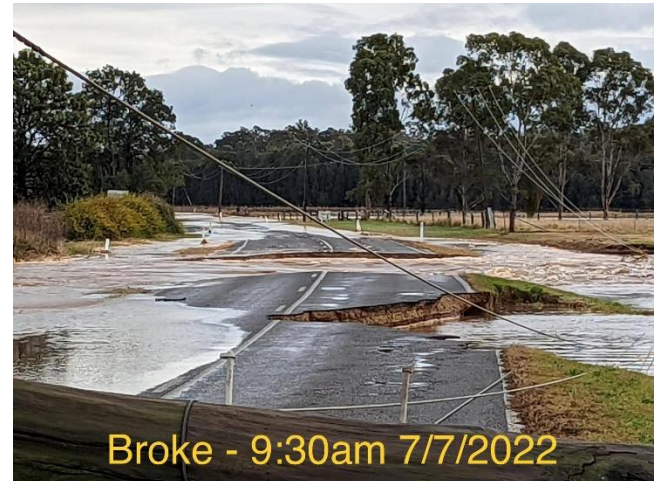


## Driving in Flood Waters

During the operational response in a flood event, the NSW SES maintains a policy stance that advises against the public driving in flood waters. This policy stance should be maintained during the execution of flood rescues and any use of SES vehicles in the flood rescue environment must be carefully risk assessed.

Driving through a flowing water across a roadway or through a river crossing poses specific risks to the driver, occupants, and the vehicle, for example:

- Water as low as 300mm deep can sweep a vehicle off the road
- No certainty about the true depth of the water
- Road surfaces can become slippery, such as at a river crossing, where friction is further reduced as water, sand or mud replaced the frictional forces that hold the vehicle to the road
- Severe weather events may increase the likelihood of the road structural integrity being compromised
- Flood waters can scour the road surface or wash away whole sections of the roadway, which may not be visible
- Water may cause damage to the vehicle
- Injury/illness to the occupants due to exposure to situations such as contaminated water, electricity from downed power lines



### Control Measures:

Where they may be an occasion to drive through flood water, for example to assist in a flood rescue situation, the following should be considered:

- NSW SES vehicles and drivers are subject to the provision of [Safe Driver Guideline](#)
- NSW SSE vehicles and drivers are subject to the requirements of [Flood Rescue Field Procedure 3.6 NSW SES Motor Vehicles](#)
- All drivers are to ensure a documented risk assessment is undertaken prior to enter flood waters, including:
  - Is there an alternative?
  - Can you see the bottom of the road/ground surface below the flood water (e.g., potentially washed-out culvert, subsident of the road surface)?
  - Is there potential for a deeper section to sweep you off the road (e.g. on a bridge or causeway)?
  - Is the water moving fast?
  - What is your vehicle type and the specifications for “wading” depth of your vehicle? Refer to the [Fleet Asset Product Description Cards](#) for your specific vehicle

- Do you require an appropriately trained and qualified person to walk in front of the vehicle whilst driving through flood waters?

In a life-critical situation, if there are no other alternatives, drive in the middle of the road (highest point). Stop or take extreme care if you cannot see the lane markings, as this may indicate deep water or changes in road surface, such as where the road has washed away.

Any vehicle that is used in floodwater above axle height should be inspected by a licensed mechanic. A 'post operational event' service should be undertaken to ensure that vehicle remains in an operationally ready state.



If you are impacted by a near miss or incident surrounding driving in flood waters, report it as soon as immediately. Report all injuries, hazards, and near-hits on

**1800 737 647**