

Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation Scheme – Community update July 2022



Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation Scheme

The Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation Scheme is designed to lessen the effects of flooding on both rural and urban areas, reducing flood damage by modifying flood behaviour. It is a well-designed and maintained state owned engineering work, which affords significant protection from flooding to community and commercial interests. The scheme is an integrated system of levees, floodgates and drains (assets) on the Hunter, Paterson and Williams rivers.

The scheme does not provide complete flood protection but is designed to mitigate or reduce flood damage. Scheme assets provide flood protection for 250 000 people in the Hunter region including in Maitland, Lorn, Raymond Terrace, Singleton and Aberdeen.

Recent flooding and monitoring

The Hunter Valley has experienced four significant flood events since March 2021 and through it all our flood mitigation infrastructure has remained strong and effective, reducing the risk to life and property by controlling the velocity, direction and depth of floodwaters.

The Singleton, Maitland, Lorn and Raymond Terrace levees are monitored daily throughout flood emergencies. CCTV and drones are used during flood events to monitor major sites, record flood behaviour and assess the performance of the scheme, enabling us to pinpoint issues as they happen.

All the levees at Singleton, Maitland, Lorn, Hinton and Raymond Terrace have had an initial inspection by a geotechnical engineer and while some of these levees have sustained damage none of the sites are considered an imminent threat. Repair works on urban levees are a priority.

Current flood levels

Every flood event is different. The most recent flood event in July was a result of an intense storm cell moving across the catchment with varied rainfall. The local area was already saturated with

many areas of the floodplain still inundated from the March flood event. This leads to longer inundation in some areas and slower timing for the river to recede and floodplain to drain.

Maitland Levee

Due to the significant rain event and flooding which was impacting Maitland and the surrounding areas, on 8 July emergency works were undertaken to stabilise the Maitland Levee at the Maitland showgrounds and a geotechnical engineer was engaged to conduct daily inspections.

We have continued to closely monitor the levee systems and other flood mitigation infrastructure as flood waters have receded. A preliminary engineering assessment of the critical levees along with further in-depth geotechnical reviews of the three sites are underway. This will enable the NSW Government to identify what urgent repairs are needed so the scheme continues to be flood ready.

Current state of the Maitland levee

The levee has sustained moderate damage from recent major flood events and the continual wet conditions over the past 18 months. The levee is a well-maintained state government owned asset under a regular inspection and maintenance routine.

Repairs

The Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation Scheme is part of the Department of Planning and Environment who are currently undertaking investigations on the Maitland levees. Any repairs that are required for the levees will be communicated to the community through local channels. We are working with Maitland Council to ensure the community is regularly updated.

Further information

Please visit environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/water/floodplains/hunter-valley-flood-mitigation-scheme or call (02) 4927 3155.