



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING
Mr Johnathan Davis MLA (Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA (Deputy Chair)
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into West Belconnen supercell thunderstorm

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From: [REDACTED]
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We live in [REDACTED] We were quite badly affected by the storm on 3 January. An angophora in our back yard dropped branches all over our back garden and smashed our clothesline, and a tree in the yard that backs on to ours dropped branches on the power line. As a result of the latter, we were without power from late on the Monday night (about 10pm) until late on the Friday afternoon.

We were very impressed with the speed with which the SES cleared trees from the roads, and although we were without power for several days, we had visits from Evo Energy and a team from Wollongong within a day or so, and we knew that the powerline damage had been reported.

As the tree damage was in our backyard, we were responsible for clearing it, and this we were able to do with the great help of friends with a chainsaw and trailer.

We were also fortunate in that our insurance paid for accommodation for most of the nights we were without power, for making the angophora safe and for replacing the washing line which was a write-off. We also had a car which enabled us to travel to buy food and so on. Those without transport were in a very difficult position, as food in fridges and freezers had to be thrown away. It was good that the government set up emergency centres where people could get key supplies and recharge batteries, but maybe this could be done more quickly in the case of a similar emergency occurring again.

The one thing that would have been of general assistance was clearer information on how the government was responding to the clearing of debris from all over the suburbs – for example, what and where were being given priority and where each suburb sat within that list of priorities. We understood that the clean up required a massive effort and that it would take some time. We were also conscious that the teams doing the clean-up work were being taken away from the regular tree-related work within the city. Perhaps some greater resources could be provided to this area, as it is of critical importance to the well-being of Canberrans.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Wendy Whitham and Lloyd Hooper

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