



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING  
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## Submission Cover Sheet

### Inquiry into West Belconnen supercell thunderstorm

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## West Belconnen supercell thunderstorm

### Introduction and context

Towards the end of the storm, my home in [REDACTED] lost power for around 3 hours.

After the storm had cleared, I walked to the street and found many of my neighbours gathered around two large gum trees that had fallen horizontally across the road.

A group of residents had already started clearing the tree from the road. I joined them. Within the hour an ACT government ute arrived with a single person. This person stopped by the tree and at first, observed the work being done on the tree by the community and then joined in.

After another hour or so, ACT Fire and Rescue showed up. By that time, myself and other Higgins residents had cleared one lane of the road and supposing (I assume) we had the situation in hand, moved on without giving any assistance (which was fine, because we did have it in hand).

With the help of residents and their private vehicles (the government ute was not used during the clean-up) we succeeded in clearing both trees off both lanes.

What follows, is feedback from my neighbours that I gathered on the day of the storm and in the intervening weeks and months that have followed while aiding other Ginninderra residents with supplies such as ice and power banks, and tree clearing.

### Government communication

While assisting residents in Ginninderra after the storm, one particular concern was shared by all people I talked to. The government response was not good enough and not well communicated.

Many of the people I spoke to were elderly and/or had their power out for a significant time after the storm. These people had either no internet access or, at best, intermittent internet access. From what I could see, most of the government messaging after the storm was done online.

Evoenergy provided Facebook updates on predicted times that power would be restored. And government ministers used Facebook and Twitter to share updates and information on where residents could find aid. Using online platforms to communicate with people who have no electricity and therefore, less access to the internet is ludicrous.

Many of the people I spoke with only found out about the community information hub once I (someone who had power and internet access) told them about it.

Evoenergy claimed to have the exact number of residents that were affected by power outages. It is logical to assume that they then knew which homes did not have power. They, as a part-owned government utility company, should have letterboxed or doorknocked the affected homes.

### Follow up

While helping a clear a tree for a resident in Scullin, they told me that on the day of the storm, SES had showed up to mark the tree that fell on her property crushing her fences. They informed the resident that TCCS would follow up with them to remove the tree. After more than a month of waiting, TCCS had still not shown up. They were not given an estimate on when the tree would be removed and were therefore unable to organise a contractor to rebuild their fence since they did not know when the tree would be removed.

