




Experience FLOODS



LET'S TALK

FLOOD LEVY?

THE Federal Government has recently announced the introduction of a one-off (2011/2012) levy to pay for flood damage. It will cost those who earn over \$50 000, 0.5% of their income and those who are earning over \$100 000, 1%

of their income.

Flood victims will be exempt. There are those who support the levy and those who don't.

What do you think? Should Australians have to foot the bill? How will the levy help?

Send your thoughts to nie@apnap.com.au



THE start of this year has seen many parts of Queensland, Northern New South Wales and Victoria hit by floods. The inundation has had great economic and emotional impact on people and their property and in some cases caused injury and death when the depth of the water along with strong currents and force of the water caught many people unaware.

The widespread flooding experienced during the big wet of January happened when rivers, creeks and stormwater drains didn't have the capacity to carry away the extra water caused by constant, heavy rainfall or overflowing dams.

In some places, like Toowoomba, rapid flash flooding occurred with little

warning as a result of large amounts of water falling in a short period of time. This posed a threat to people as they were swept off roads, caught in the fast flowing water and trapped in cars. The increased water levels have had a devastating effect on communities.

Lives have been lost, people's health affected, buildings and infrastructure severely damaged, possessions destroyed or washed away, people have been forced to leave their homes and food and essential items have been in short supply.

It has all come at a huge financial and emotional cost but Government bodies, community groups and individuals have rallied together to help those in need.



WEEKLY CHALLENGE



DURING the recent floods, our newspapers have captured some brilliant images and stories.

Your challenge this week is to tell us your experience of the floods or retell a story you heard.

You may want to include a photo with a caption. Send your stories to nie@apnap.com.au

THE BENEFITS

IT is probably very difficult for those people affected by the floods to see the benefits of this natural phenomenon but floods can be environmentally important to local ecosystems. They are a natural way for wetlands, swamps and waterways to revive and replenish.

Underground aquifers like the Great Artesian Bore also benefit from floods. Infiltrating rain recharges its water levels and reduces salinity. The heavy rains that often cause troublesome flooding can bring relief to areas suffering from drought.

FLOOD FACTS

► Since December 2010, a total of 51 Local Government areas in New South Wales have been declared natural disaster areas due to flooding.

► More than 86 towns and cities across Queensland have been affected by flooding and 75% of the state declared a disaster zone.

► 92 schools across

Queensland had at least one building inundated by flood waters.

► The flood damage bill is estimated to cost \$5 billion dollars.

► There have been 35 flood-related deaths in Queensland since November 30, 2010.



NEXT WEEK: What's News – Capturing the story