accessed information for event monitoring, preparedness, and updates on river levels, road and service closures, dam conditions, and evacuation advice. Official sources like the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) and local government dashboards were rated highly for accuracy, usefulness, and trustworthiness. However, community-based sources and news media received mixed ratings, with concerns about misinformation and conflicting advice. Respondents noted that Facebook was both a valuable resource and a source of inaccurate or exaggerated information. The Bureau of Meteorology remained a trusted source, with respondents accessing its website, rainfall tracking maps, and severe weather warnings.

The survey identified several shortcomings in communication and areas for improvement. Respondents highlighted issues such as unclear evacuation instructions, outdated flood zone maps, and inconsistent messaging from authorities. Suggestions for improvement included clearer evacuation routes, pet-friendly evacuation centres, timely updates, centralized information sources, and better coordination among agencies. Respondents also emphasized the need for targeted warnings, pre-event preparation, and education for new residents. Specific recommendations included live updates on river conditions, improved flood zone maps, and better use of communication channels like TV, radio, and SMS. Many respondents called for clearer instructions regarding flood zones, particularly the pink and black zones, which caused some people confusion during the event.

Evacuation experiences varied, but the vast majority of respondents did not evacuate, in most cases because it was unnecessary. Most evacuees stayed with friends or family. Decisions to evacuate or stay were influenced by factors such as flood zone location, past experiences, and the presence of pets. Many respondents felt safe in their homes due to elevated locations or prior knowledge of flood risks. However, some noted that evacuation warnings were issued too late, leaving them unable to act. Pet-friendly evacuation centres were identified as a critical need, as many residents chose to stay home to avoid leaving their animals behind.

The survey also explored the trustworthiness of information sources. While official sources were generally trusted, respondents expressed concerns about conflicting advice from different agencies. Social media platforms, particularly Facebook, were criticized for spreading misinformation, including exaggerated weather forecasts and outdated flood photos. Respondents called for a centralized government source of accurate and timely information to reduce confusion and improve trust.

Demographic data showed that the survey sample was skewed toward older, highly educated residents, with 85% female respondents. This demographic may have contributed to higher levels of preparedness and insurance coverage compared to the general population. The survey results cannot

be generalized to the entire population but provide insights into the experiences of a specific group. The findings and opinions from this survey should be considered as indicators of concerns, experiences and insights. The majority of respondents were from Townsville, with smaller numbers from Ingham and other affected areas.

Overall, the survey highlighted the importance of accurate and timely information, effective communication, and community preparedness in managing disaster events. Recommendations from the respondents to this survey identify future planning to improve flood zone mapping, enhance communication channels, and address the needs of vulnerable groups. Respondents also called for better post-event support, such as cleanup assistance and mental health resources. The findings underscore the need for coordinated efforts to build resilience and reduce the impacts of disasters in North Queensland. By addressing the shortcomings identified in the survey, authorities can improve disaster management and better support affected communities in future events.

The results of this online survey summarise the thoughts and opinions of people who were interested to express and share their experiences during the heavy rainfall and flooding of the 2025 wet season. They were invited to make suggestions and recommendations, which are recorded here in detail. They do not represent any official group or organization. These are the voices and experiences of members of the Townsville region community.

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Appendix

Appendix Tables

Table A1. Open ended Responses to question do you feel that you/your household was adequately prepared for a disaster before the flood event happened?

Table A2. Open-Ended responses to Other choice in question what was your primary source of information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)

Table A3. Open-Ended responses to Other choice in question please indicate the main reason you accessed information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)

Table A4. Open Ended Responses to the Most Useful Sources of Information

Table A5. Open ended responses and details of Inaccurate, Conflicting or Misleading Information

Table A6. Open ended Comments on Aspects of Information, Warnings or Evacuations that Could be Improved

Table A7. Open ended Responses to What Influenced Household Decision to Evacuate or Stay in Place Survey Instrument

Table A1. Open ended Responses to question do you feel that you/your household was adequately prepared for a disaster before the flood event happened?

Yes and no - failure of some critical infrastructure caused problems.
House floated away :(
Sort of, raised furniture packed important things
Somewhat. Wasn't prepared for water seeping through the wall from the outside
prepared for a flood event yes, for an earthquake/asteriod no
Mostly yes... although this disaster had a curveball
We was in hospital with our daughter
Without correct river measurements, how can one be prepared?
Welfare checks should have been done on the elderly and people with dementia still in their homes
It was prepared as best as possible, but did not have a generator, and live alone.
Family yes, house not (rental)
Yes and no. We were about to move house when the rain hit. We were moving to Bluewater temporarily to stay with family and their house nearly flooded and infrastructure was damaged.
Yes-ish; I don't want to completely say yes here because governments will be all "oh see they're fine" and all levels of decision making need to do better here.
I was proposed in all aspects other than non perishable food as I had "just not yet got around to organising the food" aspect
Real estate and landlord have not done any physical external work such as roof gutter cleaning, or trees near powerlines etc
Kind of. We were watching the weather, so I went and did a big shop & got fuel Thursday night before it hit.
Yes but I don't believe we were informed in time of this event. Being south of Townsville we were told we not be impacted
We thought we were
Yes and no. Yes because we usually live in a flood free zone, not could've had more supplies etc

Table A2. Open-Ended responses to Other choice in question what was your primary source of information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)

JCU Safe app
Email & text messages
Official BOM briefing, LDMG

No power and so we had no news source.
Wallys Weather
I received many letters by pigeon informing me of the events
No power, no mobile service, no TV, Radio as we don't get radio here, no communication with the outside world
Work
Tsv Council Dam Level
to be clear - reliable channels on Facebook - not el bodgitus Joe Bloggs opinions
I ran the disaster hub at Forrest beach - communications issues were rife here
Community radio 103.9 FM Triple T
when electricity and internet were available which was a non event during the disaster.
Weather IQ
Community Facebook page (I.e Community website?)
I walked to Ross Dam to read dam levels on sign as councils website did not load dam levels when needed the most
Wally's Weather on FB (local Townsville), seems to have the most relevant and correct weather.
Townsville Disaster Information Facebook page
My hobby is weather tracking, I can understand the variables with different models
Disaster management text messages & police door knocks
QLD traffic app
My work gave me more information then anything else (qld gov)
Local community
Facebook - Townsville Disaster Page
One text message
Work

Table A3. Open-Ended responses to Other choice in question please indicate the main reason you accessed information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)

Ability to get to work
Dam updates and my property seems to be in the 'Black zone' of the EAP. My property backs on to Ross River
Ergon switched off and de-energised all homes in my area, so we had no power and couldn't charge anything.
fear of not knowing what is happening as we had no communication
Information on human impact/loss of life/injury
Local road conditions and river heights
Needed to know if I could cross the creeks to get to work
Real Time water levels (Creekside B'water were flooded X3 2019)
Road closures
Road status as we were away from home at the time and are still currently stuck.
To keep track of my business (Rabbit breeding and distributing to wild)
To share to others that may have been impacted
To stay safe and listen for updates
Updates to changes impacting supply of goods

Table A4. Open Ended Responses to the Most Useful Sources of Information

A local Facebook group for Fairfield Waters, Idalia, Oonoonba and Railway Estate
A local neighborhood watch group, most remained i their houses during the event
ABC local radio - because it's local, on the ground, and thorough coverage.
Acta Diurna, a little bit behind (2000 years) but very useful

All together gave a pretty good picture
Beuro of metierlogy Wally's weather Higgins storm chasing Friend- Diana - lives on site in railway retake
Bluewater news
BOM
Bom
BOM Higgins Weather
BOM Weather is their job. Trustworthy. The media often dramatises the situation.
Bom and disaster management
bom and ergon. They provided real time updates, clear and constant communication and empathy
Bom as it's very acute and also 7 news as they were up to date on everything
Bom for radar tracking of rain events. Also found Windy app extremely useful she looking at the forward weather situation.
BOM for rain mapping Tmr for road closures
Bom not trying to sensationalise the weather event
bOM Triple t because I visited and listened at crucial times
BOM, as it helped us understand when rain was likely to worsen/ improve.
BOM, due to its credibility, and friends, due to their first-hand knowledge.
Bom, Townsville Disaster Management Page (trustworthy but slower), "Everything Townsville" Facebook group (less trustworthy but faster information in real time what was happening)
BOM, visualisation of data
BOM, WeatherIQ, Disaster response
BOM, while we had comms.
Bom. I like their Radar maps
Burdell and Townsville community Facebook pages. Real time info (pics, updates etc) from people in the area
Bureau of meteorology as their data was quite good most of the time
Bureau of meterlogy
Certain individuals that kept reporting flood levels accurately and often
Charters towers groups were very up to date and included pictures of the bridge and let people know when it was flooded and when it was accessible. Also letting people know when the shops have been restocked, plus giving people a much needed laugh here and there...my kids and myself have only lived in Charters towers 3 and a half years and this is a first for us, so it's a reassuring feeling when the community openly say,, we've been through worse....
Community Facebook groups per suburbs, because they provide updates with pictures of the current situation in certain places
Disaster dashboard
Disaster dashboard and Some of the BOM rain radar loops. Also the council's flood maps and the predicted flooding map in their latest report.
Disaster dashboard. Because it was a single spot that updated me on everything in real time in one place.
Disaster Management
Disaster management and bom. Helped us to understand what to prepare for
Disaster Management and local Facebook pages as they were up to date and sharing current info.
Disaster management fb page
Disaster response
Disaster response Facebook group as it provided weather and emergency information
Emergency services ; Local disaster group; ABC TV radio friends and neighbours
Emergency Services tend to be accurate and to the point. Government & Local council and disaster pages waffle and say a lot, yet nothing, and pretty much go into damage control assuring people

that it's not their fault yet you only had to watch the earth to know we had a big weather event coming AND you could literally re-run the "Townsville 100 Years Ago" headlines today as in 1925 roads and supply chains were cut off and bridges washed out, down to the date, just showcasing that nobody has truly done enough to weather proof the North. Yeah it's part of life up here but why do the people who have the influence insist on making it SO MUCH harder?
Everything Ingham Facebook page was the most valuable and useful source as it had live updates of specific areas and houses, people were able to offer and ask for what they needed, and the community seemed to be the only people actually helping throughout this process.
Everything Ingham page.... That's where everyone was - whinging and whining mostly... but lots of information as well.
Everything Ingham, Travel, tourism & flood chatterbox-hinchinbrook & ingham
Everything Ingham. Good information at the source.
Everything Townsville
Everything Townsville
Everything Townsville - yes there are pistakers which are pretty obvious, but it's crowdsourced aggregated information so often very useful
Everything Townsville (two of what I believe are three on FB). Because it was reports from people on the ground with photos of what they were seeing where they were.
Everything Townsville allowed people to post what was happening in their areas; & allowed/encouraged responses to be made. Offers of assistance were plentiful.
Everything Townsville Facebook group had more information faster than the news etc but it's a satire group with almost no moderation so there was a lot of misinformation.
Everything Townsville Facebook page. Kept me apprised of all street flooding so I could organise to keep my children safe at home during the event.
Everything Townsville on Facebook because people were constantly posting and I could see what was happening in various suburbs.
Everything Townsville on Facebook. It included links to trustworthy sites but also on ground experiences and videos/photos from community members. This provided some info that wasn't available through official channels.
everything townsville uncensored
Facebook
Facebook
Facebook Real time comments
Facebook - all sources were posting on FB (BOM, TLDMG, TMR, Wally's Weatehr etc) It was easier to see all the relevant information on one platform rather than multiple websites
Facebook - Bluewater Community News page.
Facebook & Community pages. Always up to date and accurate included pics when appropriate
Facebook as localised and up to date, provided information on all aspects
Facebook based weather pages local to north Queensland
Facebook because it was constantly being update in real time by so many different people. And BoM because their rainfall accuracy
Facebook community
Facebook community group
Facebook community groups allowed people to share photos and videos of flooded areas in real time
Facebook Community Groups and Chats
Facebook Disaster Response Group. It was updated as soon as it happened. On Friday 31st January there was a post warning of rising water levels & to get your children from school. I took that as an emergency.
Facebook group

Facebook group for FNQ weather predictions run by some old guy who lives in Mt Garnet. He knew his shit. Townsville disaster management group dashboard was very helpful.
Facebook groups Bom
Facebook groups. You have to filter through alot of rubbish but it's social media, it's by the minute, people on the ground posting what's actually happening.
Facebook local community groups
Facebook Townsville q amd a
Family
Fb Wally's weather
FNQ flood and disaster watch group on Facebook
FNQ Flood watch
Forrest Beach Disaster Hub
Friend who is a disaster manager in another part of Qld
Friends in the area. We all live in different areas so knew if people where evacuating etc
Government & BOM
Government groups: trustworthy
Greenvale roadhouse, they are upstream from me and posted info of rain and videos of creek flooding etc also a lady posted all road closures on there Leanne Dryer and updated all the time
had no communication with the outside world
Higgins Storm Chasing. Accurate, timely, understandable.
Higgins, NQ weather
Higgins, weather IQ, etc
I compared information from wearher groups on facebook
I don't know
I found the Facebook groups (Townsville Storms, Weather IQ and Wally's Weather) very helpful and informative in addition to the BOM. They would often explain not just what was happening, but why, with diagrams included, so that we could understand what was happening and what to expect next. This helped to inform my decisions about when to leave work, collect my children from school, and although we had a 'cyclone kit', we needed some additional food items to get us through. Luckily we didn't lose power where we were, but we were stuck for a few days due to trees being down and also being encouraged by the BOM and disaster management group not to leave home unless necessary.
I found the qps the most valuable because they would do live streams straight from Brisbane
Idalia Ooonooba Facebook group, was very up to date, made it obvious the flooding wasn't as bad as predicted
Independent weather forecasters. But mostly myself, I educate myself on how it all works. I knew this was coming ages ago. I told my daughters kindly to prepare and they did. Before any media outlet mentioned it.
IQ weather and wallys weather on FB - updates were frequent and in easily understood language.
Lightning and ACCU apps
Local community Facebook group was useful for real time road conditions and flood levels. There really was no other source of information for the majors creek area so we were completely unaware that we would be impacted, nor the volume of water and wind to expect. Only one weather person, Wally weather, commented on the wind and lucky we listened to him and removed our shade sails otherwise the damage would have been catastrophic with 100kph winds in our region in excess of 12 hours.
Local community fb pages, weather iq
Local community group which also had a live chat. My neighbour also was keeping me updated when I evacuated & she stayed

Local community groups + Townsville wide community group. Local was good for road closure/localised flooding information so we could ascertain the safety of leaving our home to assist friends. Townsville wide was valuable to find real time updates of sandbag and evacuate locations as well as community members offering help
Local community groups on Facebook as they were detailed and had photos and most up to date and accurate
Local community hall group They were living it. And trying to support others in the area with little to no support
Local disaster management dashboard
local disaster management group, TSV council disaster dashboard
Local Disaster Management. Road closures were more accurate than RACQ
Local Facebook group for suburbs
Local facebook groups
Local FB group
Local FB weather experts Wally's Weather etc.
Local Flood watch Facebook Group
Local government disaster dashboard
local government, Wallys Weather face book
Local knowledge for our area
Local pages
Local radio
Local radio. They are given up to date information by the applicable organisations.
Local SES
Local social media weather pages were more up to date, took their information from a variety of sources and did not have another agenda.
Local suburb and town Facebook pages
Local weather groups
Locals reading river levels persobally
Mainly used a combination of Weather IQ, Wally's Weather, BOM information, TSV Disaster Dashboard.
Multiple "TOWNSVILLE" themed social media pages, and Weather IQ,
My family who has been through floods
My local community page on Facebook. Because it was my neighbourhood and very accurate
My local suburb page as it was very useful to know where the water level is and if the entrance of the estate is still open (gets flooded)
N/a
NA
Nil
None because I didn't access any group
None really.
North Queensland Weather Watch - Jim Gray is the most reliable source of weather information, he is factual, does not instill panic and reminds everyone to be fully prepared for an impending event.
Not one source, a variety of sources were needed to get up to date accurate information regarding the events.
Official government channels, because they were up to date and accurate
Official sources during prep and for advice about what to expect/how to keep safe Community facebook groups for constant up to date information about what was happening during the event / what streets and rivers etc elsewhere in the city looked like at the time
Only government agencies

Our local Facebook group has been invaluable providing information on creek heights and road access
Private weather groups - accurate, easy to understand, up to date information
QFD & QPS - both trusted professional sites. Also make sure to check Qld Health but not so much a focus during.
Qld dept of housing sent info prior to the event which was extremely useful. Wallys weather on Facebook was great. Townsville Q&A, Everything Townsville useful. Townsville council dashboard was great
Qld gov housing for letting me stay at oaks palmer metropole hotel
Radio
Radio .. Triple M. Live updates with correct information
Radio as they were the most up to date
River Heights data, traffic cameras and BOM radar. Community Facebook pages because updates were more frequent, more specific information, usually provided more reasoning/context than official info and in some cases photos were useful. Ergon updates included a lot of context.
ses
TCC Disaster dashboard , gave honest answers as available
The Government websites.
The local Everything Townsville group, people shared their own images/information as well as sharing updates (including screenshots) from other sources. It was especially useful when the official websites were overloaded and unable to be accessed.
The locals who live in and around the area, the ones who were able to communicate to others when telecommunications were available, the local council were good when updated, when we had internet/wifi/network or service available via charging mobile phones at houses with a generator, but just not often enough. ABC radio also very good, (if lucky enough to own a battery operated radio and to get signal to hear it!)
The only one I ticked, because it was the only one I used.
The Townsville Disaster Management Group - 100% reliable, practical, useful. However they stick to core business - so it's necessary to seek extra related info from other groups.
Tim's severe weather Australia Facebook page. He's obviously spent a lot of time research in understanding how weather works and can explain what to expect properly. Very good information, in advance of the event.
Townsville city Council disaster management information but I wish the press conferences had been advertised more in terms of the time they were set.
Townsville Disaster
Townsville Disaster Dashboard
Townsville Disaster Information - answered questions. Link to others following to exchange information. The Ross River Dam water height level must be available on the TCCouncil page as this information allows us to know how much water is being released and is more relevant to those living near a the river than the capacity of dam.
Townsville disaster information and the dashboard. Local information on the ground. Dashboard updates to seldem
Townsville Disaster Information Facebook group - was only sharing from trusted government sites
Townsville Disaster Information facebook page
Townsville Disaster Information Facebook page. It contained all the relevant information for me
Townsville disaster management Facebook page, and townsville storms Facebook page
Townsville Disaster Management group. Up to date, measured information. (That is, not too much, not small stuff, was accurate and timely.)
Townsville disaster page Factual, clear directives on what to do, helpful
Townsville district disaster Facebook page. My police Townsville facebook page

Townsville local disaster management group and BOM
Townsville questions and answers on Facebook. Locals that had experience with other events went out of their way to help people with questions. Or if anyone asked for help others quickly volunteered to assist. It also became a platform for people to share if they had spare rooms for others that had been told to evacuate.
Townsville Storms on FB
TRAVEL, TOURISM & Flood CHATTER BOX - Hinchinbrook & Ingham (2018-present) - lots of local posts
Wally weather, Townsville storm chasers
Wally's Weather Weather IQ (Facebook pages dedicated to located NQ weather). Frequent and measured weather updates using a lot of different models without the dramatisation. Also locals and they and their followers provided videos and photos of the events as they were occurring.
Wally's Weather FB. Up to Date and no scaremongering
Wally's Weather on Facebook
Wally's weather was excellent as always.
Wallys weather
Wally's Weather
Wallys weather
Wally's Weather
Wallys Weather asking my friends who live in different suburbs
Wallys Weather - highly accurate and up to date. Townsville Disaster Dashboard, MyPolice Townsville- accurate info on the event
Wally's Weather - up-to-date information but very little hype
Wally's Weather and our local community facebook page for very local info
Wally's weather and Townsville Storms had up to date and easy to understand information.
Wallys weather emails and Facebook. Most accurate and up to date
Wally's Weather Facebook page is excellent
Wallys weather he has been the most accurate for over 10 yrs
Wallys Weather on facebook
Wally's weather on Facebook
Wallys weather on Facebook, he posted continuously throughout the event, and the information was easy to understand, and to the point. Very trustworthy!!
Wallys weather on Facebook. And ABC news. Does not come with all the media hype and carry on.
Wally's Weather on FB (local Townsville) accurate, up-to-date, useful and trustworthy.
Wally's Weather. His analysis is always in-depth and considered
Wallys weathwr
We couldn't access anything
Weather IQ Facebook page, BOM Facebook page, and Everything Townsville Facebook page
Weather IQ subscription updates and BoM radar
Weather IQ they were easily the most knowledgeable meteorological source of information pre during and towards the end of the event. These people need to be funded properly as they were far more accurate than the bom
Weather IQ. Extensive model guidance and meteorology explained thoroughly, with real time access to info
which group doing what
Woodstock Giru Community FB page. Photos were posted of creek crossing throughout the day. Can gauge if you're able to get home or need to stay in town, rather than drive 45 mins or more only to turn around and drive back with water levels rising behind you and poor mobile service. Flood cameras at every creek crossing along Woodstock Giru Road would be of huge benefit. People will always try to cross flooded roads to get to work. When you are self employed you need to work and

when you have animals you cant leave more than 24 hrs you will make every effort to get home and not be flooded out of your property.
Work chats and sports group chatta

Table A5. Open ended responses and details of Inaccurate, Conflicting or Misleading Information

A lot of people confused about Dan opening process, misleading information about road access. There are a lot of people who post without full knowledge which is why it is so important that TLDMG gets its act together and has better communication to the community.
A lot of the weather groups were exaggerating what we were expecting immediately for clicks. Other community members were spreading false information
A whole load of jokes/bullshit and scaremongering on Facebook (floating crocodiles etc), Official news stories occasionally getting confused/ not distinguishing between Townsville and Ingham - needed a mix of both community and official to get a good sense of what was going on.
All sources differed.
As I already said, no advance warning from official channels. I picked my daughter up from school a good 3 hours before any warnings on Friday.
As mentioned before, local councillors!!
As the event was ending, there was another burst of rain which reflooded the streets. There was minimal information from official sources on street flooding. I made a decision to keep my children home based on limited information from facebook
Being told to stay in place by Council, but also that I should attend work.
Black and pink zones, dam levels, flood risk --- this information that came from council often lacked accuracy and the council itself seemed to lack the confidence in its own information. Embarrassing.
Bom
Bom
Bom automatic gauge at inkerman bridge
BOM is useless
BOM Rain radar wasn't correct at times. TV reports were saying the wrong thing. Confusion over what zones were to evacuate when only part of a suburb needed to.
BOM was almost a metre off an accurate river level reafing
BOM was behind with all other weather sites and local information
Bom was often lagging Wally's weather site
Comments on Facebook telling people the river heights were going back down when they weren't. Fake photos of crocodiles in streets.
Conflicting information about our local community centre and it being available for recovery
conflicting information between the disaster response management and QPS and Army (knocking at doors)
Confusion about if buses were running, if Supermarkets were trading, if fuel gets contaminated by water if the station is flood affected. Misinformation about when to go to hospital or why to call SES and about two million different ways to avoid mould damage.
Council showing outdated storm warnings off Twitter, refusing to accept that bom had cancelled them. They were even timestamped before the cancellations!
Definitely
Different weather Facebook pages reported different severaity of the upcoming storms
Differing weather pages on social media
Disaster dashboard updates could have been more frequent
Every time a government official feigned shock and assurances that they'd do better. This is a legacy of ineffective management and projects over decades.
Everything Townsville Uncensored
Facebook community pages

Facebook is a cesspool of misinformation
Facebook obviously had large volumes of inaccurate or out of date data.
Facebook pages with scare mongers claiming to be weather forecasters.
Facebook people giving out wrong information. Especially when roads are closed they will say go the long way in land but it's flooded too.
FB comments, council disaster group in FB
FB groups "experts" often had conflicting or over dramatised information
Flood information from previous flooding was posted. Very misleading. Had to look very closely
From Townsville Disaster Management Facebook group posts
Higgins weather group, sensationalism at its finest
Interstate and international news sites tend to over dramatise the event.
It's good to take the event seriously but some people create more anxiety in social media with bad forecasts
Lots of comments on how the dam was managed better, when the difference was primarily the rain event not when the flood gates were opened. Information on conditions, evacuations etc was generally very accurate.
Lots of misinformation on social media
Lots of people passing on second or third hand information
Lots of photos from 2019 floods
Lots of scaremongering and catastrophising early on. With no real evidence for it.
Lots of the "weather" groups (eg Wally's Weather, Weather IQ, Townsville Storms) were spruiking worst case scenario and scare-mongering the community.
Lots of weather pages showing lots of different information made it difficult especially at the start until we found the most accurate one by far some local road information was conflicting at times on various social groups. We found Townsville council was useless at the start of the disaster especially on day one/two but improved quickly as the disaster went on. It was disappointing that they were so reactive at the start.
Many people were scared mongering, or just catastrophising it
Many unknown or not local weather Facebook groups posting and commenting were getting in the way of genuine disaster posts on Facebook.
Mayor said we'd run out of water but I've had my bath, shower, sprinklers and taps on for atleast 3 days straight and there's still water
Media outlets were quick to add fear.
Moronic FB posts-but my BS radar is finely tuned- lots of candidates for the Darwin awards
Most of the weather info was conflicting,
Most official data was not current or specific enough. Some people post photos and don't specify date and time photo taken.
Mostly it was just people thinking that they knew what they were talking about, but didn't. Some people who were saying it was a government conspiracy to keep us all inside, etc. I did worry though that some people weren't taking the event seriously and that could lead to them endangering themselves and others.
N Commercial news reports inflationary and sensationalism. I saw video of what "looked like flooding" but was actual at the end of my street near a standard flood way where water was supposed to be. The channel 7 news reporters was then saying that cyclones were forming of the coast which was a blatant lie.
National news seemed to inaccurately portray the severity of the floods for Townsville, and understate the severity for Ingham
Not from official sites.
Not sure of flood height no information in regards to evacuation

On a local Facebook site (called Everything Townsville). People were posting random, inaccurate and fear mongering posts.
On facebook
On Facebook, it can sometimes show information posted a few days ago that if you are not careful you may think it's recent.
On local fb community groups.
One of the local commercial news stations reported the crocodile AI images as real.
Only talk around the town, no one really knew what was happening with the dam opening
Only when sources couldn't keep up with the changing events.
Orders to evacuate the 'Black zone' listing just 6 suburbs (excluding Kelso) ambiguous as the map in the Emergency Action Plan for Ross Dam seems to indicate my property, which backs onto Ross River in Kelso is in the black zone and may be inundated by up to 25-26m of water. Neither the local council member or the MP for Thuringowa have answered my queries regarding this. Unfortunately the maps in the EAP are of a scale that they cannot be zoomed into to give certainty. I do not believe modelling for Kelso that has green zone butting up against black zone.
People making all kinds of jokes about things that weren't true
People relaying outdated information
People scaremongering but they were usually called out by others pretty quickly.
People spreading misinformation on crocodile sightings, this should be fixable as then true crocodile sightings are not treated seriously or are ignored.
Plenty as happens everyday on social media, people need to understand the climate they live in and be better prepared themselves
Plenty of people with strong opinions about whether to stay/leave, council competence, dam management, etc etc etc on social media, but you have to just know which sources you're looking at for what purpose and think critically about what you're seeing as per usual
Queensland Police Service added confusion when reporting evacuations from the black zone but not the pink. QPS used a pink map icon to demonstrate the black zone area which caused the confusion
Random people were saying that the Ollera creek bridge was open to everyone, when it wasn't
Reposting of official pages after things had changed. Facebook also randomly feeds out of date information. Time stamping needs to be better.
river and dam levels likelihood of local flooding
Road access
road closures So for goodness sake, why can north Qld councils & TMR not get with the program & just instal live view cameras at every iffy crossing! It's not hard! That would also get rid of a lot of the eejit repetition clogging up otherwise useful facebook groups.
Road closures, areas in black zone not really impacted.
Road closures, flooded roadways, dam levels
Roads being open/closed. Opened briefly, then shut quickly as water/rivers/high tides rose. Limitations on rationing at fuel drops varied, and insufficient fuel drops and sandbags available. Also, only TWO drums of fuel dropped to our area and 2nd drum contained rust in the fuel that people were using for their generators.
rumours
Sensationalist news reporting Generic and non specific information in several disaster management group live feeds
So called weather forecasters and some information in community groups. Also information available on the council website page was misleading and causing issues. Council need to focus on ensuring information is clear and not able to be misconstrued by morons within the community
some confusion on how the dam gates were operated in comparison with 2019 floods.

Some images with AI generated crocodiles in flood waters. Some photos circulating were real, while others were fake, and many people didn't know which ones to believe.
Some of the updates shown on facebook were several hours old
Some out of date info and some people purposely trying to mislead others
Some people posting photos from previous flood events to Facebook trying to pass them off as current
Some unclear information perhaps, but not misleading
Some weather pages predicted the worst and often presumably for maximum engagement. The language used created panic amongst the community
State news repeat same pictures on television
Struck to known gov sites MET disaster response
The flood map showing black and pink zones needs to be redone with colours that more accurately show the exact streets. Transparent colours that allow the viewer to see the streets would be better. People on the cusps were confused as to which zone in which they were situated. This map should have been readily available before the event was taking place.
The flood zone areas only focussed on inundation from the river and waterways and not the whole community.
The following were misleading: direct emergency text messages which were extremely misleading, Local Council Disaster Management Group flood mapping and evacuation direction was misleading, Council information regarding spillway opening was opaque and misleading, BOM forecasting was horribly inaccurate.
The height of the rivers, which roads were closed, flash flooding areas,
The information was dynamic and changing rapidly. Often the official information was out dated before it was available. Conflicting information lead to confusion.
The local council.
The pink and black flood maps were very confusing. I clearly live in the pink zone but was door knocked by police and army to evacuate. Social media and the TSV Bulletin were, at one point, advising that pink areas had to evacuate
The warning zone map. I was in the Pink section of map but police evacuated my area along with the black zone. This map should have been updated as the event went along. It was very confusing being told to leave thinking I was safe. Lucia my unit was not flooded
There was confusion about pink and black zones which led to anxiety among many and cost me a days work (can't get a day back)
There was not really any warnings that flooding was expected to occur, which meant that people had not made plans to safely collect children from school etc, and also made it difficult for workplaces to make decisions whether to shut or continue to trade
There were some reports of heavy rain which didn't eventuate
There were streets in the Pink Zone that were actually in the Black Zone, as referenced by people living in those streets who were door-knocked by the QPS and told to evacuate
Told to evacuate by Police and we were not in the black zone
Too numerous to list. Distressing
Usually conflicting between what journalists are peddling & what people in the community are experiencing. Can't think of specific details.
Various "weather" groups on FB
Various weather predictors and Facebook users
Very little but some duff information on Townsville questions and answers. But not a trusted source anyway
We were aware that people were obtaining fuel from vendors but were unaware of timing and limits
Weather rainfalls, road closures, river levels
Well, not that I am aware of...

When I was using Facebook simply to communicate with friends - nothing to do with the flooding/rain event - random reels/TikTok videos would appear with a wide range of information about NQ flood event. Much of this random information wasn't up to date, described locations not relevant to our event or in other ways did not contribute to the accuracy of information available for people.

Yes, people panicking and saying very inaccurate stuff.

Table A6. Comments on Aspects of Information, Warnings or Evacuations that Could be Improved

1. Bluewater Community Centre to be confirmed as an evacuation centre. The centre to be established with essential support equipment and supplies at least 1 month prior to the high risk weather season. 2. Local Disaster Management or SES be tasked to establish contact with farmers within their area to confirm the safety of residents. Eg Bluewater SES to establish contact with me. I could have drowned and nobody would have known. 3. Townsville City Council CEO to be the face of TCC disaster management and not councillors or politicians. The CEO needs to also explain their decisions related to the allocation and funding of TCC resources during the warning phase. 4. Pre-event warning was too generalised and down played as a rain depression, contributing to an under-evaluation of the threat to community due to flooding. 5. There was no effective messaging for mental health welfare before, during or after. Promoting of internet sites, phone numbers and hubs is not effective for people who are too stressed or unable to reach out for help. Recommend radio be used to convey mental health strategies, eg breathing exercises. Also recommend communication about the impact of low barometric pressure on the human body, eg severe/debilitating aches in joints. 6. Where was JCU's specialist knowledge during this event? How was it used? Where could I access it?

A lot for conflicting information and no one source was accurate

Advised to evacuate yet given nowhere to go. Roads were closed and our local community didn't open as they have always done previously

All of it.

As a household we evaluated on each situation as it came to hand and prepared accordingly and also preparing my elderly mother as well, gave us enough time to prepare when we were informed.

as above, there was not sufficient warning for people to make decisions on how to act.

As listed prior

As mentioned earlier when evacuation centers are announced, there needs to be at least two at the same time. One that accepts pets. You'd alleviate so much stress if that happened

as previously mentioned, we were unaware of the black/ pink zones. a defined evacuation route as our initial evacuation route was flooded and we had to drive around to find a safe route

Be more specific in the streets on the map.

Better clarity on when people should leave based on river levels. Pink zone was broad and may areas in pink zone had no impact in 2019, it would be good to know if this was an overly conservative approach or if modelling showed a real likelihood of inundation

Better communication about the likely severity of the event for those regions outside of Townsville and coastal. All media reports referred to north of Townsville to Ingham including coastal areas and there were no warnings issued for south west Townsville. The text about evacuation was received once the roads were already flooded and cut off and there was a slow response to close schools. We collected our children, and neighbours children from school early and thank god we did (make the decision based on the rainfall in our area) because we weren't aware that so much had fallen in Giru we were caught in excessive flooding on the Woodstock Giru road and were almost stuck, with a car full of children, between Giru and Majors Creek due to those road conditions.

Better communication all round! The WARDENS the Police, there was a severe lack of communication between authorities, another person was going around handing out printed sheets of what supplies one could order and PAY for and the local Council would organize to get to you, somehow?? Medical supplies, for those that can afford to, more warning for the elderly in particular

to STOCK up where possible as when roads are cut no supplies are coming in and then resources like the Helicopters are needed to bring in additional supplies. Everything needs better communication between residents, and those in authority! The WARDENS LIST needs to be UPDATED! There are some who suffer from various medical conditions that effect their ability to function in a safely. WARDENS need to undergo regular safety training in all aspects, CPR, First Aid, they need to have regular Medicals themselves, and where Food Drops are concerned NEED to learn Food Safety and Handling skills. Cold sandwiches were placed on table tops at local shed in Park, (should be left in containers to keep COLD longer) and a RESPONSIBLE person handing out the food items, same with HOT Foods, one or two people to advise choices available and stand there watching the process carefully, making sure multiple hands aren't lifting lids etc. ADVISE ALL where possible to bring a shopping bag or small box to carry items where necessary. The majority of the Volunteers did a wonderful job going around to individuals to hand out meals and other supplies at various times, many were unable to travel to get to the Park area. In the beginning the amount of food delivered was insufficient for the numbers living here. Also, it has to be said, ONE particular car of persons, handed out HOT food to certain 'workers' after BYPASSING everyone else in the main street, before elderly and other families in need in this street. They were seen stopping at the opposite end of the street where people came from everywhere to hopefully get what was left. EVERYONE is entitled to a hot meal, yes, some had severe inundation, whilst others did not, but that should NOT be a reason to bypass the elderly and the families who should have been served FIRST! There were those who did NOT have a generator or refrigeration of any kind, so I believe, there should be a priority LIST made up BEFORE any natural disaster. Name, Address, Contact Number, Medical Conditions, (just a Yes/No), live alone, children/babies, have a generator, have gas cooking facilities. Serve the elderly first, then families with children and babies, then the rest. Especially those with NO Generator or cold keeping facilities and NO Gas cooking facilities! The local hardware stores should have had both single and some double GAS burners advertised for sale PRIOR to the disaster along with sufficient gas canisters. The few that were available sold out long before the event. Not good enough! Items flown in were, 1L bottles of water, miniature tins of baked beans, two fruits, up n go milks, individual toothpaste and toiletry bags. Would have also liked to see some a combination of small fresh orange juices or even 'poppers', more fresh fruit, allowing one or two pieces per family member, some mini salad bowls with dressing separate, fresh cheese/cracker combo's, (one per person), RID mosquito creams, (which is suitable for babies and children), fresh bread, (rationed out with everything else), miniature butters/vegemite/jams/peanut butter and packs of the travel or individual tissues. If things are rationed out there will be enough for everyone. Organize trustworthy Volunteers BEFORE a crisis hits!

Better information for those at work, prioritise public safety over work

Better security for empty houses. More places people can evacuate to with their pets. People who are worried about these things are unwilling to evacuate

Bit of confusion among friends about distinction between pink and black zones, they were in Idalia and incorrectly believed that they had to evacuate (because they received a text message and ABC news said "Idalia" and didn't specify pink zones didn't have to (they were pink) so they came to us for 3 nights. We also got a text message "prepare to leave" from TDMG which panicked everyone and was very confusing

BOM

BOM - not up to date

Bom flood warning page needs to be updated more frequently. TSV disaster group SMS communication needs to be improved

BOM radar to be fixed

BOM should be ashamed of themselves. once they realised river level reading were very inaccurate, they just glossed over their updates, guessing as such.

Bridge openings and closing and water crisis in Charters Towers

Can't please everyone

Clear instructions on when to evacuate and which areas are most at risk. E.g. when flood levels reach x metres or when waters reach your driveway, etc.
Co.ercial news outlets should be financially penalised for making baseless and sensationalist 'reports'. The govt agencies, whilst sometimes a little slow were excellent and accurate. The two previous weather groups on Facebook were also EXCELLENT and FAST.
communication between council, QPS and Army. Information from door knocking police and army was outdated, very forceful.
consistency
Could be more timely
Council made sand available for sand bags but had not made the bag supply itself readily available until the event started. People were unsure where to get sand bags, having to make a trip to Bunnings to get them and then a second trip to the sand stockpiles. Post-event clean up could be better supported by council. e.g. Hard rubbish collection, green waste collection.
Council media briefings were poor. Information needs to be clear, succinct and directed to those who need it most first. Waffling on for ages helps noone.
differentiation between areas that are prone to flooding from storm surge and area that flood due to rain or river inundation.
Disaster response information could be released quicker and with more detail. As of now there is a temporary bridge over Ollera creek but no word at all as to if or when it might be open to the public, and the official road closure updates are not keeping up with the state of the roads around Charters Towers. Those of us stuck away from home are still left with no idea of how or when we will get home after a whole week. A phone number to call for information could be useful
Earlier notice, not reactive warnings.
Evacuate sooner One evacuation centre open for over 1000 people Ridiculous Townsville city council wee disorganised and woeful
Explaining the black and pink areas
Fix plantation Creek. Stuck for 4 days, even though had a 4wd that would have cleared it, over protection from police. People sleeping in their cars in home hill - no support financially or otherwise for these people
Flood maps were very vague based on how much water may be expected in varying locations (only black zone and pink zone)
For people who always follow the weather - we had plenty of time to plan. At least 2 weeks we knew big rain was coming. City people live under a rock when it comes to the weather.
Friends in the safer part of Hermit Park were unnecessarily alarmed by statements that "the suburb" needed to evacuate when only half of it was in the black zone.
Generally informed. Authorities do their best to keep up with latest info to pass on.
Government sources stay on official channels, no FB... Council info needs to be consistent and up to date on all channels
Hard to find fault. I think it would be good though to have information for people that are new to Townsville and have not experienced a disaster before. Even if it's just a two page PDF that summarises key actions, what to do when you have to evacuate, when to know how to evacuate, what to pack, contact support numbers, what to do if your house has sewerage leaks or when to contact Ergon. The information is all there but it lives in multiple different places.
Have text overview of key updates from Facebook livestreams of local disaster management groups
Having appropriately stationed emergency service in all locations - we had 1 ambulance offer, a couple of fire brigade reserve members and no one else on the ground for 5 days
Hinchinbrook shire council and their communication
Honestly nothing - the community was furious at TCC for not enough warning in 2019 and were furious in 2025 because they were asked to leave when they thought they didn't need to. Can't win sometimes - I think the warnings and information from Gov sources was accurate and useful.
I am happy with the current information provisions

I believe it was well managed and executed for those involved
I feel the longer period of rain and potential for flash flooding that is ongoing has not been well enough advised.
I think maybe a kit provided when people move here explaining what happens in monsoon season and not to panic.
I think we should
I vomited from smell disinfectant it was so strong
I was largely non informed on evacs as I did not have to
I wish that there sandbags (prefilled) to grab, especially for the elderly and people who have mobility issues
If the Disaster Facebook page could announce times of their updates each day so we knew when to check and when the next directives would be given -MP knocked on the door after the flood to check we were okay which was very kind -Townsville Council handled this very well
Individuals taking responsibility for themselves, understanding they live in NQ, we have unpredictable weather and they should always be prepared. If anything spend more time on a project that supports this/ provide packs or information to newcomers on how to prepare. Enough warning was given advice went out early for Townsville if people chose to ignore that, that is their responsibility.
Info was targeted & accurate. Press conference was fronted by the experts not filtered through the elected reps. Dam Ops bloke was brilliant- he should have been wheeled out 24-36 hours earlier.
Information i did get hold of was very vague but also catastrophising.. or on the other spectrum, complex language and difficult to understand
Information was readily available & I felt was very accurate & helpful
It is difficult to find an evacuation shelter that will allow pets, and even then, we don't own the travel crate that the shelter requires
It might be that I couldn't find it, but a live stream of the river conditions at the major arterial bridges (e.g. Bowen Rd) would be great
It was good enough for the time being
It was unclear that a pet friendly evacuation centre would open. It was unclear if evacuated houses would be safe from burglary. It was unclear when it was safe to return. Also, council provided sand and said BYO bags. I don't have a vehicle and not the first idea where or how to get bags, so I didn't.
It was well handled
It's not specifically the evacuation but that school wasn't cancelled in the first day the rain started. All the parents had to get their kids when it was already flooded.
Just sometimes more context as to why guidance has been given/what they're expecting, for example sometimes roads are closed but suitable for 4WD access. Sometimes information covers too broad an area
Live updates or forecasts on the conditions of particular streets/water levels would be useful.
Local disaster information from Townsville city council was not updated frequently enough. It should have been better
Local road closures need to be better managed and shared to stop damage from people being looks-loos
Make it accurate and timely.
Maybe 1/2 hour notification of roads closing. Notification of loss of power so people can prepare. Not just switch it off.
Maybe more up to date information on how full evacuation centres were.
Media needs to understand the fear they can quickly induce The townsville disaster dashboard needs to be easier to read and updated frequently
Mobile services made to be able to survive longer than few hours without power
More accessible flood mapping. More detailed information from council sent to residents.

More clarity for people in the pink zone about what actions to take
More evacuation center with animals
More frequent updates from TLDMG - concise, plain language, informative.
More information for the evacuated on the status of their area during evacuation would have helped be less concerned and worried and would have prevented me from driving by the house multiple times a day to check if under water or not. Every 2nd house hold has animals setting up an evacuation center where animals can be brought too in the event of emergency and or more centres that take people and their pets. I would never leave my dog at home then I'd rather stay with the animal or drive around in the car with my animal
More involvement from TCC their input was non existent
more pet acceptance - prior warning of needing crate
More timely and accurate flooded roads
More updates from mayor who had all specialists with her
More visibility of the mayor.
More warnings to target different age groups. The biggest issue is the drain maintenance. A lot of places wouldn't have flooded if the council maintained creeks and drain properly. I do however think this was way better managed than the 2019 floods. It was very evident that disaster management has improved.
Mostly worked well! Although more notice of the seriousness would have been useful for people to go to supermarket get sandbags sorted etc not in a panic at the end - I had definitely heard lots of rain was coming early in the week, but no one really seemed too concerned or trying to get fully prepared until the very last day
Much earlier warnings
N/a
Need to be able to accommodate pets in evacuation centres.
no adequate for us
No one expected the power to go out. Totally unprepared for that aspect. We were not informed it would. Let alone that it would be of for over a week...
None
None I think everyone did their best. Newspapers over dramatic and useless information fake news.
Not opening a pet centre until the 11th hour is ridiculous. Of course people aren't leaving their pets.
Not sure. There is plenty
Nothing
Nothing applicable
Notifications to businesses/schools to close to allow employees to get home safely and to collect children safely from schools.
People don't trust the news and many people are afraid of police abusing their powers, then potential looters, pets that stress etc
People seemed to be confused about if they could take pets to shelters or not. Some people didn't seem to understand that shelters should only be used as a last resort.
Pink and black weren't explained. Stand up levels weren't explained. No subtitles on the council livestreams. Relied too heavily on social media and oldies were alienated. More evac centres needed with pets. Zones need improvement - areas of Maggie and Bluewater weren't black zones but were arguably more affected.
Prepare part, this should have been planned event since we are living in the tropics. Why don't we have similar solutions like countries over seas where they have built dam like structures under cities to control flooding and severe weather
Provide more council coloured maps of predicted flood levels. Better rain radar and forecast technology. More warnings about flash flooding. Have sandbags available before the event, not just during.

Provide people with links or access to more detailed information on a range of topics (dam, flood zones and how they're determined etc etc). It was very very difficult to check where your house was located in the black or pink zone based on the links. I had to search multiple times on council's website to find a map. Much too hard
Put notifications up on TV screens
QPS very good and vigilant patrolling the area.
Regularly scheduled press conferences from the LDCC could be better
Reports of the Burdekin disaster pages where vague difficult to interpret and not refreshed to reflect quickly changing conditions
Roads were cut by Saturday lunch time tge evacuation centre opened 3am Sunday morning.. people couldn't get there tge roads were already flooded
See 27 - the wind warnings were abysmally inadequate. Here in Pallarenda, we all woke up at 3am one morning (the first Sunday, I think?) because the wind was cyclonic - proper howling. Things blew away and blew over. The whole of northern Queensland deserately needs an adequate amount of amenometers so the CTS can accurately map winds, so far more nuanced wind warnings can be issued for different areas, as is done now for flood warnings. It is no longer 'the whole of Townsville will flood', it is 'these specific areas are most at risk'. It is very below par that this is not already done re wind warnings. Help people understand the specific wind risks re their area and their personal situation - eg house siting, materials, design & maintenance.
SES could've been more prepared for this community and helpful instead of telling people if you can come and fill your own sand bags as were swamped there were elderly people and people who didn't have the right vehicle to put the amount of sand bags required
SES should have stayed as a support service of QFES to ensure a more coordinated service. It was way too obvious they were competing for attention & just looked childish. It's insane that they thought it was responsible to promote a different phone number to the community instead of leaving it as the trusted 000. Don't confuse people. In case of emergency call 000. Don't add numbers & expect people to know when it's appropriate to call each number. Stop being so irresponsible. Work within your ability, volunteers should not be responsible for someone's life. Leave them to tarp roofs & do field searches etc.
Severe weather texts went out but 5 in a row with incorrect link and we werent asked to evacuate - flooding wasn't going to happen in my area
Specific Flooding streets. Basic services and water restrictions
Suspected outcome and clearer detailed information be provided by authorities at the onset, not 3/4 of the way through the event.
TCC needs to check the accuracy of the Pink & Black Zones on the distributed maps & update if necessary. During the Event, warnings (including Road closures) could be a little more frequent ... oh, and please filter out the "Not available" data on the Disaster Dashboard Road Closures.
Text message - my husband got loads and I got none. Better communication and trustworthy communication from council. More possibilities to help get sandbags etc (like if your estate road is flooded and you have a small car you might not be able to go).
Text message evacuation warning was extremely alarmist and misleading. This will create a "boy who cried wolf" scenario in residents. The black zone / pink zone was poorly communicated and poorly explained. It just created confusion. The complete absence of the temporary acting mayor Greaney in creating a consistent leadership presence was appalling and should be a sackable matter.
The black zone pink zone thing was so badly done. Map on the dashboard had solid fills which covered the road layer. Useless. No link from there to a useable map. No explanation of the criteria to designate zones. Not trustworthy and very poor effort. Didnt reflect on ground risk or reality. Boo
The evacuation messages were not clear as to whether the black zone referred to the area on the maps or the all of the suburbs mentioned.
The flood zone map should have been regularly updated if they were upgrading suburbs from pink zone to black

The local disaster board crashed several times, and we couldn't access it.
The map that was circulated by the Council on social media outlining the black and pink zones was of low resolution, and it was difficult to read street names. I found a full page pdf version on council's disaster dashboard website which was much clearer. This could have been linked to.
The maps with zones on them were hard to zoom in on. Eg if trying to see which streets and houses were in and out. Resolution was too low!! People couldn't tell from low res images on social media. (Imagine if you could see it on the Applemaps or GoogleMaps app on your phone — how helpful and easily accessible would that be!)
The mere fact that people have no access to any visual media (Tv) in Townsville and are forced to get 99% of their information from Facebook is horrendous. If you have no power, no internet, etc you are basically dead in the water. Having to depend on commercial radio stations is 50 to 60 years behind the times.
The news is repetitive and not useful. I don't know how to improve it.. but I personally would benefit from more accurate and up to date road closure notifications and Oak Valley being included where suitable.
The phone messaging to landlines was inflammatory and lacked accurate information. It was more like scare mongering
The pink and black maps were a little hard to read. When Bluewater was told to evacuate, it was too late. The flooding had happened in some areas.
the pink and black zones created confusion
The public doesn't understand the government different levels of response. There is no need to tell the public you are in "stand up" mode as we have no idea what that even means. Putting sand up at the dam and then telling people not to go to the dam. It's all fine and well the council telling residents to remove their own greenwaste, but council can't then expect the community to help move green waste generated by councils trees falling. Letting people know ahead of time what assistance council intends to provide also helps, don't change it half way through a disaster. Government needs to understand that whilst some areas were more impacted, all residents are impacted and it costs every resident money they don't have to clean up and stay healthy. It's \$180 that goes a long way in such circumstances, to purchase cleaning materials and food.
The text messages were great, it promoted us to research
The timing and accuracy of warnings could be improved. The pink zones could be re-assessed, Hyde park it is higher than Hermit Park, was not mentioned in suburbs needing to evacuate but managed to get into the pink. I didn't flood in 1969, 2019, 2025 or many other years and I am unhappy
The Townsville City Council needs to educate its disaster coordinators better. Also media train them. QPS need to be more careful when door knocking as saying the wrong thing to concerned residents only creates more chaos.
There is an issue with the wind warnings. Not accurate wind measurements from Townsville Airport (very close to Pallarenda) and therefore no warning given.
There is no evacuation center at all on Magnetic island. That definitely need to change
There needs to be a central government source of accurate and timely information. At times the police/council/SES advice was conflicting. The fact that community storm chasers provide more support and information to the local community then BOM do is ridiculous.
There was ZERO information about the risk in the pink zone! Thank Dog my friend's partner is ex-Disaster Management Group. He gave me accurate info when it was not available on the Facevook page or from the ABC radio. He explauned I would get AT LEAST 48 hours to leave if my place was at risk. He explained it would have to rain for about 6 more days at the same rate for my place to be at risk. NO official sources explained this, whicg made me panic unnecessarily for days. Why could nobody just say: pink zone, no threat for the next 48 hours, then U would not have been panicking.
There wasn't enough warning in the lead up. Sure, we knew it was raining because we could look out the window, but there was no actual warnings in advance that it was going to get bad. Not like how we have warnings in advance before a cyclone hits.

This event appeared to be better managed than in 2019 due to flood mitigation ,dam control and disaster management preparedness with better local and state government involvement
This event was very well managed
Townsville City Councils EAP for the Ross Dam needs better maps and TCC should educate people generally and specifically about which areas are in the 'Black zone'. Language should be consistent as orders to evacuate the black zone then naming just 6 suburbs is misleading if more Ares are in the black zone than the 6 suburbs named. The EAP needs to be refined with field work 'ground truthing' and surveys of properties like mine. My property was hit by a wall of water in 2019 yet Townsville City Council have not inspected it or provided any assistance to repair my backyard after the 2019 flooding event. This is a missed opportunity to refine data on how high the River will reach close to Ross Dam.
Try to stay more current
Up to date info on road closures/inundation.
Warnings should be sent out to all residents phones
We are not in the grants list. Please help us get grants to put storm water plumbing in & block fences to keep water out !!
When finishing up the event, can official sources maintain a small presence on webpages to monitor the chances of resurgence. Otherwise I would also recommend more sandbagging sites, as well as access to an automated sandbagger to improve efficiency. Additionally can news sources stop referring to these events as once a century. I've lived here 20 years, and been flooded every few years to varying degrees.
When instructions for the black zone were given out, people were confused about what that meant for the pink zone. In future both zones should be given instructions. Don't just ignore one of them. At least say "but pink can stay put" or something
You used to get news flashes on tv for cyclones etc. this doesn't happen now

Table A7. Open ended Responses to What Influenced Household Decision to Evacuate or Stay in Place

Not in the zone
A working farm, I stayed to oversee the safety of livestock. This was essential for their welfare and to maintain their security during small windows when repair of boundary fences was required. Also, after the first flush of rain on the Paluma range, I was flooded in on Friday 31 January. Townsville City Council's failure to address material blockages in the dry arm of Upper Sleeper Log Creek resulted in the flooding of my main access road to Bluewater Park.
As we are in the pink zone we were unsure how much worse it would get and we have pets. We wanted to get out early before roads became flooded. We went to my parents at Bushland Beach. There is a lot of anxiety when the first shelters that open say 'pets are not accepted' two places should be opened at the same time and one should accept pets. This is reiterated on all social media pages and something that needs to be addressed. People won't leave their pets and they shouldn't be forced to.
Based on river levels. Evacuated animals based on BOM river level readings and then realised they were almost 1 metre higher than actual river level. Massive f%\$up on behalf of BOM.
Based on the lack of water in the street, monitored our storm water inlets - which were not backed up- unlike 2019 plus the drain. I could access dam levels matched that info to tides (neap) thankfully.
Because our property is on a hill and if we get flood water through our house, the whole of Ingham will be completely under water
Because we are safe where we are
Before purchasing my house I researched flood levels. Confident neither I nor my home were in danger of flooding.

Bohle River level had not reached the same height as the 2019 flood. We were safe then so knew we would flood when the river was at a lower level.
Bushland beach was safe, received text message for blue water
Concerns from my friends & family about me staying in my home alone. My house did not flood in the 2019 floods so I thought I'd be safe but still choose to leave.
Confident we'd be fine
Defence had said to prepare for the worst Media had said to prepare for roof level flooding Our house was not impacted in the 2019 floods yet we were told it was going to be worse We followed the mandatory directives because we didn't want to be left behind and then overload the SES/defence if anything were to happen when we had options to do something about it
Did not evacuate as the water levels were not rising on the streets and house premises.
Did not flood in 2019, felt safe to stay.
Did not need to evacuate
Didn't flood in 2019
Didn't need to
Didn't want to be have a emergency arise requiring assistance in black zone
Do not live in a flood zone
Elevated site. Felt safe
Evacuated as an immuno-suppressed foster child lives in the home and needs access to clean water, electricity and to be kept away from flood water. Evacuated as we did not want to get stuck in the house for an extended period of time.
Evacuated because our house flooded in 2019 - we were worried and didn't want to risk evacuation at night time or if road conditions worsened to get to safety/comfort. Mostly due to having a child and a dog we wanted to be safe than sorry. The unknown / unpredictability
Experience of 2019 flood and flood inundation maps
experience with 2019 floods.
Fear of looters
Felt prepared and rather stay with animals
Felt safe
Felt safe to stay,
Felt safe... we were not advised to evacuate
Felt we were safe, understand enough of our local area.
Firstly, having nowhere to go. There is no suitable enclosure in the near vicinity. There is nowhere for people to go with Pets in near vicinity. I'm not leaving without my Pets. There needs to be a LARGE enclosed facility with both GAS and electrical cooking facilities, and a LARGE generator available, where people can go cook a meal for their families and/or cook meals for the community. A facility that has multiple showers/toilets for men and women, NOT the awful unisex type facilities. There also needs to be a large facility/weatherproof area with fenced in yarded areas for Animals, one for Cats and a separate area for dogs.
Flood level in the gully and sitting in a house where everything has been packed upwards and no real pleasant place to spend time
Flood map - we were not in the black or pink zone but if that would have changed I would have
flood map zones, prior experience of flood free, comparing the rainfall totals for this amount several times a day compared to previous flood events
flooded in 2019
had pets so we stayed
Have only ever had localised flooding below a half meter. Live in a high set house. Well prepared and have pets. Shelters are hell quite frankly.
Having been through multiple weather events at this address I was confident that I wouldn't flood here.

Heeding advice
Home is safe
House is on flood free land
House is on high ground and we stayed home to monitor the yard and sheds that are sometimes impacted by flooding
House located on hill. Many animals
I could walk to the dam to see the dam level was lower than the 2019 flood event
I had evacuated my son to his father's home or if the pink zone just got peace of mind and although I was fairly sure my home would be fine I didn't want to risk being cut off from my son.
I had no need to evacuate
I had water to ceiling in 2019 I didn't want to go mundingburra police evacuated me
I have 95 years history of the house in floods, I was never at any risk. I had water, food and gas.
I have exotic pets and medical conditions and evacuation would have caused excess stress on them and myself so I chose to avoid it unless I was door knocked, which I wasn't.
I live in Wulguru which is close to Mt Stuart. We are a bit higher in this suburb compared to most other suburbs of Townsville.
I stayed as it was only heavy rains and eventually it went down by a few hours
I stayed in place a) to protect property from looting and crime b) I am a long term Townsville resident with significant understanding of dam and weir levels, tide heights and their impact on water outflow, ground level height and previous flood water heights.
I think I got texts because I lived in Rosslea with the same mobile phone number in 2019.
I was in the pink zone not the black zone, but the black was the other side of my street. I asked my neighbours if we flooded in 2019 and they said no so I stayed. Also I live in a highset house so I knew I would be safe.
I was in the pink zone, and after a few days of listening to the over-the-top warnings it became clear my house was not at risk, given most of the black zone houses didn't flood.
I was in the pink zone, and watched dam levels/local flooding. We didn't even get water in my street until 6/2
I was out of Townsville. My husband evaluated friend's house due to his 2019 experience. We back home earlier due to our dog had anxiety at the friends' place. We couldn't leave our dog behind and evaluated evacuation centre. I've hear many if my friends are the same boat. If we have somewhere to evaluate with animal, it would be great.
I was safe and fully prepared
I was watching the level of the creek slowly rising, though it was still far away from the property.
I'm on higher ground and was prepared
If my house floods, most of Townsville will be underwater! The MAJOR fail is the total absence of adequate wind warnings. Where I am, the wind on the first Saturday afternoon blew my bbq of the low table it was sitting on - and would have blown it further away but the hose had it anchored to a heavy gas bottle. The best part of 3 days of winds that had a far greater impact than the non-cyclone - Kirrily.
Im on castle hill in an elevated location.
It is high on a hill and was absolutely safe in the 2019 floods.
It was clear we were not in danger.
It was too late to leave when the text to evacuate (if unsafe) was received
Level of preparation I knew I was okay to stay. Also to avoid theft of my property
Local flooding receded as rain eased, had supplies for family and pets
Local knowledge and official advice.
Local suburb, was free from any flooding.
Located on outer edge of pink zone - no flooding in immediate surrounding areas.
Location

Monitoring reports, bulletins. Knowing my flood zone. Having all I needed at home.
Mt house block is a little refuge island in the middle of a flood zone I did not get water in during either 1998 flood or 2019 flood.
My ability to get to my workplace. I am in healthcare (pharmacy) and need to be able to assist the community in a disaster. If I stayed home and the bohle river floods and the suburb gets isolated I can't get to work and that runs the risk of people not being able to access their medications
My dog and inability to get off island as no ferries were running for days
My home has never been close to flooding
My home was not subject of flooding, just the bridge crossing bohle river
My home whilst easily cut off, is high rise and in a high area, not in either evacuation zone. Being a local, I am confident in my ability to ascertain the likelihood of being flooded in.
My house backs on to bluewater creek. The Creek level page on BOM
My partner lives in Rosslea, which was an evacuation zone
N/a
Na
Never flooded and I'm in a first floor unit.
No chance of flooding at my residence
No flood risk
No flooding at our home
No flooding at our home in previous similar weather events such as 2019 monsoon
No flooding in Charters Towers
no flooding in my area
No funding to put fuel in and no where to go
No government advice to evacuate, not in a flood zone, no flooding occurred, did feel safe
No imminent danger
No instruction to leave
no need to evacuate
No need to evacuate so stayed in place
No need to evacuate.
No need to evacuate.
No need to not in a flood zone
No need was on high grounds
No previous history, no official recommendation to do so, no obvious issue, had all reqd items.
No prior warning, no one door knocked and by the time the disaster council group warned us, we were surrounded by water
no risk of flooding
No text received to evacuate as there was no need
No water coming in house
No where to evacuate to. The water from our creek should not be able to get higher than the mound the house is built on
None flood area
Not apart of the pink or black zones being monitored and previously weathered 2019 flood even with minimal impact
Not at risk where I was living.
Not impacted in 2019, was in pink zone and not asked to leave
not in a black zone, plus data from the BOM, adn ergon didn't turn our power off. Plus we were there for 2019
Not in a flood area. Ours was trees down due to high wind and water
Not in a flood prone area.
Not in a flood zone

Not in a flood zone - house and land does not flood. We were also fully prepared to stay in place once the creek spilled over the local causeway and cut us off.
Not in a flood zone, bought enough supplies at the beginning of the event.
Not in a flood zone, inability to properly relocate pets safely, evacuation centres unfit for people with a disability to spend extended periods.
Not in a known flood black or pink zone here
Not in an evacuation zone. We had other people evacuate to us.
Not in black zone
Not in flood zone
Not in flood zone
Not in flood zone and this house was safe in 2019.
Not in the evacuation area and in a high-rise complex.
Not necessary
Not required
On reasonably high ground
Our are is not know to flood. Floodways go under, but properties do not.
Our home is higher than most of Townsville, our greatest danger is being cut off by local flooding. We have pets, and most evacuation shelters refuse to accept them. Although we were not 100% prepared, we have a generator and food/water for several days, and gas to cook with.
Our house did not flood
Pink zone and in a high set property
Police
Police advise which was incorrect, so at the time I not aware it wasn't nessersary
Police told me to leave and I was quite distraught as I didn't know where to go
Positioned on a hill, very low likelihood of flooding
Previous events, wife and child both unwell, better to leave early, also we had friends in safe zone, so somewhere to go made it easy
Previous experience in 2019 floods - water level in the drainage gully remained lower than in 2019
Previous experience of nil flooding in events like 2019 and Yasi 2011
Previous flood event experience taught me to watch the water levels gauging when to leave
Previous flood mapping and updates via facebook
Previous flood mapping stated roads out would flood. Later confirmed decision after black zone ran behind house.
Previous floods in 2019
Previous lack of inundation and preparedness
Ran out of toilet to paper to buy, so I went to neighbouring towns to buy there
Research and preparation.
Residents of Townsville for over 50years, previous experiences in cyclones and floods from past events
Returned home from out west and had. O time to get back oit
Risk of being cut off with no power for days, and not wanting to be a drain on emergency services if we did get cut off.
River level
River levels aren't as high as 2019
Road cut by rainwater before the flood no way to go anywhere
road floods before any decision could be made
Roads out of location get flooded with heavy rains.
Roads shut, no way home.
Stay in place- too many pets and children and inaccuracy around needing to evacuate or not
Stayed In 2019 so stayed this time

The creek level, water coming over the deck & through the shed
The people we offered evacuation to were elderly and in chest deep water in their house. They weren't going to go initially until a neighbour encouraged them. We had no powers to force them to evacuate
The risk of conditions worsening and preventing me from getting out before roads were closed and I was trapped, and the risk of having to leave my cats behind if I couldn't evacuate on my own
There was no flood waters affecting my property. My house is elevated slightly and the flood water would have to rise very significantly (climb uphill) to flood our property.
there was no threat of flooding
There was not enough warning to organise yourself
Unpredictable weather event and water release from the dam
Was just outside the pink zone, looked reasonably safe council flood maps, walks around our street + photos of flooding in the wider local area on facebook, felt safe to stay put and had sufficient supplies
Was not in a flood zone.
Wasn't a need
Water levels remained below the height of our property by about 30 cm
Water was leaking in from the external wall into the inside and i wanted to keep an eye on it. If I did loss power I would have evacuated to family
We are 50km from the Townsville CBD but still in the LGA and tend to get flooded in. Roads close and properties flood but houses tend to stay out of flood waters. We choose to stock up and stay here once a possible weather event is advised
We are high above sea level and not in the path of the dam.
We are in a green zone here in West End next to Castle Hill. It would take a lot more water for us to go under.
we are in a highset house with the main area staying dry in 2019 floods. We now have a generator and felt better prepared to stay - we also have 3 pets
We are JUST outside the pink zone. If pink evacuated, we were preparing.
We are located outside of the Evac Zones. Having lived in Townsville since 1997, I know which areas flood, how quickly, the extent to which they flood, and how quickly MOST areas will recede. As a Disability Support Worker, I was able to take my client food shopping the day before the flooding started, and we stayed in contact throughout the event.
We are not in low-lying area and our property drains well
We are not situated in a flood zone, we live in a high set house, our driveway and house ground level is naturally higher than the street level.
We believed we would be ok due to previous flood levels, and then didn't have a crate large enough for my dog. I also have autism and being in an emergency evacuation center would have been incredibly distressing for me due to sensory/physical issues.
We did not have a problem with floodwater during the 2019 event, so felt confident that we would be safe to remain.
We didn't get a door knock to go
We didn't need to
We don't normally flood in our actual house, however our yard has become a raging river
We got flooded last time 2019 but not this year a little bit of water under house and house is up high.
We have quite a few animals & my adult son has autism & an intellectual impairment which makes it difficult to make him understand the dangers behind the flooding
We kept an eye on the creek across the road, it lowered quickly with any reprieve in the rain. The damage to our home was from the heavy rain.
We know our place won't flood / we are up a slight hill, but we did take other evacuees

We live in a safe zone based on the mapping
We live on a hillside so inundation was not a risk
We only received a prepare to leave message. We felt safe. If it had been a direct order to evacuate or we felt unsafe we would have left.
We only suffered flash flooding
We were close to the Ross river but at a safe elevation
We were in a watch and act zone
We were not at risk of flooding
We were outside the pink zone by several blocks, our street did not get inundated in 2019, we had generators ready and supplies to shelter in place.
We were prepared
We were safe inside the house
We weren't in a pink zone and monitored the water around our property, which did not reach concerning levels.
We wouldn't flood, we could just become isolated. We also have many pets.
We're not advised to evacuate. Also that question is irrelevant tge military does not evacuate anymore when it's deemed climate change apparently.
We're not in a flood zone. Home became inundated due to water run off issue. Knew we could reside safely upstairs.
While roads in & out of our area were affected at times, our house was quite safe. Although if there was another meter or so in it, this would likely have been a different story.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

1. Were you or your household impacted in any way by the major flood event in North Queensland during late January/February 2025?

Yes - please proceed to complete the following survey

No - please do not complete this survey - thank you for your time

2. In what town, suburb and postcode do you live?

3. Do you feel that you/your household was adequately prepared for a disaster before the flood event happened?

Yes No Other (please specify)

4. Did you/your household have a disaster kit prepared before the event (minimum 3 days food, water and supplies)?

Yes No Other (please specify)

5. Did you/your household have a disaster evacuation plan before the event?

Yes No

6. Did you/your household have household and/or contents insurance before the event?

Yes No Other (please specify)

FLOOD INFORMATION

7. What was your primary source of information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)?

Television Print media (newspaper) Facebook X (formerly) Twitter Instagram
Other social media platform (eg Flickr, YouTube, blogs) Media website Government web site (this includes Bureau of Meteorology) Local Government Disaster Management Dashboard
Community website Other internet source Weather based app (smart device) Radio
Friends/family Telephone support service/hotline Other (please specify)

8. Please indicate the main reason you accessed information regarding the flood event. (you may select more than one option)

Monitoring of the event/local impacts Personal preparedness Sandbags and supplies
Warning information Flood/inundation mapping Evacuation information
Information about pets/evacuation Dam updates River/waterway levels updates
Event tracking/updates Information on impacts Information on emergency response
Information on relief efforts Information on recovery efforts Financial assistance
Volunteering/donations Other (please specify)

9/10. Please indicate any official source/group you accessed to prepare or obtain information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option).

Queensland Fire Department Bureau of Meteorology Queensland Health
State Emergency Services (SES) Local Council Based Disaster Information Group
Local Council Disaster Management Dashboard Flood Event Livestream/Videos
Queensland Police Service Local Politician Ergon Energy
Department of Transport and Main Roads RACQ Other (please specify)

11. How would you rate the information provided by these official sources?

Completely Very Moderately Somewhat Not at all N/A

Accurate
Up-to-date
Useful
Trustworthy

If you wish, you can provide comments here:

12. Please indicate if you accessed weather based information generated by the Bureau of Meteorology regarding this event

Bureau of Meteorology website
Bureau of Meteorology facebook page
Bureau of Meteorology severe weather warnings
Bureau of Meteorology rainfall tracking maps
Bureau of Meteorology live streams/videos
None

13. Please rate the information generated by the Bureau of Meteorology

Completely Very Moderately Somewhat Not at all N/A

Accurate
Up-to-date
Useful
Trustworthy

If you wish, you can provide comments here:

14. Please rate the information from other weather focused source/groups you may have accessed.

Completely Very Moderately Somewhat Not at all N/A

Accurate
Up-to-date
Useful
Trustworthy

If you wish, you can provide comments here:

15. Please indicate any news media outlet source/group you accessed to prepare or obtain information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option)

ABC News SBS News 7 News WIN News Other commercial news network
Other print based news network (eg. Local newspaper, The Australian, Guardian, Reuters etc)
Online news based services (eg. news.com) ABC radio Local commercial radio station
None Other

16. Please rate the information from the news media outlet source/groups

Completely Very Moderately Somewhat Not at all N/A

Accurate
Up-to-date
Useful
Trustworthy

If you wish, you can provide comments here:

17. Please indicate any non-government organisations or agency source/groups you accessed to prepare or obtain information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option).

Australian Red Cross RSPCA The Salvation Army Volunteering Queensland
GIVIT Lifeline None Other (please specify)

18. Please rate the information from non-government organisations or agency sources/groups.

Completely Very Moderately Somewhat Not at all N/A

Accurate

Up-to-date

Useful

Trustworthy

If you wish, you can provide comments here:

19. Please indicate any community based forum source/group you accessed to prepare or obtain information regarding the flood event (you may select more than one option).

Disaster Response on Facebook

Local questions and answer group

Local animal or pet focused group

Local church or religious group

Community support group

Flood event group

Friend/family None

20. Please rate the information from community based forum sources/groups.

Completely Very Moderately Somewhat Not at all N/A

Accurate

Up-to-date

Useful

Trustworthy

If you wish, you can provide comments here:

21. Which group/source did you find most useful/valuable? why? Please give details.

22. Did you come across any inaccurate, conflicting or misleading information regarding the flood event?

Yes

No

If you wish, you can provide comments here:

23. Please indicate your overall level of trust in the information provided regarding the flood event.

Completely trustworthy

A great deal

Moderately

Not much at all

Not at all

If you wish, you can provide comments here:

WARNINGS AND EVACUTION

24. Is your home located in a previously identified flood inundation zone?

Yes

No

Unsure (please specify)

25. Did you receive advice to evacuate your home/location (you may select more than one option)?

No

Door knock by emergency services/military

Text message

General warning via media

Advised by friends/family

Self evacuated before any notifications

26. Did you evacuate your home/location?

Did not evacuate

Self evacuated early

Self evacuated after general warning

Self evacuated after text

Self evacuated after door knock/warning

Assisted evacuation (friends/family)

Assisted evacuation (emergency services/support)

Emergency evacuation

Other (please specify)

27. What influenced your decision to evacuate or stay in place?

28. If you/your household evacuated - where did you go?

Did not evacuate

Friends/family

Accommodation service provider

Evacuation centre

Evacuated out of town

Other (please specify)

29. Please comment on any aspect of information, warnings or evacuations for this event that you believe could be improved?

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

30. Are you male or female?

Male Female Other (please specify)

31. What is your age?

18-20 21-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60 or older
Prefer not to say

32. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Primary/elementary school/not attend school

High school (up to grade 10)

Graduated high school (year 12 or equivalent)

Vocational certificate or diploma

Undergraduate/ Bachelors Degree

Post Graduate Qualification

Prefer not to say

This is the end of the survey.