IS YOUR PROPERTY FLOOD READY?
A guide to making your property flood ready

FARM FLOOD READINESS KIT
WHY DO YOU NEED A FLOOD PLAN?

- You are not guaranteed financial or farm assistance when floods occur.
- You need to know what to do and when to do it to reduce damage and losses.
- Every flood is different. You need to plan for all risks and possible impacts.
- If you are prepared you will recover much quicker and be able to get back to business.
- The damage and losses caused by floods can be very high. It costs a lot of money and takes a long time to clean up your property, repair fences and feed livestock.
- It is cheaper to plan ahead and be prepared than pay the costs of repairs or lose income and production time.
- Can you afford not to have a flood plan?

The Hunter Valley is located on a floodplain and has a history of flooding.

There have been over 200 floods recorded since European settlement. The Hunter Valley can flood as a result of an East coast low (2015) or a late summer cyclone (1955). In April 2015, 36,906 animals including chickens, pets, and over 1000 livestock and horses were lost.

The total value loss of agricultural productivity from the April 2015 flood was $105,000,000.
ARE YOU FLOOD READY?

Having a flood plan can help prevent damage and losses on your farm:

- Dead livestock
- Destroyed equipment
- Debris and waste
- Loss of access to property
- Erosion
- Blocked drains
- Damaged fences

Be prepared

Ensure your property has:

- Clear laneways
- High ground with access to fodder and water
- Tools for clearing damage
- Appropriate storage
- Stored fodder
- Appropriate land management systems
When you live on a floodplain, having a flood plan just makes good farming sense.

Planning will not only protect your home, property and business. You also have an obligation to protect your livestock and pets from drowning.

Your flood plan doesn’t have to be complicated. In fact, it needs to be as easy and straightforward as possible so that if you are away someone else can implement it on your behalf. Below are some examples of risks and actions that might be included in a flood plan.

**Know what your risks are**
- complete the flood readiness checklist and identify the risks and hazards on your property

**Know what to do to reduce risks**
- develop an action list to reduce your risks and make your property flood ready

**Know what to do when a flood is coming**
- develop a flood plan and ensure you know where to get information about floods and warnings

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Do you have livestock or other animals?

- Have safe high ground with access to food, clean water and shelter.

Can your property be isolated?

- Store food, clean water, battery radio, generator, fuel, first aid kit and emergency contacts.

- Move necessities above expected flood levels. Make sure they remain dry.

Do you store chemicals on your property?

- Store in shed off the ground so they can’t be washed away.

- Ensure all chemicals are stored and shed securely locked.

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Hunter Local Land Services’ flood readiness checklist can help you identify the risks and hazards on your property and how to address them. Contact Hunter Local Land Services for information and advice on how to develop your flood plan.
WHERE TO GET INFORMATION ABOUT FLOODS AND WARNINGS

NSW SES: 132500  www.ses.nsw.gov.au
NSW SES – for information on what is happening and what to do.

www.bom.gov.au
Bureau of Meteorology – for information on rainfall, weather radar, river heights and flood predictions.

ABC Radio 1233AM
ABC Radio – for ongoing flood messages and information.

Emergency Alert Channel
www.emergencyalert.gov.au

Emergency + helping people to call the right number at the right time, anywhere in Australia. The app uses a mobile phone’s GPS functionality so callers can provide emergency call-takers with their location information as determined by their smart phone. ‘Emergency+’ also includes SES and Police Assistance Line numbers as options, so non-emergency calls are made to the most appropriate number.

Live Traffic NSW provides up-to-the minute news of incidents and conditions that affect your journey in Sydney and Regional NSW.
www.livetraffic.com

What do Bureau of Meteorology warnings mean?

Severe Weather Warning
A general warning to expect unusual conditions which may include:
- Gale force winds and gusts
- Heavy rainfall with potential for flash flooding
- Abnormally high tides

Flood Watch
There is a potential for a flood to occur
- You need to start preparing for a flood

Severe Thunderstorm Warning
A general warning to expect unusual thunderstorms which may include:
- Large hail
- Lightning
- Damaging wind gusts
- Heavy rainfall with potential for flash flooding

Flood Warning
A flood is expected or already occurring
- You need to have everything secured and safe

Always call 000 in life threatening situations
WHAT TO DO WHEN THERE IS A FLOOD

Flood Watch
- Start moving livestock to higher ground – open gates and ensure laneways are clear from obstructions
- Untie animals
- Secure moveable objects such as shipping containers and other heavy objects
- Move equipment where possible – tractors, farming equipment, utes and other vehicles
- Remove debris from fields and pastures – pipes, timber, scrap, metal, tools etc
- Remove pumps from waterways
- Make sure all chemicals are stored securely and out of potential flood water levels
- Make sure your emergency kit is ready – include portable battery radio, torch, batteries, first aid, food and water for three days
- Check on neighbours and off-farm owners where possible

Flood Warning
- Always stay up to date with warnings and other public messages so you know if things are likely to change and what to do
- Stay in touch with nominated contacts
- Move livestock to higher ground
- Open gates and cut fences where necessary
- Seal areas around the home and other farm buildings to keep out water
- Lock storage sheds and sandbag where necessary to prevent water entering
- Keep pets safe and out of flood waters

Evacuation Warning
- Know if you are going to stay or leave. If evacuating, leave early
- Send staff and visitors home if safe to do so
- If you are evacuating make sure animals are safe and have access to shelter, food and water
- Make sure you have essential documents – emergency contact list, legal documents and accounting records
Livestock and horses

If you have livestock or horses you will need to make sure they are safe and well.

- Check to see they are safely on high ground and still have access to fodder and water.
- Notify Hunter Local Land Services if any stock are missing.
- If you can access your livestock or horses check they are not injured. If necessary contact your veterinarian.
- When the flood waters recede move them back to undamaged pastures or safe area where you can provide access to fodder and water.

Carcasses

- You need to dispose of carcasses quickly. You can do this by composting on site or burial.
- Information about disposing of carcasses can be provided by Hunter Local Land Services.
- The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) also has guidelines for disposal.


Cleaning up

Floodwaters can be contaminated by septic, chemicals or other waste which can cause illness and infection. When cleaning up:

- Always wear protective clothing including gloves, boots and eye goggles.
- Follow the safety instructions on the labels of any disinfectants or products you use.
- Watch out for snakes and spiders.
- Wash your hands thoroughly and maintain hygiene.
- NSW Health has information on cleaning up after a flood.


Waste and debris

There can be a lot of large materials and debris to be cleared up after a flood. During clean-up:

- Watch out for sharp objects.
- Do not move anything unless it is safe to do so.
- Contact your local council about disposal of large items.
- Photograph any damage for insurance purposes.
Ensure your property is flood ready

Contact Hunter Local Land Services for a Farm Flood Readiness Kit. The user-friendly kit is designed to assist farmers to make their property flood ready and to develop a flood plan. The kit contains:

1. **Flood readiness checklist** - identify the risks and hazards on your property and develop an action list to make your property flood ready

2. **Flood plan** - identify what needs to be done when a flood is coming

3. **Nominee form** - identify who will put your flood plan in place if you’re away

To request a copy of the Farm Flood Readiness Kit please contact your nearest Local Land Services office or email admin.hunter@lls.nsw.gov.au

- **Kooragang**
  - Hexham
  - Phone: 4964 9308

- **Maitland Saleyards**
  - Rutherford
  - Phone: 4932 8866

- **Merriwa**
  - Phone: 6548 2175

- **Paterson**
  - Phone: 4930 1030

- **Scone**
  - Phone: 6540 2400

- **Singleton**
  - Phone: 6572 2944

- **Taree**
  - Phone: 6551 8994

- **Tocal**
  - Paterson
  - Phone: 4939 8967

- **Wingham**
  - Phone: 6553 4233

- **Wyong**
  - Phone: 4355 8200

www.hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au